



**University of Illinois Chicago**

Great Cities Institute

Neighborhoods Initiative

# **Evaluation Report**

## **1999-2000**

**NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE  
EVALUATION REPORT: 1999-2000**

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## INTRODUCTION

This has been a year of change for the Neighborhoods Initiative. UICNI has lost one of its coordinators, Loomis Mayfield, who leaves with a solid record of accomplishment based on hard work. The coordinator position has changed from co-coordinators to a single coordinator, Nacho Gonzales, and the job description for that position has changed to look more like it did when Marty Adams held that position. The Neighborhoods Initiative now has a director, Cynthia Barnes Boyd, who brings to UICNI a long history of collaborative projects in health care and health promotion, adding a dimension to UICNI capacity that it has long sought and connecting UICNI not only to the west side of campus but also to the International Center for Health Leadership Development, now part of the School of Public Health at UIC. David Perry has made his presence felt increasingly during this year, and with his appointment as Dean of CUPPA, adds to UICNI capacity connections to higher echelons of the UIC administration that both faculty and community partners have sought. The Steering Committee has changed from a small group of faculty and community partners with a city representative, a Great Cities director, and the coordinator(s) to a much larger group of partners, potential partners, and interested parties from both the faculty and the communities. The nature of participation of committee members in policy discussion and decisions has also changed, and as a result, committee members who were silent witnesses last year have been strong voices this year, joined by new voices. Projects have also changed, but in a way that is more evolutionary than sudden.

All of this change shows a single pattern that demonstrably characterizes not only each of the components of the Neighborhoods Initiative—projects, activities, and governance—but all of the components taken together. The pattern is most clearly represented by the term “integration.” The parts that constitute each component have come together and the components have begun to come together. This is systemic change. This report uses the same format as our past reports:

- A description of each of the projects along with analysis and recommendations
- A description of UICNI activities, such as the coordinator’s position, the Steering Committee, etc.,
- A conclusion section that synthesizes the specifics to see what sort of larger picture **they** form.

This format may not be designed to keep the reader on the edge of his/her seat, but it is designed to clearly show evidence of patterning in what appear to be discrete events. It’s also a lot cheaper than Valium.

Rather than concentrating on examination of questions of building capacity in the university and community organizations and the ability to form productive partnerships, as we have in past reports,

we will focus on the processes and outcomes of integration in the projects, the activities, and the larger whole that is the UICNI, as we did in the 1999 report. This document is essentially an update of the conclusion section of the 1999 report.

## **PROJECTS**

### **Affordable Housing Fund (AHF)**

The Affordable Housing Fund was undertaken in partnership with The Resurrection Project (TRP), the Near West Side Community Development Corporation (NWSCDC), the city of Chicago Department of Housing (DOH) and UICNI. Funded by a HUD Joint Community Development (JCD) grant issued in 1996 to only three urban universities. JCD funds cooperative efforts between each university and its surrounding community for the purpose of addressing community issues, especially those of housing and economic development. At UIC these partnerships are now in their last year of scheduled funding.

Statements of the program's purpose in relation to low income homeowners varies from partner to partner depending on each organization's model of the community they serve, the organization's relationship to the community, and the organization's model of community transformation. On the near west side, where there is a great deal of new construction, many current residents are elderly long time residents living on fixed incomes, and the NWSCDC already administers a program that makes minor interior home repairs possible for the elderly and handicapped. NWSCDC personnel describe the AHF program as a grant and loan program for exterior rehab that helps the elderly keep the appearances of their homes up to rising community standards while often reducing their utility bills. The hope is that these improvements will help prevent some of the current residents from being displaced by processes of neighborhood improvement. In Pilsen, a largely Mexican American immigrant working class community with little new construction and many old homes, TRP personnel describe the program as a forgivable loan program that helps families make a variety of needed improvements in their homes. It is no surprise then, that most published statements of the purpose of the AHF program favor one version or the other.

For residents of the Near West Side and Pilsen, who make less than 80% of the city's median income, AHF makes available matching forgivable loans and grants for the rehabilitation of 1-4 unit owner occupied residential properties for the purpose of bringing these properties up to Federal Housing Quality Standards. Improvements to meet these standards can be work inside or outside the house such as improvements in electrical systems, plumbing, or tuckpointing. AHF also makes funds available for a variety of specifically external rehab purposes including landscaping. External work takes precedence after the aforementioned federal standards are met. Grants are restricted to low-income senior citizens and to special cases deemed appropriate by the loan committees. Grants can go up to a maximum of \$2,500. Loans start at \$1,000 and can go up to \$10,000. Forgivable matching loans are loans which the borrower has to match with his or her own funds, or in most cases

with funds borrowed from a private lending institution, as a requirement of program participation. They are "forgivable" loans because if the resident stays in the house for four years he or she does not have to pay back the AHF half of the funds. If the resident moves out in less than four years, he or she has to pay back a prorated portion of the AHF loan, possibly partially replenishing the loan fund for future borrowers.

Both organizations market the fund through the networks they are connected to in their respective communities. NWSCDC uses the meetings of the Central West community organization, the aldermanic offices, and word of mouth to target eligible participants within the area bounded by Western-Damen and Lake St.-Van Buren St. This last mode is informal but effective. The applicant list is currently over one hundred people. TRP uses member parishes and block clubs they have organized to promote the program. They are targeting eighteen blocks in Pilsen based on where they have networks. The application process requires documentation that the AHF staff person at each organization can help residents get in order. NWSCDC was able to acquire pro bono title and track searches from the city and a private company for low-income applicants in the first round of granting and loaning. Both organizations report that the AHF staff person and the construction managers they retain on staff can and do help residents determine the scope of work needed, prioritize work, locate contractors, and assess bids. Both organization play an oversight role in the construction process and submit receipts to the city on work completed.

At the time of the 1996-97 evaluation, the project was still being held up by the negotiation of legal arrangements for the transference and responsibility for program funds. In February 1998, the city Department of Housing finally gave UIC vouchers for the program funds. By March the city received the funds and deposited \$150,000, the total amount for the first two years of the program, at the First National Bank of Chicago. It was hoped that making this much accessible to the community organizations would cut down on future delays due to bureaucratic red tape. At the time in March of 1998, the program was two years and three months into the grant period and community organizations had only just received the possibility of accessing the funds.

In May of 1998, TRP sponsored a review session for all partners on the underwriting process and the program manual. In June of 1998, each community partner held a lead education workshop for community members, as lead abatement was one of the issues that have to be dealt with in the loaning and granting of funds to residents. TRP, an affiliate office of Neighborhood Housing Services (which helps low income individuals solve home financing issues) was the first of the two community partners to disperse funds to neighborhood residents in the form of loans and grants. By the end of 1998, TRP had dispersed five loans totaling \$20,000 out of a "first round" pool of \$25,000. The largest loan was for \$9,000, the smallest for \$2,000. In one instance, \$1,500 on a \$4,000 loan was given as a grant to a senior citizen.

The program was set up to have a city audit after a \$25,000 first round of loans. So at this point TRP was in the position of waiting for a city audit of the first round of loans before it could initiate the second round. At the time of the first round, Louisa Espinoza was the TRP Housing Services Director responsible for coordinating all of TRP's AHF activities. Alfredo Melesio, a UIC research

assistant working at TRP, aided clients in the application process, and Phil Lopez was the TRP loan officer, directly responsible for getting potential AHF recipients to the point of being considered by the loan committee.

NWSCDC took somewhat longer to get to the point of dispersing their first round of funds. It was October of 1999 before they had a loan committee meeting at which they awarded six grants to low income senior citizens, each totaling \$2,500, and one loan of \$9,600 against which the recipient had to acquire matching funds. The work for which these grants were awarded to seniors and working families included replacement of porches, doors, fences, gates, garages and windows, tuckpointing, and roof repairs. It is clear that in this round, the funds are achieving NWSCDC's stated goals of helping seniors keep up the exterior appearances of their homes; which can play a role in preserving the home, helps seniors feel better about where they live, and uniformly improves the look of the neighborhood as new housing appears. A second specific objective cited by Wilma Ward, NWSCDC's AHF staff person, was to help seniors with their utility bills by providing them with new windows.

Compared to the almost all loans with one grant pattern at TRP, NWSCDC's pattern is almost a mirror opposite. These differences in granting and loaning patterns between the two communities in fact realize the initial grant writers' intention to create a program with flexibility to match local demographic needs and organizational agendas. TRP has a partially revolving housing loan fund that it wanted for young working families, a loan option it can provide alongside other home finance services. NWSCDC got the grant program they wanted for seniors on fixed incomes, complementing the H-Rail program, which makes grants available for minor interior repairs for the disabled.

The reasons for NWSCDC's delay in starting to grant/loan are not all entirely clear. From at least November 1998, Nacho Gonzalez, UICNI co-coordinator, and Kelly Murphy, with the Department of Housing, were putting steady pressure on NWSCDC to assemble a loan committee and move the entire process to the point of being ready to have a loan committee meeting at which funds could be dispersed to west side residents. Wilma Ward, the AHF program coordinator at Near West, described the process of putting together a loan committee as easy. For community representatives it was just a matter of contacting people she knew in the neighborhood and going to a Central West meeting to find candidates. Argo Bank was asked to sit on the committee because they had originally been asked to come into the community by NWSCDC to be a financial business anchor on Madison Street. Phil Lopez, by the summer of 1999 no longer the loan officer at TRP, currently works at St. Paul Savings and Loan. He is now an alternate if someone does not show up to a meeting.

NWSCDC is a small organization and has undergone a great deal of turnover, having had four executive directors since 1998, when the funds first became available. But it seems clear that staff turnover has created delays in both NWSCDC and TRP programs. Relative capacity is probably more important in delaying NWSCDC than staff turnover, however. The sheer amount of detail and paperwork tasks involved in getting ready to make loans is daunting in a large organization, and NWSCDC is not large. This is why Nacho Gonzales placed a Doug Shenkelberg, a CUPPA intern, there specifically to work on AHF. According to Shenkelberg, organization staff indicated that the

intern who had just resigned before he started had been unable to complete the tasks required on AHF. Shenkelberg spent August and September completing application paper work and computerizing many of the forms so that NWSCDC would have a computerized application database. Ward and Shenkelberg divided the work up in complementary ways, and within six weeks after Doug's arrival, Ward was able to set up the loan committee.

Clearly the placing of an intern at NWSCDC has helped the organization to develop capacity on the AHF program. Shenkelberg has contributed to the organization's capacity in other ways. He has been involved in inventorying city owned parcels in the area, and grant writing among other tasks. One proposal to LISC resulted in the placing of a new intern at NWSCDC by LISC to work on the New Homes for Chicago program.

Neither organization has done any additional loaning or granting after a first \$25,000 round. They have both been waiting for some months for the mandatory audit by the city Department of Housing that must follow the first round of loans. These first round audits are intended to ensure that the community partners are administering the program appropriately. Loan recipient files will be examined to insure that qualification procedures are being followed, that the work being funded is appropriate to the awards, and that other federal housing fund requirements are being met, e.g. that proper environmental clearances are being received from the city Department of Environment. According to DOH commissioner Elise Mann, of all the partners on AHF, DOH was asked to take on this role because overseeing HUD CDBG funds that come into the city has traditionally been their job.

The delay at the city seems to have been caused by the departure of Kelly Murphy, who had been the DOH point person on AHF for about two years. A replacement was about to start working in June. Susana Vasquez, TRP Deputy Director, indicated that Elise Mann was planning to do the audits herself. Mann is the commissioner that oversees the unit of DOH that oversees the program, but for the past six months she has had to be more directly involved after having had no direct prior involvement. She is responsible for a large number of programs, many involving significantly larger budgets than AHF.

TRP personnel acknowledged some organizational responsibility for the loaning process not moving forward since December 1998. The issue here has been in great part staff turn over. Phil Lopez, the former loan officer has moved on to the private banking sector. The new loan officer, Eleazar Vasquez, has been working since June, but initially had to attend to the new homes for Chicago program. He was brought up to speed on AHF by meetings with Nacho Gonzalez and Wilma Ward, but it was then that Kelly Murphy left her position at the city, which left the audits in limbo right at the time Vasquez became aware that he needed to be actively preparing for them. Vasquez mentioned that at the time of his meetings with Gonzalez it was a mutual education experience, as Gonzalez was fairly new to work on AHF due to personnel changes at UICNI. The current housing services director, Victor Gamez, is now in his fifth month. Gamez and Vasquez have reviewed all of TRP's files to insure that they are ready for the audit and are prepared to do another round of marketing once the audit is complete. Since they deal with home financing on a regular basis, TRP feels prepared to quickly disperse the rest of the loan funds before the contracts on the partnership expire

in December of 2000. Nacho Gonzalez indicated that HUD would most likely grant an extension, enabling all funds to be disbursed. It is also the case that neither NWSCDC nor TRP had ever given the city vouchers for the funds to pay for the AHF staff person; both have paid this salary out of their own funds since the program's inception. Susana Vasquez has taken the initiative in the last year to make sure that all of TRP's AHF program materials are current and to voucher the city for all five years of funding for the AHF staff position. These funds have not been received yet. The situation is the same for NWSCDC. Wilma Ward has adapted voucher forms already in use by the city's Department of Housing for AHF reimbursement, duplicating these on a computer disk to share with TRP. Ward has also worked out a process by which both NWSCDC's and TRP's first round of grants and loans can be audited at the same time with a potential time savings for both programs and for DOH.

### **Challenges Encountered**

- Delays related to negotiations between UIC and the city and getting the administrative infrastructure in place to release funds for the first round of loans and grants.
- Delays resulting from turnover in key staff at TRP, NWSCDC, and DOH, which still has not begun audits for funds disbursed in 1998.
- Delays in creating the paperwork and organizational infrastructure for loan committees to work at NWSCDC.

### **Facilitating Factors**

- The willingness of community partners to be open with UIC about the challenges they have encountered and to work with UICNI personnel to overcome them.
- The persistence of UIC co-coordinator Nacho Gonzalez in monitoring progress and offering assistance and resources to make sure the program continued to move forward.
- The leadership of Pat McDowell at NWSCDC. Doug Shenkelberg cited her management style as one, which respected his input and his limits as an intern, and provided for his educational needs, thereby allowing him to perform at his best for the organization.
- The loan management capacity of TRP already in place as an NHS office.
- The willingness of TRP and NWSCDC to share information and materials on an as needed basis.
- The commitment of all the involved staff at both community organizations to move forward with a second round of loaning and granting once the audits are over.

### **Recommendations**

Given the delays in implementation and the considerable pressure this places on all of the partners, both community partners have suggested the following, that

- UICNI should convene quarterly update meetings, "check-in meetings...bring DOH, NWSCDC, and TRP together on a quarterly basis and say, OK, what is the status? We

know there is a hold up, but what is the status? Agenda items could include paperwork and the status of its reviews, vouchering the city, the audit process, etc. Who is the staff doing this? You can work on check-list items here.” UIC would maintain time lines and steps for the program, as well as current status overviews, so new personnel with any partner could become immediately aware where their organization stands. While each organization is responsible for maintaining its own documentation, the university is in the position of a facilitator and a neutral party, making it the natural choice to maintain documentation of sorts that community organizations may not given constraints on their resources. Nacho Gonzalez and UICNI intern Kim Courtney have already been playing this role, but what are suggested here are more formal, regular, and comprehensive in scope. Given that AHF staff at TRP, NWSCDC, and DOH have other programmatic responsibilities, and that UICNI has the largest organizational investment in the success of AHF, UICNI is the logical partner to take responsibility for keeping the project on schedule.

- Targeting AHF as one intern’s major responsibility has certainly helped facilitate the process of preparing for loan committee meetings at NWSCDC. Nacho Gonzales should consider whether this strategy might help at both NWSCDC and TRP.
- Mr. Schenkelberg’s enthusiastic response to his experience at NWSCDC brings to light an issue raised in the 1996-97 evaluation report. Interns and RAs see their work as a learning experience or as “just another job” according to how they are supervised and integrated into the work or the community organization where they are placed. According to Schenkelberg, Pat Dowell took her role as supervisor and teacher seriously: varying his work responsibilities, including him in meetings, and making sure that he saw his work as part of a larger picture. *It is time that the Steering Committee took this issue seriously*, having been content in the past to trivialize the education of students as simply “getting a taste of the real world.” It has been made clear repeatedly in past evaluation reports that internships and research assistantships are a good deal more than that, and for some interns a good deal less. We recommend that Pat Dowell be asked to give a brief report to the Steering Committee on how she supervises interns and why she does it the way she does. The discussion that follows should be helpful to all the partners.

### **The JCD Commercial Development Project**

According to UICNI personnel, the purpose of the JCD Commercial Development grant is to have the university help community based organizations (CBOs) develop new capacity to create viable commercial projects in their neighborhoods, and to result in those communities having new commercial infrastructure and business opportunities that significantly contribute to their quality of life, and employment base. It is thus not a matter of assisting baby steps in organizational diversification that the communities themselves might notice another ten years out, but helping organizations expand out from their existing resources to make more immediately visible community contributions of types they have not previously attempted.

Since the JCD Commercial Development grant period began in 1996, UICNI's community partners have been Near West Side Community Development Corporation (NWSCDC) on the Near West Side, and Eighteenth Street Development Corporation (ESDC) in the Pilsen community. Progress on the projects pursued by these partnerships over the four and a half years since the grant period began has been slow at times, and have led to contrasting outcomes, at least at the time of this evaluation. On the West Side, NWSCDC and its private development partners will break ground on a shopping center with a Walgreen's Drug Store and a Hollywood Video located at the corner of Madison St. and Western Ave. One NWSCDC representative commented that after the riots in 1968, the only business left in the community was a dry cleaning establishment, and things have stayed that way until now. Over the last decade more than one study confirmed that local residents most desired a drug and general goods store.

As of the fall of 1999 in Pilsen, ESDC had not come up with a project they wanted to pursue that the development committee, made up of ESDC personnel, UIC representatives, and a member from the city Department of Planning and Development, could agree was feasible and met the requirements of the grant. In March 2000, ESDC revived an earlier proposal to renovate Thalia Hall with a new 1.5 million dollar commitment from the Empowerment Zone to fund their efforts. Even after these latest proposals, Pilsen Commercial Development is a number of significant steps behind the parallel process on the Near West Side. The 1.5 million commitment notwithstanding, the JCD commercial development project in Pilsen has effectively failed to move forward for the last four and a half years. What follows is a description of the histories to the present of the respective partnerships and corresponding projects and then a brief analysis of the reasons for the divergent outcomes in the two communities.

#### Update: Near West Side

Although NWSCDC has been more involved in housing, the organization's personnel has realized since its inception that commercial development could follow housing development and that the two depended upon each other to be sustainable. As reported by current NWSCDC executive director Pat Dowell, the Near West Side community's interest in gaining a drug store was first collectively represented in the early 1980's Better Alternative Plan, developed by local residents. Wilma Ward, AHF coordinator and cofounder of NWSCDC, stated that NWSCDC approached UIC in the mid 1990s to gain access to university funds and technical resources to assist NWSCDC in its overall mission of improving the neighborhood in ways that do not leave behind current residents. As documented in the UICNI newsletter (Spring 1998) and the JCD 1998 Semi-Annual Report, once NWSCDC was approved for the JCD grant, it requested commercial development research from the University's Voorhees Center. Voorhees staff and students conducted nine focus groups and a written survey on the near west side to bring stakeholders together for the purpose of focusing NWSCDC's commercial development goals and build community awareness and support for them.

A commercial development committee, composed of members from NWSCDC, UIC, and the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development, drove these early stages of project

development forward. According to the aforementioned documents, the development committee was able to use the Voorhees research to narrow proposal options, to support presentations to the NWSCDC board, to guide the search for private development partners and to strengthen the final proposal. By the end of the summer 1998, the city had approved NWSCDC's proposal to develop a Walgreen's at Western and Madison, making the land for the project available to NWSCDC.

The development committee has not met for some time, consistent with its diminished importance once the project entered the construction stage. The role of moving the project forward has been taken over by the development team of NWSCDC and their private partners Taxman Co. and All Chicago. An early construction obstacle was the discovery of toxic contamination on the site. Pat Dowell reports that the city took financial responsibility for clean up. Currently the developers and the city are waiting for a "no further remediation letter" from the State of Illinois to acknowledge that the clean-up work has been completed satisfactorily, but this will not delay construction. A last issue affecting the project is a median strip that needs to be moved for parking lot access for the planned Hollywood Video store. The City of Chicago has cleared NWSCDC to remove the median, keep what is needed, haul away what is not needed, and to repair the street. NWSCDC has its construction loan, \$2.9 million from LaSalle Bank, and the City has approved the release of the JCD funds to NWSCDC. The groundbreaking ceremony will be held in late August, and construction will begin in early September.

Two tenant leases have been signed: one with Walgreen's, which will occupy a 15,000 square foot space, and the other with Hollywood Video, which will occupy 5,000 square feet. The general contractor will be Walsh Construction. NWSCDC is currently negotiating with Walsh Construction over the inclusion of minority business enterprises and women's business enterprises as subcontractors during construction. Resources NWSCDC has to offer to facilitate this inclusion include their own lists of contractors and access to other organizations' lists of minority and women contractors. NWSCDC is also discussing issues of local hiring with Walgreen's, taking a direct role in matching Walgreen's' job descriptions to local residents. The details of these inclusion arrangements with both Walgreen's and Walsh Construction have not been finalized.

In terms of desired outcomes from the project, NWSCDC personnel cite the community's desire for jobs both in the construction and operations phase of the development, the bringing of essential retail services into the community, and the development of retail anchors for future development on Madison Street. Pat Dowell discussed the possibility of bringing a grocery store to one of the adjacent corners of the same intersection in the future. The Voorhees study and findings of other studies show that many residents do not own cars, making local retail an issue of accessibility and convenience. The Voorhees study also showed that area residents spend approximately \$19 million per year on food. The 1998 semi-annual JCD report goes further to suggest that having local area shopping may "help strengthen their [resident's] sense of community."

Pat Dowell, who has been Executive Director of NWSCDC since the fall of 1999, is the person primarily responsible at NWSCDC for seeing that the project moves forward. Her hands-on management of this project, the close working relationship she has with Kim Cook at the city

Department of Planning and Development (project discussions on a weekly basis), the fact that the organization will have a 25% stake in a standing development, and her expressed interest in bringing a grocery store to the same intersection, point to the fact that she represents the growing capacity at NWSCDC to manage commercial development. The commitment of NWSCDC to creating commercial development has been unwavering, as the process has been moved forward across several changes in NWSCDC personnel. This continuity may be related to the mutually dependent tight fit between developing new housing and developing commercial and community infrastructure to support it. Dowell and Ward talk about retail development as being as much a part of improving the community as building houses. It seems unlikely that turnover in even a ranking staff position would result in a change in the organization's understanding of its overall mission and the place of commercial development in that mission.

#### Update: Pilsen

The JCD grant for commercial development in Pilsen was awarded to Eighteenth Street Development Corporation (ESDC) in the winter of 1996. In providing background for understanding commercial development in Pilsen, Yittayih Zelalem of the Voorhees center explained that while on the west side commercial development means building new structures in an area with ample empty space, Pilsen is a heavily built-up area, so rehabilitating older buildings is necessarily the focus of development efforts. It was with a view to locating and rehabilitating a structure for significant commercial purposes that efforts began in Pilsen. According to the JCD 1998 Semi-annual Report, a working development group was formed composed of ten representatives from ESDC, the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development, UIC, HUD's regional office, and the office of the Alderman of the 25th Ward. Early activities surrounding the grant moved forward on multiple fronts at the same time.

Professor Ting-Wei Zhang of Urban Planning and Brian Wright, an architecture intern, prepared assessments of buildings in terms of structural stability and project suitability. Having initially located four properties they felt were most promising, this list was then narrowed to two properties. Ultimately even these properties were rejected on the grounds of cost or unsuitability for the purposes ESDC had in mind at the time. Also in the early stages UIC's Voorhees Center worked with ESDC to develop feasible end usages for a rehabilitated structure. An early idea that was considered promising was to have an upscale restaurant as the anchor tenant in a building in the Eighteenth Street corridor. Voorhees' work on feasibility culminated in a Community Planning Studio Spring 1997 course in which Urban Planning students conducted mailing-list-surveys and face-to-face surveys on the Eighteenth Street El platform to see what kinds of consumer services residents from all over Chicago, as well as in the neighborhood itself, wanted to find on the Eighteenth Street commercial strip. This research generated data on consumer demand and commercial patterns on 18th St.. One of the findings, having businesses cater to visitors to Pilsen, was not well received by an audience of local businessmen assembled by ESDC to hear the development proposals. Many in attendance in particular saw the idea of an upscale restaurant or coffee house as a plan for gentrification that would ultimately hurt the local community. At a May 1st, 1997 UICNI Steering Committee meeting, the study results and market analysis were put

forward by Isaacs as the basis of his organization's continued interest in a tapas bar or restaurant (UICNI 1996-97 Evaluation p.102), but by the end of the summer their plans had shifted again.

The new plans centered on a building in the Empowerment Zone that would have been suitable for a bookstore and food processing company that had expressed interest in being end users of the property. ESDC also sought development partnerships with Heartland Alliance and Hispanic Housing. None of these ideas bore fruit, and by early 1998, correspondence indicates that staffs at UICNI and Voorhees were becoming increasingly concerned about the inability of ESDC to move the project forward. UIC staff indicates that ESDC admitted at this time that their board of directors had been reluctant to move forward for fear of financial liability after a failed attempt at development in the 1980s had hurt the organization.

In the spring of 1998, ESDC and Resurrection Project (TRP) agreed to form a partnership to rehabilitate the Zemsky building on Eighteenth Street next to the blue line El stop. Both the city and UIC recognized the merits of the proposed partnership and expressed their commitment to facilitate its implementation. This project, which aimed to bring a health clinic to Pilsen, allowed ESDC to limit its financial exposure by being a limited liability partner. This partnership, and the planning stages of the corresponding Zemsky project, lasted for little under one year. In January of 1999, ESDC withdrew from the partnership, not citing uncertainty about end users, but breach of the "proposed Zemsky project partnership agreement" on the part of TRP (letter from ESDC to Voorhees, January 25, 1999). The nature of ESDC's complaint, both in writing at the time and articulated by ESDC's current executive director, Joe Galvan, is that TRP moved forward on development unilaterally, forgetting that part of the purpose of the JCD grant was to develop ESDC's capacity to develop commercial properties (TRP has a different take on the failure of the partnership). During this time, the UIC medical center decided not to put a medical facility in the location because of reasons not related to the problems with the partnership.

In place of the Zemsky project, ESDC proposed the rehabilitation of Thalia Hall, a historic building in Pilsen. UICNI, Voorhees, and City personnel thought the best chance of success for the project lay in ESDC returning to the TRP partnership and the Zemsky project, given that the JCD grant was less than two years way from expiration. Although the Zemsky partnership had lost the commitment of UIC's hospital, the program was far advanced in its planning development and assembling of funders. In a recent interview Edel Perez of the City Department of Planning and Development expressed the city's enthusiasm for the Zemsky project in terms of its being transit-based development supported by and supporting use of the blue line. ESDC agreed to revisit the partnership and enter a negotiation phase with TRP.

During the summer of 1999, James Isaacs, who had been executive director of ESDC for most of the JCD based partnership with UIC, left the organization. Maria Muñoz took over as acting executive director at ESDC. She had been involved in ESDC's development efforts before becoming acting director. By August, four of ESDC's Development Committee members who were instrumental in the agreement to revisit the partnership with TRP had left, and ultimately Muñoz left as well. Joe Galvin, the remaining Development Committee member, resigned from the board to take the position of executive director.

TRP sent two memos to ESDC, one in March, one in June, asking how the development tasks should be divided up in a new partnership agreement with TRP. These memos elicited no response. In July 1999, TRP established a partnership with Cook County Hospital as the health care provider for the clinic space in the Zemsky building and was eager to move forward with the project. By late summer 1999, UIC personnel impressed upon ESDC the urgent need to come up with a viable project with a complete development plan if they were not going to join TRP on the Zemsky project. In September under the leadership of new executive director Joe Galvin and a new board, ESDC revived the Thalia Hall proposal. UIC partners asked ESDC staff if they were prepared to undertake the development of this project in the time period left for the JCD Grant. Recognizing the potential risks, magnitude, and infeasibility of the Thalia Hall project in view of the fact that more than 6 million dollars were needed, ESDC staff proposed two other more moderate development plans in the fall of 1999. According to UIC personnel, this flurry of activity in the fall was in the context of a verbal understanding that if a viable project were not put forward by December 1999, then the bulk of the funds would revert to UICNI to award for unspecified viable development projects in Pilsen. Between \$40,000-\$60,000 would go to ESDC to help it develop organizational capacity to undertake modest development projects in the near future. The two proposals that ESDC put forward in the Fall, the renovation of a small Laundromat/apartment building and the expansion of a day care center, were judged by the development committee to be either too small to have the impact envisioned within the JCD framework, or as simply too preliminary to be considered more than an idea for a project, rather than a viable, developed project ready to move forward.

After December there was no activity on the part of ESDC to follow through on the verbal agreement and relinquish the bulk of the funds, accepting a smaller portion of the grant. Instead, in the early spring, ESDC disclosed that there was approval for 1.5 million dollars from the Empowerment Zone to be used to rehabilitate Thalia Hall. ESDC executive director Joe Galvin described the proposal that gained these funds as a step his organization had initiated last September in response to UIC's observations of the shortcomings of the Thalia proposal. It took the Empowerment Zone committees five months to process the application and commit the funds. In fact, it was UNO that submitted the proposal to and received the grant from the Empowerment Zone, with ESDC listed as a collaborator on the project.

The Thalia Hall project is a partnership between ESDC and UNO (after the grant was approved). According to Galvin, the owner is willing to sell the Thalia Hall building, and ESDC has agreements in place to have architects from the city's Landmarks Commission do design work on the building. Thalia Hall is a mixed-use structure with residential units on the top floors, a performing arts center in the middle, and space for mixed usages including retail shops on the ground floor. According to Galvin, ESDC's plan is to develop it as a point of entry heritage center museum for the Pilsen community. In doing so, he sees the organization following the lead of Mayor Daley, whom he said wants Chicago to be the "Mexican Mecca" of the United States. Galvin described ESDC as ready to move forward as soon as UIC releases the \$235,000 from the JCD grant.

For their part, UIC personnel see this project as still under funded and underdeveloped, lacking at least half of the funding that will be eventually needed, among other things. To paraphrase one UIC representative, there is a good chance they will get half done with the project and then run out of money. The official position of UIC is not that there are problems specifically with this project, but that the deadline of December, 1999 has passed for having a completed workable plan in place and operating, something that is lacking even now although there is only a few months left for the grant to run out. In spite of the potential risk that these grant may be lost, ESDC was not inclined to forgo the use of these funds and now wants to pursue the Thalia Hall Project especially following UNO's \$1.5 million EZ grant. Galvin, on the issue of why the funds should get released, did not cite tangible steps in the development process completed by ESDC, but the fact that the grant is federal money, and the project is supported by numerous politicians-- Senator Dick Durban, Cook County Commissioner Mario Morano, Alderman Danny Solis, and two state representatives including Anthony Muñoz, and several unspecified community organizations. For Galvin, the University releasing the JCD funds would represent UIC's commitment to be a good neighbor, helping the Pilsen community to hold its own against multiple forces impinging on its boundaries, forces that include the university itself.

In light of the position taken by ESDC, UIC, in consultation with the city, agreed to ESDC's proposal to pursue the Thalia Hall Project on the understanding that it will be ready to implement the project prior to the expiration of the grant period at the end of 2000. At a June 8, 2000 meeting between ESDC, UIC and the City of Chicago, the group discussed the current state of planning for the Thalia Hall project and agreed to a series of six steps to be completed by ESDC. They are

- Formation of the limited liability corporation between ESDC and UNO backed by board resolutions
- Site control/option contract of Thalia Hall
- Development of scope of work and architectural drawing
- Development of comprehensive development performance
- Identification of development team members funding sources and commitments

Any commitment of JCD funds depends on whether or not ESDC meets these deadlines. These steps were to be completed by June 22, 2000. As of this writing, in mid-July, there has been no response by Galvin or anyone else from ESDC.

For their part TRP plans to move forward with bringing a health clinic to the Eighteenth Street corridor, whether in the Zemsky building or at another site. They had been working on a health clinic project before the proposed partnership. Although the end of the partnership with UIC and ESDC makes the funding picture less clear, TRP expressed confidence that the project will be completed. With the end of the partnership between ESDC and TRP, developing Zemsky is no longer a UICNI project. (In fact UICNI personnel point out that TRP has not been promised any

money, even if ESDC were to agree to relinquish the bulk of the JCD funds for use in a viable development project in Pilsen.)

### **Organizational Comments**

Some evaluation participants cited organizational turnover as one of the causes of commercial development in Pilsen not progressing further than it has. This is at least in part true, especially during the period when Isaacs and Muñoz left and there was significant turn over in membership on the board, all within a short period of time. But the time Muñoz and Isaacs each individually spent working on commercial development at ESDC was actually longer than the typical tenure of executive directors at NWSCDC, where the process has progressed farther. To be precise, it would seem that the bigger problem in Pilsen has been the effect of turnover in a context where there has been no organizational consensus as to whether the ESDC should be involved (or if so, then in what ways?) in commercial development.

In a sense, the process in Pilsen could be described for much of the JCD grant period as money in search of a purpose. The Voorhees research done for ESDC certainly established, and partially quantified, potential consumer demand for products and services, but it came over a year into the grant period. By not identifying commercial development options in cooperation with a wider audience of individuals ESDC identifies as members of the community, Voorhees' contribution not only failed to build consensus from the constituency up as it helped to do on the West Side, but it also painted a much less compelling picture of community demand for the benefits of proposed development. [Community demand is used here to mean not only consumer demand that would make a project commercially viable but also in the larger sense in which a project is something the local community wants and feels it will benefit from.] These more broadly conceived benefits were clear on the West Side after the work of Voorhees and other community based research showed how far residents currently have to travel for full service drug stores and how much they wanted these amenities. Without a concrete project with clear community benefits as well as evidence of commercial viability, it was likely more difficult for ESDC to get the other dominoes of development partners and end users to fall in a timely manner.

The counter argument to this position might be that in a rehab context like Pilsen, one necessarily has to find a building and then work from its capacity to what the final form of development will be. We would argue that knowing exactly what was being looked for might have made it easier to eliminate unsuitable buildings more quickly and to recognize suitable ones that might have otherwise been overlooked. Also, if ESDC had been looking at buildings all along with a stronger sense of commitment from potential financing partners, then some buildings that were rejected as too expensive might have been judged possibilities in the context of knowing where more money was going to come from. We would argue that LISC, Heartland Alliance, and other nonprofit financing sources, with explicit agendas of community improvement, will likely make stronger statements of initial interest in forming partnerships with organizations that have a clear, supported vision of what their project will do for the community, than they will make to organizations whose projects and their benefits are fuzzy. Even though a nonprofit financier may not commit to come into a partnership until a building is found, they can give more or less reassuring

statements of how much interest they will have once a building is found. This changes the perception of the possible on the part of the organization seeking the property.

## **Challenges**

- The discovery of toxic pollution on the site by the Phase I environmental assessment of the Walgreen-Hollywood Video site
- A poorly placed median strip blocking access from the street to the Hollywood Video facility
- An ongoing challenge in the future of commercial development on the West Side is fostering local entrepreneurial activity. UICNI had hoped to facilitate this process through the Learn and Serve America program, funding for which have been denied.

## **Facilitating Factors**

- Research on the needs and desires of local residents in the project area, mainly on the Near West Side, but also with face-to-face interviews with local Pilsen residents at the L-stop
- The early work of the Development Board at NWSCDC and the steady progress toward completing the steps necessary for acquiring the land from the city, identifying development partners, attracting Walgreen and Hollywood Video as tenants, and securing financing, facilitated by a succession of executive directors and a NWSCDC board whose commitment to the project never wavered
- Starting from a concrete plan, which itself was derived from community based research, created a “domino effect” momentum for the process, which helped carry it through organizational changes.
- The steadfast commitment of the city, particularly the Department of Planning and Development and, most recently, Kim Cook

## **Recommendations**

- While UICNI can be proud of its contribution to the success of the Madison Street commercial development project and should disseminate information about the project, the UIC director, coordinator, and staff should be careful to clear any drafts of disseminated material with Pat Dowell and Wilma Ward prior to publication. NWSCDC has been very sensitive in the past about how much and what kind of credit UIC claims for itself in its

publications, and, as Marty Adams insisted with reference to other projects, it is the *partnership* and what partners have accomplished that brings about project outcomes.

- With a trilateral agreement specifying the steps necessary to meet HUD's requirements for release of JCD funds to ESDC, both ESDC and UIC need to strictly adhere to the particulars of the agreement and accept the consequences of meeting or not meeting those requirements.

### **City Lab Design Studio – Fall 1999**

#### **Program Mission, Project Description and Activities**

City Lab is a project of the UIC City Design Center (CDC). The School of Architecture and the Urban Planning Program jointly offer a studio course, UPP552: Advanced Architecture Design, including as participants UIC architecture and urban planning students, UIC architecture and urban planning faculty, and a community partner. These parties work together on planning and development issues in a specific community, primarily in the format of a class. In addition, this year, as part of a two-year grant from the Graham Foundation, urban design faculty from Washington University, St. Louis, joined the partnership.

The program this year was directed by the City Lab Coordinator, Tom Forman, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Architecture and Associate Director of the City Design Center. Professor Forman is the liaison between the University and the community partner. Bruno Ast, Associate Professor of Architecture, and Charles Hock, Professor of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, served as instructors. City Lab students are third-year graduate students in the Master of Architecture and second year students in the Master of Urban Planning Programs. Seventeen students participated this year. About half the students were planning students and about half were architecture students.

The course syllabus describes the City Lab Design Studio:

The course is designed to give students hands-on experience with physical planning and development issues in urban areas, and through the studio work, provide technical assistance to urban communities.

Past City Lab projects include work with community partners in North Lawndale, Chinatown and Pilsen. This year leading faculty chose to work with a community partner in the Morgan Park area, the Beverly Area Planning Association (BAPA). BAPA is a consortium of community groups from the Beverly/Morgan Park area of Chicago.

Potential projects for UPP 552 are assembled through an application process that begins with a Request for proposal circulated to community organizations in Chicago during the semester

preceding the course, which is typically offered in the fall. The Morgan Park proposal was chosen from among twelve completed applications (of the thirty-one application packets sent out in Spring, 1999). Once it had been selected, a memorandum of understanding was drawn up between UIC and BAPA delineating the time line for the work and the area(s) to be researched– in this case the community area was bounded by 103<sup>rd</sup> on the north, to 119<sup>th</sup> St. on the south, I-57 (Dan Ryan west leg) on the east, and the METRA tracks (Hale St.) on the west. Work focused on a corridor: Vincennes Ave. from 103<sup>rd</sup> to 119<sup>th</sup>, a block – focused on Church Street from 115<sup>th</sup> to 111<sup>th</sup>, and scattered sites located west of Vincennes Ave. between Monterey and 119<sup>th</sup> Streets.

According to the course syllabus,

Preliminary meetings with representatives of BAPA raised three important development issues: current and expected patterns of land use in and around the project area; commercial corridor decline and decay along Vincennes Boulevard; dilapidation, vacancy, deferred maintenance of select residential blocks.

The class, designed by Tom Forman, Bruno Ast, and Charles Hock, met three times a week with architecture students attending all three and urban planning students two per week. The students were divided into three groups consisting of architecture and urban planning students, each with its own component of the project to complete. Each group and each student gave mid-term and final presentations on the work to an audience consisting of faculty from UIC, urban architecture faculty from Washington University, and BAPA representatives. Following the final student presentations, parts of the completed design were displayed at a community meeting at the Beverley Arts Center with Forman and Ast present to answer questions from community residents. The details of the students' work can be viewed on the CityLab website at

[Http://www.uic.edu/aa/cdc](http://www.uic.edu/aa/cdc)

### **Goals, Implementations, and Outcomes**

The overall goal of UPP 552 is to produce a development plan in the form of a physical design that addresses the expressed desires of a specific community group. The objectives leading to accomplishing that goal are hierarchically layered:

- Fostering collaborative working relationships between architecture and urban planning students
- Fostering interdisciplinary thinking by faculty and students in concert
- Developing and maintaining collaborative relationships between UIC, community organizations in Chicago, and the residents served by the community organizations
- Using disciplinary skills and collaborative relationships to address development issues in communities.

At each of these levels there is a different audience–students' own colleagues in their disciplines, students in the other discipline, their professors and the larger disciplinary audience, the

community “client”, community residents the client serves, and the local power structures that are affected by the potential adoption of design products. Relationships at each level present their own complexities.

CityLab has always faced the difficulty of getting architecture and urban planning students to work together, and this course was no exception. Urban planners are trained to fit their proposed interventions to a community’s desires based on careful research that elucidates the community’s circumstances. Architecture students are trained to “push the envelope,” i.e., to use their training and imaginations to independently create innovative, physically and aesthetically striking solutions to “problems.” Collaborative work requires overcoming these somewhat opposed perspectives. The class was held in an architecture laboratory where students came and went as needed with no formalized opening or closing of each class session. This made some of the urban planning students uncomfortable. Only one of the three student groups worked cohesively. Students from the other two groups complained about the lack of structure and blamed the faculty for not providing it. Faculty were all aware of this but were loathe to structure relationships for the students that students ought to be structuring for themselves—and all faculty agreed that this course was about relationships. Tensions in the two student groups resulted in each student working on his or her own to the extent possible. The third group, united by common interests (and, according to both students and faculty, compatible personalities), had no such difficulties.

The relationship between UIC and BAPA was even more complex than those between students and faculty. The BAPA person, Laura McMorran, who wrote the proposal for Morgan Park had been a CUPPA student and was familiar with both the community and UIC. McMorran thought that the design project could show residents of the area possibilities for development that they would not otherwise envision. She left BAPA to take another job shortly after the course began. At the same time, BAPA got a new executive director, Willie Winters, who had no prior knowledge that the project was being undertaken. This left Winters in the position of having to collaborate on a project he had inherited while he was trying to establish himself in a new (for him) organization. It left Tom Forman in a position of bringing new BAPA staff up to speed on a project they had not chosen and maintaining contact with them throughout the process. Forman and Winters managed a productive collaboration in these difficult circumstances, satisfying the agreed upon time lines for the project’s completion. As Winters put it, “I wish I had a year in my position before this project came along.”

## **Outcomes**

One of the major goals specified in the original proposal was to “expose residents to formal planning theory and its application” and to “generate development interest and serve as a template for new development.” The project appears to have accomplished this goal, at least for BAPA. As Winters said, “The energy of new ideas towards a long time problem could result in some positive changes.” He also stated that some of the design elements were potentially useful, while others were not. This echoes Ismael Guerrero’s statement about last year’s design project for the 18<sup>th</sup> St. commercial district in May 1999 (see the 1998-99 evaluation report). On the feasibility of

implementing the design project, Winters was less enthusiastic, stating that it would have been better to work on a more realistic project. The area chosen is on the margins of three different wards, and developing the area is not a priority in any of them. As McMorran stated, “Politically, it [the area] wasn’t important, and the city won’t do anything unless the alderman wants something done.”

### **Organizational Comments**

One must realize that CityLab is by far the most complex of all of the UICNI programs. Its structure is one of multiple levels of organization of relationships, each with its own audience, and each with its own sets of constraints. Because constraints can vary independently at each level, variability of potential outcomes at every level is enormous. Managing this sort of complexity is beset with traps even when things run perfectly, which they rarely do. There is little precedent for CityLab, so learning how to make it work has been necessarily a trial-and-error process. Projects like the Morgan Park project illustrate the levels of complexity, making it a rich learning experience in that it has encountered most of the challenges of both interdisciplinary and university-community collaboration, complete with staff turnover and Chicago political ecology. Students in particular had a lot to learn from this project, but the larger UICNI audience also has much to gain from understanding what goes into collaborative processes.

### **Challenges**

- The most important challenges for CityLab continue to be finding reliable ways of getting students to work in interdisciplinary teams. Faculty has yet to work out a set of processes whereby they can take leadership roles when necessary and move to the background when they can.
- There is no way of predicting from a written proposal that the lead person submitting it will be around to help guide the collaboration with the community once the project begins. Organizational turnover is a fact of life familiar to most partners in UICNI projects, and students need to be apprized of it when it intrudes into an ongoing project.
- The community organization for which work is done controls the parameters of presentation of students’ work to members of the community for whom the work is done. In the Morgan Park case, contact between the CityLab representatives and local residents viewing the materials presented at the Beverley Arts Center was minimized, resulting in a good deal of misunderstanding by residents about what the project was trying to accomplish.

### **Facilitating Factors**

- The hard work and commitment of Tom Forman, Willie Winters, and the students,

- The commitment of CityLab faculty to interdisciplinary collaboration and to the relationship building it requires,
- I. The willingness of CityLab personnel to commit themselves to the trial-and-error process of institutionalizing a replicable program.

### **Recommendations**

- Several students in the course recommended an orientation period for introducing concepts and techniques of interdisciplinary collaboration, team building, and university-community partnerships in order to make clear what the faculty's expectations of students are and how students can meet them. We agree. There are a number of exercises in team building and a number of people readily available that could be of help.
- Students should be apprised of the difficulties that past students have encountered and how these can be avoided, minimized, and/or managed.
- Students should be apprised of organizational exigencies affecting their work and how it is perceived as these arise, e.g., staff turnover, as an essential part of the learning experience.
- Willie Williams recommends that the architectural critics from the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Sun Times do a story on this project, stating that "Lee Bay and Blair Kamin should be excited by this type of collaboration."

### **The Achieving High Standards (the Juárez) Project**

Over the last four years, the Great Careers Program has evolved from a school-to-work program for high school students at Benito Juárez High School (Juárez) and Crane High School (Crane), to a program focused on producing successful, post-secondary outcomes for students at Juárez. Crane decided to cease partnering with Great Careers, because it was overwhelmed with partnerships. DePaul University is its external partner and the College of Education at the University of Illinois-Chicago has recently become its "Chicago Math, Science and Technology Program partner". Now that the Great Careers program is focused solely on Juárez, the program has taken on the official name The Achieving High Standards Project, and the informal name The Juárez Project.

Although the partnership field has narrowed, the scope of The Juárez Project has broadened. Careers and work have become just one aspect of the program. Currently, the program's mission is to create post-secondary success for Juárez graduates. The specific goals are in the research phase, but will be in the areas of 2-year colleges, 4-year colleges, work, military, vocational school, and home life. To achieve success in the aforementioned areas, graduation from Juárez is deemed necessary, and therefore, increasing graduation rates has become a requisite goal. Currently, the dropout rate at Juárez is approximately 55%. In order for students to graduate, however, reading and math scores must be improved, and efforts to improve such are the

prerequisite goal. From Juárez's perspective, the primary goal is to improve reading and math standardized test scores. The main issue to address, as identified by The Juárez Project's research, is the overall lack of engagement by Juárez students in their high school experience. The Juárez Project has been shaping its program elements with this finding, which is consistent with available research on low-income, immigrant community high schools, in mind.

During the previous two academic years, The Juárez Project conducted research in the form of surveys and face-to-face interviews of the freshman class. This provided the UIC team with data for two cohorts of freshmen. The purpose of the research was to identify why the students were not engaged in their high school experience. The background of the research was studies that both Tozer and Yowell had read on lower-income, immigrant school students' attitudes toward secondary education—the difference between their attitudes versus students in middle-class high schools. The former tended not to connect their high school experience with their post-secondary success. In addition to the research, during the previous academic year, The Juárez Project collaborated with Juárez teachers and Juárez's curriculum coordinator to develop Writing Skills Program curriculum. The collaboration with Juárez teachers provided them with an opportunity for professional development. The support and resources that the head Writing Skills Program teacher, Rich Gelb, and the UIC team provided helped the teachers stay motivated and focused. Tozer and Yowell plan to integrate a similar professional development resource into the program in the future. The Writing Skills classes were also used as a vehicle for having freshmen write about their future aspirations, and to start them thinking about post-secondary expectations. The Writing Skills curriculum that was developed is currently being implemented. The research has ceased due to the new UIC policy on human subjects in research. Tozer and Yowell hope to attain UIC Internal Review Board approval to continue their research in the 2000-2001 academic year.

### **Current Programming: 1999-2000 Academic Years**

The 1999-2000 academic year provided two new opportunities for The Juárez Project to partner with Juárez. During the spring semester, they began working with the Advisory class curriculum, and assisting to teach five-twelfth grade English classes. Currently, The Juárez Project's staff consists of two faculty members from UIC's School of Education, Connie Yowell and Steve Tozer, and two research assistants who are candidates for Masters Degrees from the School of Education, Dan Gonzalez and Teresa Sosa. Dan Gonzalez co-teaches the senior English classes with Steve Tozer and Connie Yowell; Dan is always present and sometimes teaches solo, while Steve and Connie participate in the teaching intermittently. The twelfth grade English class has a regular teacher, so Dan and Connie or Steve teach the classes approximately once every other week. The UIC team is also partnering with an eleventh grade Advisory teacher from Juárez, Liz Winfield to develop a pilot Advisory class. Winfield and Teresa Sosa co-teach the weekly eleventh grade Advisory class. The Juárez Project team meets weekly to debrief and to develop plans for their next class at Juárez. While any member of the group may provide feedback and generate ideas for either class, the two program elements are conducted as separate functions.

Advisory is a class period during which teachers are to build personal relationships with the students, through weekly discussions. Each student is assigned an Advisory teacher for the duration

of his or her attendance at Juárez. The curriculum provided by CPS is generic; it provides a topic for discussion, but it does not provide the method for accomplishing the topic's objective. For instance, the lesson plan may suggest talking about "How to raise self-esteem," and that might be the extent of the direction given to the teacher. Winfield's class is being utilized as a pilot. In her class Winfield and Sosa attempt to discuss issues of interest to the students, such as current school affairs and topics the students suggest. The goal of the Advisory class is to engage the students Juárez by providing a forum to raise issues and concerns, seek advice, and bond with teachers and classmates. Some of the topics the students discussed were the departure of Principal Alonzo, attendance and suspensions, school uniforms, lunchroom food, and summer jobs. Winfield was asked to work with The Juárez Project this year, because of favorable feedback from her students as a Writing Skills teacher the previous year. Winfield volunteers her time to participate in the program, because she sincerely wants to be a good teacher to her students; and she did not feel she could maintain her commitment without the ongoing support of The Juárez Project. She considers this support the reason she remained in the teaching profession.

The twelfth grade English classes that Dan Gonzalez co-teaches with Tozer and Yowell, also has a regular Juárez teacher, Bill Brackney. Brackney had an administrative position at Juárez last year, but was called upon to teach this year. In order to allow Brackney to continue to participate in administrative responsibilities, The Juárez Project was asked to teach Brackney's English classes periodically. However, Gonzalez, et al are not teaching English curriculum. They use the class time to provide those senior students with whatever assistance possible to improve their post-graduation prospects, during their final semester of high school. The English classes have become a forum for informal exit interviews. Through this interaction with the seniors, The Juárez Project is receiving feedback about what the students say they needed, would have liked, or did not have during their high school experience. A sample of the types of activities The Juárez Project planned at this program element's inception is attached as Exhibit A. Some of the activities actually executed were a presentation by a member of LARES, the Latino student recruitment and development organization at UIC, to encourage Juárez students to attend UIC and to provide general information about college from a Latino student perspective. Also, an admissions officer from UIC gave the students a presentation about college admission and financial aid, specifically with respect to UIC and in general. Another activity that was implemented was career planning—how to match aspirations with career choices and the necessary steps to achieve those career goals. The worksheets used for this topic are attached as Exhibits B and C.

A third program element during the 1999-2000 academic year was the design of a tracking system, so Juárez would have data on the post-secondary outcome of their graduating seniors. In the twelfth grade English classes, Gonzalez and Tozer asked the students how Juárez could find out what had happened to them following graduation. The twelfth grade English classes proposed a tracking system that involved student participation. They felt each graduating senior could provide the names of two people, along with their phone numbers, whom the seniors believed would know what they were doing a year after their graduation. Then the following year's senior class could call the former graduating class's contact people, and acquire data on their post-graduation status. This calling could be performed as a club activity or as part-time, paid employment. The seniors in the English classes expressed an interest in returning themselves, to call their former classmates. Juárez

does not have a formal alumni organization; nor are there school sanctioned class reunions. The implementation of a post-graduation tracking system will provide a quantifiable measure for Juárez, and facilitate the setting of precise future goals. The senior English classes suggested that the outcomes of graduating seniors to improve upon the outcomes of the preceding class. This tracking system is also planned for other CPS schools.

### **Future Planning: Summer 2000**

During the summer of 2000, The Juárez Project will implement another program element, a summer bridge program from Juárez to UIC, funded by UIC Medical School. Leonard Ramirez, head of LARES, facilitated this Juárez Project-Medical School relationship. Ramirez became aware that UIC Medical School had money to use to fund a science and math bridge program that had Latino student development as its mission, so Ramirez introduced Jorge Girotti, from UIC Medical School, to Tozer and Yowell, and a partnership ensued. The medical school will provide program funding, but The Juárez Project will have full administrative control and responsibility. The fifty 1999-2000 freshmen with the highest grade point averages will be invited to attend, and twenty-five will be selected. Juárez students who have just completed their freshman year experience the highest drop out rate. It is a crucial intervention point, and also a grade category that other summer bridge programs do not recruit. A primary reason for drop out at this juncture seems to be the ability to acquire paid employment. Therefore, The Juárez Project will try to provide a stipend for students participating in the summer bridge program. The specific program aspects are in development. If the summer 2000 program is deemed a success by UIC Medical School it will fund The Juárez Project's science and math summer bridge program in future summers as well. An unwritten goal of The Juárez Project is to develop a pipeline for students from Juárez to UIC.

For the 2000-2001 academic year, The Juárez Project has been selected to be Juárez's external partner. The external partner title is an official status that is sanctioned by the Chicago Public Schools (CPS). This partnership was facilitated by Rich Gelb, last year's Writing Skills Program's head teacher and this year's curriculum coordinator at Juárez. Gelb proposed to the interim principal, Leonard Dominguez, that UIC become Juárez's external partner. Dominguez was pleased with UIC's involvement at Juárez, and readily agreed to the proposition. Juárez's goals are twofold--improve reading and math standardized test scores and increase graduation rates. Rich Gelb is interested in a social dimension, as well. He believes the way to accomplish Juárez's goals is to garner student buy-in to the secondary education experience.

From The Juárez Project's perspective, the program's intent remains the same, but as external partner the language of the mission and goals will be modified, so that they are aligned with Juárez's "Three Priority Goals":

Priority Goal 1: To improve the instructional program for greater student achievement in reading, writing and all content areas across the curriculum so that the 2000-2001 reading score improves 2-5% as measured by the TAP exam.

Priority Goal 2: To improve teaching and learning by personalization of instruction and by aligning curriculum, vertically and horizontally, to cover all state and local outcome standards. Academic content skills will improve 2-5% as measured by TAP, Prairie State, PLAN, and other academic standardized tests.

Priority Goal 3: To upgrade teachers' skills in computer technology through professional development in all curriculum areas, which will be assessed pre-skill rubric and post-skill rubric.

Juárez's goals along with The Juárez Project's goals are outlined in Exhibit D. The specific implementation plans will be developed during the summer prior to the 2000-2001 academic year.

A major change for The Juárez Project, as external partner, will come in the form of \$40,000 funding from Juárez, as well as administrative support and other in-kind contributions to the program. The grant will partly go toward funding consultant services; the external partnership agreement commits The Juárez Project to providing onsite, consulting services 62 days of the academic year. In addition to the \$40,000, funding is also being sought from the Great Cities Learn and Serve grant. The grant application is being written in partnership with Ann Feldman from UIC's English Department. Besides funding, another major change in next year's program will be the involvement of Sharon Ransom, from the school of education. Ransom is a non-tenure track faculty member; rather than teach or do research, she works as a consultant specialist in adult learning and professional development. She will be instrumental in designing professional development activities for Juárez's teachers. A potential, additional program element, for 2000-2001, is the inclusion of English Department graduate student teaching assistants as Writing Partners. The teaching assistantship would include work in a community development project; this is essentially how Dan Gonzalez has come to be a part of The Juárez Project (however his funding source is different).

There are two additional future program pieces. One is a partnership with The Resurrection Project, through their representative Juan Salgado, to reach out to parents to provide support for their children's academic progress. This partnership is in its inception phase, and the details have not been decided. The other tentatively planned future program piece is self-evaluation. An implementation target date has not been set. The Juárez Project, especially as it expands its program elements, team members and partnerships, realizes that it must track its program impact, along with its day-to-day operations; to ensure that goals are being met and identified issues are being addressed. Also the program's successes should be formalized into methodology that could be utilized in schools facing similar issues.

## **Recommendations**

At a Planning Committee meeting in Pilsen during the summer of 1996, several organizations including the Walsh Elementary School, Juarez High School, Institute Progreso del Latino, Latino Youth, Eighteenth St. Development Corporation, and others engaged in an animated discussions about problems and possibilities of Pilsen youth. During the course of that discussion, all of the

participants realized that they were dealing with aspects of the same issue and that they each had important resources to pool to confront it head on. That UICNI did not follow up on that discussion was and still is the single most potentially productive missed opportunity in its history. Rarely does any organization get a second chance, but the work of Yowell, Tozer, Gelb, and others has served to present precisely that second chance. It was clear in Tozer's update on the project at the May meeting of the Steering Committee that TRP wants to be part of the Juarez Project. It is also clear that there are other organizations in Pilsen with interests in resources to contribute to the Juarez project. Two things need to happen to take that second chance.

- Connie Yowell, Steve Tozer, Nacho Gonzales, and Guacolda Reyes need to review the report of that 1996 meeting (and the evaluators will make sure they get the report).
- Nacho Gonzales needs to call together this core group to map a strategy for the incorporation of community organizations into the Juarez project, beginning with TRP, which is the first to express strong interest. Identifying organizations, assessing their potential contributions, formulating recruitment strategies, and finding ways to minimize the potential for the Juarez Project to become a political football all need to be considered. Incorporation will necessarily be gradual, and Juarez Project personnel must set the pace.

## **Senior Managers Fellowship Program**

### **Project Inception**

The Senior Managers Fellowship Program (SMFP) is a program for “executive directors and senior managers of community-based organizations.” Kevin Jackson at the Chicago Rehab Network serves as the community partner and Yittayih Zelalem, Senior Planner at the Natalie P. Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement serves as the UIC partner and facilitator of the JCD grant. The SMFP was initially funded, in 1996, through a JCD grant of \$25,000 as a three-year project that could happen over five years. An additional \$50,000 was to be raised for program support.

The SMFP was originally conceived as three-year project to happen over five years. Program planning began in 1996. Since the first year program implementation, 1996-1998, no program activities have occurred. Recently, a mailing was sent out to announce a new round of SMFP, a letter of invitation. Kevin Jackson has also “approached people selectively.” Kevin Jackson with the Chicago Rehab Network (CRN) implemented the first round of the SMFP and he remains the community partner.

CRN became the community partner for SMFP because of an existing, successful partnership that CRN had with UIC. The project successes from this partnership, particularly the provision interns to conduct research on the city's DOH reports and the pattern of property taxes in Chicago along with seed money provided by the university, was sufficient to demonstrate that an

expansion of the partnership into the fellowship program could work. According to Jackson, We were asking the question how to get the city to change its behavior. We saw value in strength.”

The SMFP mission statement reads:

The Senior Managers Fellowship is a vehicle for bridging efforts of community development groups to effect change by helping to build a strong, defined community voice through powerful organizing and networking within communities and across disciplines and boundaries. The Fellowship will be a catalyst for the design and development of relevant policies and programs that would positively impact such major urban problems as housing, economic development and living wage jobs.

Another SMFP document outlines program objectives and operational methods.

The following program objectives will be met through organizing and attending seminars, local and national site visits, and mentoring experiences over a one-year period:

1. Build relationships and peer support systems among senior managers engaged in community development.
2. Provide opportunities to interface with major policy makers.
3. Provide mentoring opportunities for new community development leaders.
4. Provide opportunities for veteran leaders to reflect and recharge.
5. Provide opportunities for senior managers to further develop their leadership skill.
6. Provide a catalyst for new approaches to creating policies and programs for revitalizing Chicago’s neighborhoods.
7. Generate a broader, more holistic vision of community development in Chicago, and in national and international contexts.
8. Leverage the collective skills of the group to provide technical assistance to developing countries and opportunities for ongoing exchange.

## **Project Procedure**

A third SMFP document list activities and meetings of the first year of the fellowship:

**June 24, 1997** – UIC – Discussed biographical benchmarks and upcoming retreat

**July 10 & 11, 1997** – University of St. Mary’s – Fellowship retreat. Discussed and developed program mission and calendar of events

**August 26, 1997** – The Indian Center – Created vision statement

**September 23, 1997** – Community Workshop for Economic Development – Conducted a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and truths (S.W.A.T.) exercise

**November 18, 1997** – Chicago Coalition for the Homeless – Met with guest speaker, Ed Sherna, to discuss community organizing. Fellows also discussed the CMS convention that was held in October

**December 2, 1997** – Met with renowned architect, Michael Pyatok. Fellows met for breakfast, toured Cabrini Green housing projects and had a luncheon meeting with other professionals in community development. Mr. Pyatok gave a presentation of some of the housing developments he designed and answered questions about new ways of creating affordable housing.

**February 4, 1998** – Chicago Rehab Network – Guest speaker, Todd Dietterle (Senior Program Officer from the Woods Fund of Chicago). Mr. Dietterle spoke on political power structures and how to initiate policy change.

**February 26, 1998** – Chicago Rehab Network – Discussion on the Living Wage Campaign and economic development

**April 25 – 28, 1998** – Trip to San Francisco – Fellows toured San Francisco’s low income housing developments and met with representatives from Bridge Housing Corp., Pyatok and Associates, Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corp., Iroquois Residence, the San Francisco Housing Authority and the San Francisco Department of Human Services.

**June 23, 1998** – Chicago Rehab Network – Discussed plans for recruiting the next group of Fellows and concluding first year.

Fellows meetings were co facilitated, with the chair of each meeting circulating among the fellows (and their organizations).

There were two activities cited by all participants to whom we spoke as important to their thinking: the December 2 meeting with Michael Pyatok and April 1998 trip to San Francisco. The opportunity to “see what other people are doing” and to “hear other ways of approaching” development issues was cited as the core of the importance of these two activities. Also cited was the presentation on how the Republican National Committee works. These responses speak directly to goals 1, 2, 6, and 7 above. As one participant put it,

I met great people, that was good. It was important for me for where I was at the time...I got three solid relationships out of it...I was exposed to the bigger picture. It was important for me to see the other side. We had site visits and tours to developers. It was good to see what models exist and to learn their terminology.

All participants we spoke with also talked about the importance of the network of new relationships created by the program. As one put it, “I can just pick up the phone and call ... when I need to.” Another participant mentioned that he was able to “tap into” other fellows’ networks. Another fellow, comparing the fellowship with everyday work experience said,

There is a tremendous amount of loneliness among executive directors. There isn't a heck of a lot of networking on a professional level...

Another fellow spoke about the mentoring experience in participating in the fellowship, beginning with networking and evolving into a kind of informal mentorship. This speaks to goal 3 above.

### **Outcomes of the Program**

Given the available data (collected over two years by two students from six participants and one of the program planners), the Senior Managers Fellowship Program partly or wholly achieved all but one of the eight goals set by the fellows. Leveraging the collective skills of the group to provide technical assistance to developing countries and opportunities for ongoing exchange requires resources and networks that were simply not available to the fellows in 1997-1998. Contact with policy makers, particularly in local, state, and national governments, also requires considerable time and resources to program, but appears to be feasible in the next fellowship round. Particularly important is an unanticipated outcome of the sort of networking that the fellowship made possible—one fellow tapping into other fellows' networks. In an evaluation of another fellowship program just recently concluded, the evaluators found this sort of "secondary" networking occurring, particularly in connecting one fellow with another's network at the national level of both formal and informal organizations.

### **Current Program Planning**

When asked why the program saw only one year of implementation, Jackson explains that he conceived of it then as a one-year pilot program, that he was new at CRN and soon learned that there he could not do all that he wanted. The SMFP was put on hold, temporarily, while he settled into his job and handled other projects, specifically, the Human Capital Development Initiative (hereafter HCDI). Jackson now sees the SMFP as becoming more fully folded into CRN and the HCDI. He explains,

There are common goals. And (for the last few years) we could not do everything at once. SMFP was a pilot and now we are ready again. We included the SMFP in the HCDI proposal...The fellowship was put on hold intentionally. We were working on things here.

Jackson feels that the SMFP is very much a part of CRN. "I do feel ownership...We see it as a CRN program and it is important to be that way."

Jackson plans to make a few adjustments in the next SMFP implementation. He believes that a strength and a weakness of the first program was that participants spent a great deal of time creating the mission and vision, deciding program, speakers and events and taking care of the details of planning. In fact, Fellows took turns chairing the meeting. Each fellow was asked to take a month, creating "a deep level of commitment by those who stayed and old relationships were deepened and new relationships formed." This work was time consuming, however, and it turned a number of early participants away. As one participant put it,

The time commitment was too much for me. It's not that I didn't want to attend...There was a rotational co-facilitator. Each of us would have to facilitate one meeting then co-facilitate another.

The next round of the SMFP will build on the work of the first year and keep the mission, vision and program objectives. Jackson wants a programming format similar to that used for the visit of the architect, Michael Pyatok. A meeting between the fellows and a person of Pyatok's stature followed by a dialogue between the smaller group and interested people in the local communities. As Jackson puts it,

We would meet for breakfast, like with Michael. Then (when the architect visited.) we went on a tour of Cabrini Green. Then we had a talk on site and had a lunch at the Quality Inn with 85 people from the community and invited guests. People were high from it. There were people from the university, from community development groups, from public housing and residents. All talking. It was a powerful political reality.

Jackson has added a new goal for the SMFP, given the experience of the pilot program: to address a high rate of burnout and turnover in senior management of community development organizations.

We needed a tool that reinforced retention. At that time we had six senior managers moving out of their positions.

The UIC partner mentioned other reasons.

...To provide for a forum for leaders to talk policy. The leaders of these organizations are too caught up in the day-to-day details of running the organization...they do not have time to reflect on the bigger issues...The SMFP would also provide a venue for newcomers and old timers to interact. The hope was that a sort of mentoring program would come about. Also, the SMFP would be an opportunity for leaders to network...Finally; the participants would visit each other's site and even take national and someday international trips to visit other sites. The ideas behind the trips and site visits was to make the program higher profile so it would attract and maintain relationships with higher profile leaders and encourage them to take the program seriously. This would serve (he hoped) in the long run to be an intangible compensation to attract potential leaders who might be lost to other fields and higher paying jobs.

## **Challenges**

There were two major challenges for this program: funding and management. Jackson had a good deal of difficulty raising the matching \$50,000 for the program. Local foundations contacted were not familiar with the kind of resources that a fellowship program entailed and were not sympathetic to funding it. Managing this kind of program requires enormous amounts of time, and with CRN's small staff, it placed a heavy extra burden on its resources, particularly on one secretary who took on most of the work. As on participant put it,

They weren't organized enough. A part-time staff person was supposed to be written into the grant. It lacked an on-going staff person to keep it organized.

Moving the meetings around helped to distribute the burden, but all of the fellows' organizations felt the strain, and at least one fellow left the program in the face of the added work. Without sufficient funding to hire the extra help needed to take care of the fellowship infrastructure, the program again faces heavy burdens on the fellows' organizations and particularly on CRN.

### **Facilitating Factors**

- The most important facilitating factors have been the willingness of Jackson and Yittayih Zelalem to devote the time, effort, and resources to making the program work.
- UIC has considerable resources that can be brought to bear on the fellowship—funding, its own networks in the development arenas, and a steady stream of speakers and consultants of national reputation that might be lent to the program as speakers or facilitators, Jackson said as much recently,

I need a university road map. I want to know every academic event during the year...who is coming to talk in what departments... every academic conference. There could be possible links to the fellowship...They could help us by letting us know what's already happening. That's a start.

### **Organizational Comments**

Two issues have emerged in our interviews with the participant in SMFP that are related in an important way: ownership of the program and what might be termed the “credentialing” aspect of the program.

#### Ownership

That Kevin Jackson and CRN have taken ownership of this program is an indication that it has achieved one of those overarching goals of partnership that HUD, Great Cities, and UICNI espouse. From HUD's and UIC's point of view, CRN ownership of SMFP is an unqualified success in this regard. From the point of view of participants in the program, however, there is some qualification. One participant mentioned that CRN was not an experienced “neutral” party. The participant stated that “they” (implying more than one) and felt unable to be open with CRN as the community partner. This person wondered why the Voorhees Center did not serve as the community partner. It is difficult to know how to interpret this statement. Did this person (and others) understand the respective roles of CRN and UIC in the program? Was the partnership presented to participants clearly enough? Is this a partnership at all? Or is this possibly a matter of pre-existing organizational competition being brought into the fellowship? Is the presence of either CRN or UIC or both as partners responsible for SMFP sufficient to discourage eligible executive

directors from participating in the program? This last question is important, since, as one fellow put it, “It’s about who you bring to the table, like X. That was a selling point.”

Whether the matter should be couched as ownership or as clarification of the respective roles of CRN and UIC in SMFP is important. Should organizations that compete with one another be represented in the same program? Are there organizations that can be safely (or better) ignored as potential sources of fellows? Is there a way of allaying the discomfort of some potential fellows by presenting the program as a partnership? However the partners choose to answer these questions, all of them imply the necessity of rethinking and clarifying the roles of CRN and UIC in this program.

At least one fellow was adamant about not only the content of the program, but also about what sorts of credentials it might add to fellows’ resumes.

To be honest, a lot of it is a status thing.... If I have credentials, people have to talk with me...if they see that I have been part of a certain program. So the question is how do you credential a program?...to give it status.

Credentialing is an organizational matter. Anyone can print up and hand out certificates, but they mean nothing without the imprimatur of the organization handing them out. A certificate handed out at the end of the program was not what this fellow meant by credentials. But the question remains as to what sort of credentials participation in the program should convey, e.g., continuing education credits? The imprimatur of X? If so, which X is sufficient?

The organization of the site visit to San Francisco is a model that other fellowship (and workshop) programs could use. Starting with a fellows’ session with Pyatok in Chicago, fellows already had a relationship with Pyatok and a sense of his approach to development before going to San Francisco. The site visit served to amplify issues already discussed in Chicago in a way that fellows could visualize. In our experience, site visits rarely achieve the kind of integration of program issues that this one did.

## **Recommendations**

Fellowship programs like that envisioned and conducted by participants in SMFP are among the most effective, cost-efficient ways of promoting change in the how leaders approach issues of community development. Compared to courses, workshops, conferences, and other ways of disseminating information and skills to develop leadership capacities, fellowship programs have their effects over a longer period of time and, because fellows form successive cohorts, in an expanding set of self-reinforcing networks. Courses, conferences, and workshops tend to be one-shot (sometimes called “drive-by”) programs that convey ideas and skills with no follow-up for participants. Fellowship programs, by contrast, convey new information in a context where fellows can use the information, report on results of its use to others, and get the benefit of the others’ experience. Feedback is built into fellowship programs, both during the program and afterwards through the networks formed in the program. The number of organizations through which change

flows by fellows' activities multiplies geometrically over time in a well-run program. It is clear that SMFP has this sort of potential, and our recommendations are based on this finding.

- The CRN and UIC partners need to frankly assess the state of the partnership, what each wants from it, and what each is willing to give to it.
- There are at least two ongoing fellowship programs of the kind that SMFP is planning: the International Center for Health Leadership Development program (Virginia Martinez, dir.) and a fellowship program in the School of Public Health (Lou Rowitz, dir.). Both may have some useful ideas and tools that SMFP could use, and both Martinez and Rowitz are accessible.

### **Esperanza Familiar**

The Neighborhoods Initiative and the Jane Addams School of Social Work have been partners in this Resurrection Project initiative since its inception. Jane Addams interns worked with the Esperanza Familiar Steering Committee primarily as researchers for the first two years (see the 1996-1997 Evaluation Report). Esperanza Familiar addresses family issues through classes and workshops for parishioners at St. Pius, St. Procopius, and St. Adalbert. In 1998, interns began to work as co-facilitators in the parenting classes and in 1999 in both parenting and parent leadership classes at St. Adalbert and St. Procopius under the direction of Ana Romero. In 1999, another component was added to this program—a workshop for teenagers' issues, facilitated by one of the UIC interns (see the 1998-1999 Evaluation report).

This is the first year that Esperanza Familiar has functioned without a UIC intern, and although this report will be brief, it is important to note the lessons learned from comparison of this year with prior years.

### **Procedure**

The way that Esperanza Familiar approaches issues of empowering families by addressing issues such as domestic violence, decision making, and the like through sharing of experiences and connecting parents' experiences to larger social and economic contexts. This procedure has produced a range of results among participants in these sessions—some dramatic and some less dramatic but equally fundamental. Relationships between spouses have improved in many cases, and relationships between parents and their children have shown improvement, e.g., “I don't yell at my kids anymore. I don't have to.”

Classes in parenting and parent leadership run at St. Procopius and St. Adalbert as twelve week sessions, meeting once a week. Attendance at these classes as dropped somewhat at these locations, but Romero has added a training program for parent facilitators, who will first co-facilitate

parenting classes and later take over their facilitation. This is necessary because of changes that have taken place in 1999-2000.

### Organizational and Programmatic Changes in Esperanza Familiar

Esperanza Familiar now has a new director, Ana Romero, and a new program facilitator-counselor, Marta Cruz. Despite the lack of interns for 1999-2000, Romero has proceeded to implement a Steering Committee plan for expansion of the program to other parishes in The Resurrection Project membership. Expansion began in 1999 with St. Agnes, where the parenting class attracted twice as many participants as expected and had to be split into two classes. With sessions running at three parishes, Marta Cruz is now seeing on an average of sixty-seven people each week in classes and individual counseling sessions. Epiphany is the next church schedule to begin Esperanza sessions. The expansion plan currently calls for two new congregations per year until all fourteen Resurrection Project parishes are up and running. This ambitious program of expansion has introduced new complications into Esperanza Familiar: each parish is different from the others in how congregations and their priests view the sorts of activities and empowerment that EF envisions. This has meant that Romero and Cruz have found themselves in a position of adapting to very different working contexts, requiring a very short learning curve in order to operate the program in a timely fashion. As the program expands, childcare provision becomes an expansion issue.

Another programmatic change being considered is the possibility of EF conducting its own evaluation with its own evaluation staff. Janice Hurting (UIC Women's Health Program), an anthropologist who has worked in Venezuela and in Chicago, has agreed to train people that Romero designates in evaluation methods and to help design the evaluation research. Hurting, who also works with Hal Adams in conducting writing programs, is also discussing the possibility of introducing this program into the EF curriculum (see the Parent Leadership Program in the 1996-1997 UICNI Evaluation Report).

### **Current Outcomes**

Esperanza Familiar has already won a substantial award from the Sarah Lee Foundation, and it continues to serve over a hundred people each year in its classes and individual counseling programs. AS the classes increase in expansion, the number of individuals in counseling is expected to grow.

The expansion of EF and the training of the first cohort of parent facilitators afforded Romero and Cruz a unique perspective with which to evaluate the importance of its partnership with Jane Addams. Clearly, the three basic components of the program—parenting classes, parent leadership classes, and individual counseling—have continued without the presence of a Jane Addams intern. Training of parent facilitators will allow the basic components to continue to expand without a UIC intern. What was missing this year that Romero and Cruz feel as essential is the teen program. Begun last year because of the presence of an intern trained in working with teens and the opportunity afforded by the presence of teens accompanying parents to classes, the value of a teen program and its potential for integrating parents and their children in the same program was

demonstrated. A second element missing with no intern available was the research capability that interns had provided EF from its beginning. This becomes more critical as EF expands to new churches. What does it have to offer to those parents who have already completed parenting and/or leadership classes? This is a question of programmatic follow-up, generating new program and curriculum models that can be adapted to the parishes' needs.

## **Recommendations**

- The Jane Addams-EF partnership should continue with perhaps a narrower targeting of interns who are capable of running teen programs and of doing curriculum research. The payoff for the intern is
  - (a) Mentoring in the Paulo Freire approach to learning and empowerment, which concentrates on developing learners' capabilities to put understand their own experiences as part of a larger context of social and economic systems that constrain their choices of action. This is compatible with the systems theory emphasis in the Jane Addams curriculum. EF staff also offers an intern some useful tools for working with groups, e.g., popular education techniques, in which Romero has become proficient,
  - (b) The opportunity to apply classroom learning to actual situations, e.g., systems concepts and tools such as the genogram (a systems tool that helps people visualize their relational contexts), and
  - (c) The opportunity to do applied research whose results can be observed first hand.
- The evaluators recommended in 1997 that EF personnel should look carefully at the Parent Leadership Program at Walsh Elementary School as a curricular possibility. Now that Romero is discussing this possibility of a writing project for EF, we recommend that Romero and Janice Hurting consult with Juan **Gamiño and some of** the Walsh School mothers who were part of the program. We repeat this recommendation once again.
- UICNI should support the development of EF's in-house evaluation in any way it can.

## **West Side Consortium Training Institute for Family Child Care Home Providers**

This project was begun in 1996 and called the Community Union Day Care project and was a partnership that included UICNI, West Side Consortium, the Chicago Association of Practicing Architects, the Salvation Army, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers union. The partnership planned to buy and rehab a building that would be used as both a day care center and a training center for day care workers. When anticipated grant funds did not materialize, the partners decided to concentrate on the training aspect of the project. When the Salvation Army left the partnership,

Malcolm X, which has a training and certification program for day care workers, replaced them. Although day care has been one of the most consistently expressed needs on the Near West Side, the project, called the Community Union Day Care Project, was never very successful in recruiting, maintaining, and tracking students through the training. In 1999, a graduate student in Social Work, Patrick Robertson, formulated a new proposal for organizing the training program that included ongoing recruitment and supervision of students and equipping the program with a model apartment to show students how space can be used to both facilitate activities for children and to meet city licensing requirements.

Ben Kendrick and Robert Strom from the West Side Consortium and Loomis Mayfield from UIC worked to get the proposal funded and were successful, getting a grant of recurring funds from the City of Chicago in 1999. Bernice Shelton was hired as project director in late 1999. The project also called for its own evaluator and hired Debbie Wong, a graduate student. Shelton recruited twenty women for the program, and they began their training in February 2000. All twenty completed the program in May 2000. Ben Kendrick reports that several of the graduates have decided to continue their schooling, while several more have begun their own child care businesses. Construction of the model apartment has been completed, and Malcolm X college has been able to use this facility for both project and non-project students. Shelton plans to expand the number of students from twenty to thirty, and thus far fifteen students have been recruited for the fall semester.

This brief account is meant as more an update than an evaluation. Ms. Wong's evaluation report is not yet complete, but Kendrick and Strom have promised to share the report with the UICNI Steering Committee when it is complete.

### **Lessons Learned**

Like the Juarez Project (formerly Great Cities - Great Careers), this project has gone through three phases or reorganization and much frustration. Originally envisioned as a day care center with training as one component, the project ran head-on into a policy change at the city level whereby day care centers were discouraged in favor of the entrepreneurial model of in-home child care (which the city has always found easier to manage). Like the Juarez project, providing childcare and jobs in the context of welfare to work was a goal that never changed. Partners learned from their mistakes and adapted implementation strategies to changing conditions. This is in object lesson in the value of long-term commitment.

### **Neighborhood Non-profits Network (NNNet)**

This project continues in a skeletal form. The UIC Computer Center maintains the community partners' email and World Wide Web accounts, while Al Schorsch and his research assistants provide training in software use and equipment on an as needed basis. NNNet has had one unanticipated outcome this year, however. Schorsch explains:

In the past two years, a number of us at the UIC College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs provided information for public interest leaders in Illinois who requested that a public

technology fund, similar to that set up in other states, be set up for Illinois as a consequence of the SBC/Ameritech merger. Illinois activists worked very hard to see that this fund was set up, and the fund, with \$4,500,000, has now been announced. Digital Divide activists, including Don Samuelson, a Chicago area attorney, and Layton Olson, along with Illinois grassroots organizations, including some of our original UIC Neighborhoods and NonProfits Network participants, did the heavy lifting in advocating for such a fund with the ICC.

## **NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE ACTIVITIES**

### **Neighborhood Initiative Coordinators Role**

The organizational structure of the University of Illinois at Chicago Neighborhood Initiative Program has undergone several changes since its inception in 1995. UICNI was established in 1995 with a coordinator, an informal executive body, and a Planning Committee. Marty Adams was coordinator and was responsible for implementation the HUD COPC and then the Joint Community Development Programs, partnering UIC with community organizations in the Near West Side and the Pilsen. UICNI expanded under Adams's vision and hard work (see the evaluation report, 1996-1997). By 1997 the organization of UICNI had changed from a coordinator and a Planning Committee to that of a coordinator working under the Great Cities director with a steering committee consisting of five UIC faculty and five community representatives with one representative from the City of Chicago. With Adams's departure in 1997, the scope and responsibilities of the coordinator position were re-evaluated. In August 1997 Loomis Mayfield and Nacho Gonzalez assumed the role and coordinator and co-coordinator for the UICNI. When Mayfield stepped down earlier this year, Gonzalez assumed the position of interim coordinator.

The job of the coordinator has four essential components: administrative duties, project management, community outreach, and marketing.

#### Administrative

- **BUDGET:** The coordinator is responsible for managing the \$200,000 allocated by the university, as well as overseeing the funds from HUD for the community programs. In preparing the budget for FY2001, Mr. Gonzalez is looking at creative ways to use the funds that will provide leverage for obtaining monies from foundations or federal sources.
- **UICNI STEERING COMMITTEE:** Coordinators maintain the schedule for these meetings, which occur every six weeks. Coordinators plan the agenda, notify committee members, and facilitate the meetings. Mayfield and Gonzales took on the task of reviewing and reformulating the UICNI mission, goals, objectives, and implementation strategies during 1999-2000. This will be reviewed in more detail in the section on the Steering Committee.

- **REPORTS:** The coordinator prepares reports for University senior administration and external agencies such as HUD, Loomis Mayfield has been primarily responsible for these.
- **COMMITTEES:** both Mayfield and Gonzales attend meetings within the University, which include Chancellor's committee, Great Cities, the Voorhees Center and the Neighborhood Initiative Staff. He prepares the agenda and takes minutes at the Steering Committee meeting and facilitated the Strategic planning meetings. The coordinator of UICNI attends meetings of the community partners as well as standing committees such as the Community Advisory Committee to UIC Hospital. Gonzales sits of the Board of Directors of two community groups.
- **PROVISION OF RESEARCH ASSISTANTS:** Works with various units of Great Cities, Community Partners and the Neighborhood Initiative Staff to identify the need for Research Assistants and then hires, assigns and evaluates the students.
- **BROKER:** Mr. Gonzalez serves as an intermediary between community groups requesting assistance or consultation from the University and links them to relevant faculty of the various colleges, e.g., CULPA, Architecture. Mayfield has served on Unity West, West Side Consortium, Full Service Initiative School (at RBIs School), and West Side Training Institute for Family Care Home providers' boards. Mayfield has also served on several university committees on both east and west campuses and on the chancellor's task force on ABLE. He also received the Outstanding Community Commitment Award from Renature Westside Community Network in 1998.
- **GRANT MAKING AND FUND-RAISING:** Both Mayfield and Gonzales have been involved in seeking funding. Two grants have been secured over the last two years, one of which is recurring and is the major funding source for the partnership between West Side Consortium, UIC, and Malcolm X College to fund the day care project. Mayfield was instrumental in obtaining this grant from the City of Chicago. There was also a major effort, led by Mayfield, to answer an RAP for a national service learning program, which was unsuccessful in its first attempt but, according to Gonzales, will be pursued. Funding is assuming a much higher priority as the Joint Community Development grant approaches its final year.
- **EXTERNAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION:** Meet with City of Chicago Departments such as Housing, Planning and Development, Human Services; as well as meetings with the Office of the Mayor. Meet with representatives of HUD both locally and in Washington, D. C. Submits quarterly reports on the status of the JCD grant, meets with representatives during site visits and ad hoc meetings.

## Project Management

The coordinators have been responsible for overseeing the activities of the projects included in the Joint Community Development grant. Each of these partnerships is in different stages of development, leadership and capacity. In some of the projects the goals changed during implementation, in others new leadership provided new direction, at the same time there were project still searching for appropriate sites to develop. These projects are:

- The Affordable Housing Fund,
- The Near West and Pilsen Commercial Development projects,
- Great Cities - Great Careers,
- Westside Consortium Training Institute For Family and Child Care Provider (Formerly The Community Union Day Care Center),
- CityLab (in the City Design Center),
- NEIGHBORHOOD OF NON-PROFIT NETWORKS: A network that connects 50 organizations to UIC computer system. Deep Senile, R.A., has done research with groups on use of the Net. Some use for research, others don't. Troubleshoots.
- JACOB RBIS: FULL SERVICE SCHOOL INITIATIVE: Nacho Gonzalez is on the board of directors, which meets every two months.

## Community Outreach

Community outreach has always been a part of the UICNI coordinators role, although it has assumed different levels of priority over the six years of UICNI. Based on the Steering Committee's strategic planning and new vision of what the Neighborhood Initiative should accomplish, Gonzalez sees community outreach as a high priority for the year 2000, in contrast to the initial priority for both coordinators in 1997, which was the implementation of the HUD Joint Community Development Grant. With most of the work of these projects in process, Gonzalez shares the belief, which was also clearly articulated in the revised mission and goals, that it is time for UICNI to expand by contacting new potential community partners, focusing on issues that they identify, and then identifying faculty to assist with designing projects, securing funding, and conducting the implementation.

## Visibility

- VISIBILITY IN THE COMMUNITY has been augmented particularly by Gonzales's strategy of attending new meetings in the community; e.g., service organizations such as the Rotary Club in Pilsen and fundraisers and banquets in both communities. Coordinators also network with various organizations and coalitions in the community to identify potential partnerships. For example, the Pilsen Alliance, Near Westside CDC meeting, and the Interfaith Organizing Project.

- VISIBILITY ON CAMPUS has been addressed in several ways. Mayfield and Gonzales have made presentations in classes, e.g., Dick Simpson's course on Chicago and in Mike Lieber's anthropology classes. Mayfield has been active in using listserv discussion groups to bring the UICNI agenda to people's attention and to maintain an information flow on activities surrounding poverty, housing, and homelessness issues to the campus community.
- VISIBILITY OUTSIDE CHICAGOLAND: Visibility outside the local community has become a much larger component of the coordinators' work over the last two years. UICNI's receipt of a HUD Best Practices Award in 1999, one of the top 100 of 3000 nominees, was the result not only of its track record, but also of a considerable amount of work by Mayfield. Mayfield was also very active in attending national conferences, e.g., the COPC conference, a conference at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (Mayfield being an invited participant in these last two), making presentations, and publishing materials on UICNI in professional journals, both individually and in collaboration with Ed Lucas (an article for *CityScape*) and others. The UICNI model for university-community partnerships is currently being considered for adoption by a new university in Belfast, Ireland.
- PUBLICITY: UICNI has conducted tours and site visits for a number of organizations and individuals, e.g., participants in the Engaged Universities conferences in 1998 and 2000. Gonzales and two R.A. s have concentrated on developing the UICNI brochure and the UICNI Newsletter. Both have been revised in several stages over the past three years. The formats and layouts of both have changed considerably to be more readable and more engaging. For example, photographs now primarily feature people instead of buildings. The double column format is now parsed with heads and subheads to direct readers' attention to major points. Both publications are more informative while being less academic in tone than their predecessors. The brochure includes updated lists of projects and partners. The Newsletter's mailing list has expanded from 300 to 2000 in the past two years. Finally, the UICNI Website has been revised to include the new mission statement and goals and weekly news flashes highlighting current work, e.g., graduation of the new Day care workers from Malcolm X.

### **Organizational Comments**

Comparing the information on the coordinator's role in this report with that given in, say, the 1996-1997 report shows two things: first, that the components of the coordinator's role are much the same in 2000 as they were in 1997, and second, that the priorities and emphases on coordinators' activities have varied over those years. The major difference is that the workload has expanded along with the staff assigned to do the work. Marty Adams had very little in the way of staff support and assistance compared to his successors. This has not prevented HUD reports from being late, however, and while it is tempting to blame Mayfield for this, it is also the case that financial information that he should have gotten from Great Cities personnel was very late in completion and that priorities for what he should be doing have shifted somewhat unpredictably.

For example, he was given the lead role on the Learn and Serve grant proposal while trying to complete a HUD report. With severe deadline limits, the HUD report had to be delayed until the grant proposal was sent off. Having co-coordinators may carry the advantage of more people to do the work, but it also has the disadvantage of introducing the necessity of negotiation between coordinators who may (and do) have different visions of their work and different styles of conducting relationships. When Adams left UIC, UICNI directors determined that his successor should be a Ph. D. on the assumption that this would lend the coordinator more credibility in recruiting UIC faculty. Experience has demonstrated this assumption to be false. Only one coordinator has ever recruited a UIC faculty member for a project, and that was Marty Adams's recruitment of Rich Kordesh for Esperanza Familiar. Most new faculty recruited into NI work have been recruited by other UIC faculty already involved, e.g., Steve Tozer recruiting Connie Yowell for Great Cities - Great Careers. It is quite clear that the recruiter's credentials are less important than how the proposed partnership dovetails with and enhances the faculty member's professional interests. The data indicate that the degree the coordinator holds is far less important an issue than the vision the coordinator has and the support that UICNI can offer to fulfill that vision. It is the coordinator's vision that UICNI directors and Steering Committee are buying; anything else is add-ons, plug-ins, and commentary.

Nacho Gonzales's vision of the role of the coordinator is much the same as Marty Adams's, and the style by which both operate is very similar, i.e., beginning as organizational outsiders, becoming insiders, and using their connections to the outside and knowledge of how the inside operates to connect the organization to people and organizations on the outside as partners. This style has worked effectively for both men and for UICNI. If a post-graduate degree is no longer a primary consideration—and there is no data to indicate that it should be—then we see no reason to continue using co-coordinators, particularly if the level of staff support over the past two years continues.

Both Gonzales and Mayfield see as their major accomplishments the conduct of the HUD Joint Community Development Grant, the “post –“JCD” retreats with a reformulated vision for UICNI, and fostering the completion of the Union Day Care project, after 3-4 years of negotiations. These are considerable accomplishments, but they are only a few highlights of a busy three years.

## **Recommendations**

- The coordinator and the UICNI directors need to share the same vision of the position and need to do so explicitly,
- The present level of staff support should be maintained, if not increased.
- Gonzales's premise that UICNI coordinator's major focus is looking for good projects and that the place to look is in the communities is not new to UICNI, but it does prioritize the coordinator's work in a somewhat different way than in the past. The Steering Committee and UICNI directors need to be clear on what this focus entails, e.g., what steps lead up to finding a good project and how the coordinator uses his time to take those steps and what has to be done to form a partnership to do the project.
- If publications based on UICNI projects are an important priority, then, as Mayfield has said, whose job is it to encourage this activity? If it is not the coordinator's job, then is it the new director's (Cynthia Barnes Boyd) job? the Great Cities director's job?

### **The UICNI Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee was organized in 1997 as a cross between a board of directors and an advisory committee, and at times, it has acted as one or the other. Committee members include four representatives of the Pilsen and Near West Side community, four faculty, and one representative of the City of Chicago, the coordinators, and the director of Great Cities. Agenda issues that have come before the committee have included the organization (and dissolution) of the UICNI Update, monitoring of JCD projects, proposals for new UICNI projects, e.g., a presentation by Virginia Martinez on dispute mediation, and project presentations by both UICNI projects and other projects that in Pilsen and the Near West Side that impinge on UICNI partnerships. In 1998, the committee decided that project monies and their disbursement were not an agenda item that should concern it, thus setting the committee in more of an advisory than a directorial mode. Meetings continued to be organized by the coordinators on Thursdays every six weeks.

During the 1998-1999 meetings, committee representation continued to be an issue during this time. Should community representatives be representatives of organizations with whom UICNI was partnered, or should the committee cast a wider net? Should UICNI projects be restricted to the present area, or should potential partners be sought in places like Little Village, Lawndale, etc.? Agenda time became increasingly taken up by project presentations to the committee such that in the April 1999, meeting, presentations left no time for consideration of other agenda items. As this pattern of presentations grew, attendance by non-UIC representatives diminished. It was at this juncture that Loomis Mayfield and Nacho Gonzales began rethinking the purpose, structure, and operations of not only the Steering Committee, but of UICNI.

### **Retreat, Reflection, Revision**

With the 1999 fall retreat looming, Mayfield and Gonzales began preparations for a meeting that would assess and rethink UICNI's mission, goals, objectives, and implementation strategies. One

of the preparation strategies was to conduct a series of face-to-face interviews with (present and former) faculty and community partners and others associated with UICNI partnerships, asking each to review his or her own experience to assess what had been done, what was valuable in that experience, and what UICNI ought to be doing. This strategy--key informant interviews--was parallel to the kind of work Pat Wright and her students had done in 1993 to help design the mission of UICNI. Mayfield and Gonzales used their analyses of these interviews to construct an agenda for the UICNI retreat, which convened in November 1999. Prior to the retreat, a smaller group consisting of UICNI, Great Cities, and community personnel met to consider the issues that would be presented at the retreat. Mayfield's and Gonzales's summaries of the interview materials were presented to this group as a jumping off point for discussion, which was wide ranging on how projects were selected, managed, sustained, and funding, where UICNI funding comes from, what UICNI as an entity is and how it is visible, and the like. The discussions and issues were a kind of preview of what the retreat would do.

Rather than restricting attendance at the retreat to Steering Committee members, as had been the case in the past, Mayfield and Gonzales cast a wide net, inviting current Steering Committee members, former and present project partners, representatives from the City of Chicago, and potential partners, including representatives of the UIC police and the business school. The group numbered forty-eight people. The meeting purpose was reformulating the mission, goals, objectives and implementation strategies of UICNI. David Perry began this meeting with a brief list of the issues the group had to consider in rethinking UICNI:

- ? What issues in the neighborhoods can UIC address that are not being addressed
- ? Who is not here that should be here and why?
- ? What did UICNI do well and how can it do more of it?
- ? Is the UICNI mission correctly configured and in a way that makes sense to this body?

With Tom Lenz helping to facilitate the meeting, the group engaged in a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis. The resulting list, including threats such as weak capacity in both community organizations and faculty participation, opportunities such as developing new projects and partnerships, leveraging new programs with the resources already available, strength such as UIC institutional and state support, solid relationships with community partners, and a national reputation, was a catalyst for the discussion that followed. Discussion was wide ranging, with communication at the highest university administrative levels, deciding on a more narrow or a more comprehensive project and geographical area focus, tinkering with the margins of development issues versus projects that create change in neighborhoods, and the relationship between UICNI and Great Cities coming up repeatedly in discussions.

Smaller groups were then formed to consider the mission, goals, and objectives for UICNI. These groups reported back and discussed their findings. In fact, there was little disagreement with the original mission statement for the UICNI (although adding the arts to it was discussed). There was a lengthy discussion on the nature of agreements made between UIC entities and community organizations and the need for clear accountability of parties to each agreement, which should always be in writing. The question of who belongs at the table came up repeatedly, and there was general agreement that university, city, and community personnel need to be augmented by corporate leaders and church leaders at the very least. The increased role of students also came up in several contexts. Mayfield and Gonzales used their notes of this meeting to write a draft of the revised mission statement, goals, objectives, and their implementation strategies.

Gonzales and Mayfield submitted their draft of the mission statement, the goals, the objectives, and the implementation strategies to a much smaller group, to the next Steering Committee meeting, considered to be the second component of the retreat, on December 10, 1999. Most of the community representatives attending the November meeting were absent. Discussion centered on the specific language of the proposed text and on the issues that the language implies, e.g., who is included as community partners served by UICNI, which voices are privileged in the statement of UICNI mission, goals, and objectives, etc. Developing a separate, unique identity for UICNI was rejected as a goal by the Steering Committee members, who saw this as more of a strategy. A subcommittee was formed to work on the language of the final draft. The committee then moved on to an extensive discussion of UICNI structure that included

- The *Steering Committee*: there was consensus on expanding its membership to twenty-two to twenty-five people including both project partners and community leaders
- The “*executive committee*” of UIC personnel who are concerned with day-to-day decisions that keep UICNI running—this includes David Perry, Nacho Gonzales, Wim Wiewel, Lauri Alpern, Pat Wright and others depending on the issue. Cynthia Barnes Boyd joins this informal group with her appointment as Director of UICNI.
- The possibility of re-instituting what were called “*working groups*” put together to plan and monitor planning progress of new projects (e.g., the group that formulated the Hiring and Purchasing project and wrote its own evaluation report that detailed and accounted for the project’s failure)
- The *UICNI Update*: there was growing consensus that this activity needs to be transformed from a project presentation format to a forum for confronting and discussing issues affecting the communities from which UICNI’s partners and projects are drawn, e.g., South Campus Development, TIF districts. There was strong sentiment for moving these meetings into the communities.

Except for a brief update on the outcomes of the two retreats, the next Steering Committee meeting on February 3, 2000 was devoted almost entirely to a discussion of two grant proposals, both with March deadlines—the Learn and Serve proposal for a program in service learning and the

community technology proposal (to the U. S. Department of Commerce). Lauri Alpern and Loomis Mayfield had worked on this proposal and met with UIC faculty prior to the February meeting, and discussion in the Steering Committee centered on what sorts of contributions UIC students could make to community organizations in which they would be placed. There was strong sentiment expressed for a clear demonstration of support for this service-learning proposal from the chancellor's office. The technology in the community proposal, on which Ed Lucas was taking the lead, elicited similar discussion on its possible application to community organization projects, e.g., helping to implement GIS technology in both housing and health projects. Subcommittees were formed to help complete both proposal drafts.

Twenty-eight people attended the May 18, 2000 Steering Committee meeting. Nacho Gonzales, interim coordinator, summarized the current progress of UICNI work, his approach to community outreach, the Learn and Serve proposal, and the results of the two retreats. A discussion followed on Steering Committee meeting times and venues, which will change from lunch meetings every six weeks to breakfast meetings every eight weeks with a final afternoon June meeting. Community-university co-chairs were proposed, and Ed Lucas was selected to co-chair the June meeting. Three project presentations followed: (1) a new project on community oriented primary health care by Sheryl Bloom and Richard Kordesh, (2) an update of the "Juarez Project," (formerly Great Cities-Great Careers) by Steve Tozer, and (3) an update of the (formerly the Community Union Day Care project). Brief discussions followed each presentation. There was interest in the possibility of research in primary health care issues from both Pilsen and Near West side partners. The Juarez Project elicited a good deal of interest in ways that community organizations might be involved in the project, which now has funding from the school. For example, the churches that are members of TRP have their own member databases and tracking procedures that might be of help in tracking graduating seniors, an important component of the Juarez Project. A parallel initiative at Crane High School in math and science also drew interest from Near West Side partners, particularly on the possibility of linking education and health initiatives. Ben Kendrick reported that the day care training initiative had graduated all twenty students that enrolled and that plans for next fall call for an expansion from twenty to thirty students. Kendrick encouraged committee members to refer prospective students to Bernice Shelton, project director. Discussion of the Juarez and Day Care projects emphasized the importance of the kind of long-term commitment envisioned by UICNI, demonstrated by outcomes that no one had anticipated when these programs began in 1996.

The final meeting on June 22, 2000, attended by nineteen members, was a brief wrap-up the year's work gathering. Nacho Gonzales began with an update of his activities, special outreach, new project development, and his relationship with the chancellor (based on his membership on the chancellor's committee on ABLE development projects). Chang Lee reported that the Learn and Serve proposal was not funded but that Lauri Alpern had already begun work on revising the proposal for subsequent submission. Ben Kendrick briefly updated the committee on the completion of the West Side Consortium Training Institute for Family Child Care Home Providers first year of operation. The curriculum, recruitment and graduation, and facilities (the model apartment used to train home care providers) goals had all been met, and fifteen new students have

enrolled for the September program. Kendrick asked committee members to refer prospective students to Bernice Shelton, project director. Kendrick pointed out that the City Department of Human Services wants to expand the program to the Latino community and to ABLE and Rockwell Gardens. Nacho Gonzales and John Chavez-Pederson presented a brief update on the progress of the Pilsen Commercial Development project. Mike Lieber briefly sketched the evaluation reporting procedures and announcements of upcoming conference closed the meeting.

### **The Steering Committee and the Revitalization of the Neighborhoods Initiative**

The Steering Committee became the vehicle to revitalize a Neighborhoods Initiative that was drifting in the spring of 1999. The format was the two part retreat, and its success was wholly due to the painstaking ground work –research and careful planning–of Nacho Gonzales and Loomis Mayfield, aided considerably by Tom Lenz’s skills as a facilitator and David Perry’s penchant for distilling complex issues into clear, concise, compelling speech. The format of the first retreat meeting included a bare minimum of presentation sufficient to focus participants’ attention on fundamental issues of the Neighborhoods Initiative has been and should be. The bulk of this retreat was discussion by the people most affected by UICNI. The SWOT analysis, an often overused tool, was ideal for eliciting and critiquing the issues that define community-university collaboration at UIC after six years of work.

The outcome of careful planning was a set of intense discussions characterized by what Raul Raymundo at TRP calls “creative tension,” typical of university-community collaboration when it is at its best. Tension is inherent in any critique, and the SWOT analysis critical examination, e.g., weak capacity of community organizations and of UIC faculty to engage in collaborative community development projects. Assessment of strengths (e.g., institutional support) and opportunities (e.g., expanding projects in the community) balance critique by creating alternative pathways for using institutional and community assets. It is significant, at least to this observer, that even in the absence of most of the community partners at the second retreat in February, the same creative tension carried over from the first to the second meeting and was palpable throughout, while critique was quite a bit more blunt than at the first retreat.

Because the context of the February meeting was composing the language of the UICNI mission, goals, objectives, and implementations, discussion shifted fluidly between dialog–discussion of specific issues–and a form called metalogue–discussion about how issues should be discussed. What was apparent in these shifts was a clarity, particularly among UIC personnel, about what were community issues, what were partnership issues, and what were university issues, what language was appropriate to each, and which issues were privileged in which in the final document representing the Neighborhoods Initiative. The fluidity of these shifts, free from the kind of self-conscious caricaturing (particularly of the university) that was all too common in the early stages of UICNI development, bespeaks a profound, shared learning of faculty and community partners about what kinds of contexts generate what kinds of issues. This is an initiative maturing in the ways

that Wim Wiewel, Pat Wright, Lauri Alpern, and Marty Adams had hoped and planned for at the outset.

### **Recurring Issues that the Steering Committee Must Confront**

- ❖ There were a number of issues that repeatedly throughout the process of planning and conducting the retreats. They need to be clarified at least and resolved if possible in future meetings of the Steering Committee.
- ❖ Misinformation about UICNI within the university and among faculty
- ❖ Misinformation about UICNI and about the university in the communities
- ❖ What is meant by “capacity” when referring to community organizations and what kinds of decisions result from assessment of capacity?
- ❖ Narrow versus Comprehensive focus: to what do each of these terms actually refer and how do these references actually affect what UICNI does and should do?
- ❖ Neutrality versus Advocacy: Is this an either/or position that UICNI must take or are there contexts in which one or the other is appropriate?
- ❖ The creation of a structure for consistent dialog between community residents and university personnel whereby information flows in both directions
- ❖ A procedure for making the work of the Great Cities Seed Fund and Great Cities scholars available to community partners that could use it
- ❖ Bringing greater diversity to the Steering Committee—corporate people, business people (including bankers and realtors), church leaders and community leaders
- ❖ The issue of equality in partnerships—the difference between equality and equity
- ❖ The most persistently cited issue, The importance of a structured, consistent relationship between UICNI and the chancellor: phrased as “access” to the chancellor, both community and faculty partners agree that there needs to be a channel through which accurate information about community needs, community organizations, and community projects flows to the chancellor and information about current decisions flows to faculty and community partners.
- ❖ The most important issue for the Steering Committee is the most fundamental--is UICNI content with “nibbling at the edges” of community development or are there criteria that define core community issues to which UICNI projects are to be directed?

### **Recommendations**

- Planning of Steering Committee meetings is time consuming and critical in determining participation in the meetings and buy-in to UICNI. It is apparent that discussion invites

participation, specifically discussion that results in some decision or action. The list of issues cited above is of obvious concern to committee members and should constitute agenda items for future meetings.

- Project presentations—either new or prospective projects or updates—should appear on the agenda of every Steering Committee meeting, but unless there is some sort of deadline involved, there should be no more than one per meeting. If Steering Committee meetings become dog-and-pony shows once again, it will be very difficult to bring people back to the table.
- Moving Steering Committee meeting to the neighborhoods may be a mixed blessing and should be considered carefully. Who would bear the costs? Who would make the arrangements? How will parking be provided? What will be necessary to get Pilsen partners to the Near West Side and vice versa? If capacity is an issue, then how does one justify the time and planning commitment necessary for a community organization that hosts the meeting? And if none do, then what is the purpose of UICNI arranging for a meeting in Pilsen or the Near West Side? This should be rethought.
- Legitimacy is an issue that is not much discussed in UICNI, but it is an important one. It has been the willingness of community organizations to partner with UICNI that legitimized this program from the beginning. But our UIC's community partners have their own legitimacy issues with their own constituencies, which Ed Lucas's experiences should have taught us. Access to the chancellor is as much an issue of legitimacy as it is of communication. The chancellor's presence at a Steering Committee meeting—for the entire meeting—would accomplish both objectives. Cynthia Barnes Boyd, Nacho Gonzales, David Perry, and Wim Wiewel are in a position to make that happen, and should make it happen.
- The committee needs to decide its role in hearing project updates presented at meetings. Are these presentations a courtesy? FYI? Or is there something that the Steering Committee ought to be doing in response?
- What is the Steering Committee's role in hearing new project proposals such as Sheryl Bloom and Virginia Martinez's presentations? Is the Steering Committee a gatekeeper? A facilitator? What is the purpose of these presentations? What should the committee's responses to them be?

## **NI Update**

There was no NI Update meeting during this year of rethinking and reorganizing the Neighborhoods Initiative. The Update has been part of the planning process, however, and the Steering Committee appears to have consensus on its use as a forum to discuss issues that are important to development of the neighborhoods. It should be noted that this use of the Update was part of the deliberations of the Steering Committee in 1997. UICNI experience with NI Updates since then—entirely project presentation formats—has shown that Updates have not drawn much interest, particularly from community partners. A recurring theme in Steering Committee discussions and from community partners since 1995 has been the university's role in providing an arena for discussing issues that

can bring together people with common (and even conflicting) interests. If this is what the Steering Committee wants to do, then name change should also be considered.

### **UICNI Course Work**

There were only two courses offered this year bearing on UICNI issues—the CityLab studio described above and *Anthropology 594*, Anthropological Approaches to Program Evaluation. The outcomes of the evaluation course can be seen in the project reports above. This course has developed over the past four years into a full-fledged graduate course, and discussions are underway with Alice Dan, Janice Hurting, and David Beer about at least a cross-listed course for the regular graduate curriculum. We are exploring interest in other parts of the campus for a more extensive curriculum in program evaluation that would link UICNI with other colleges.

### **Challenges**

- Notable in its absence is the Community Planning Studio, UPP 555, this year. Janet Smith could not teach the course because of her involvement in as a Great Cities scholar.
- There has been a net loss in UICNI coursework over the past three years.

### **Recommendations**

- It was recommended in the last evaluation report that the Community Planning Studio, currently part of the JCD program, be institutionalized as a regular part of the CULPA curriculum. That it was not taught this year indicates that there has been no move to consider this recommendation seriously. We repeat this recommendation and urge the Steering Committee to take up the matter with the Interim Dean of CULPA, David Perry.

## **CONCLUSION: THE STATE OF THE SYSTEM**

At this point in its development, the Neighborhoods Initiative is exactly where it needs to be. UICNI is now poised to

- Complete some of its projects,
- To expand some of its projects,
- To generate new projects with faculty partners from both sides of the campus,
- To follow up the retreats of 1999-2000 with Steering Committee discussions that make clear the direction UICNI should take, and

- To work out a strategic plan that specifies the policy decisions of the Steering Committee in concrete action.

After an intensive stock taking at its halfway point, UICNI's mission has been reviewed and reaffirmed. Its goals have been specified along with sets of objectives that map the paths to the goals. While the ground work that made this reflection possible fell to Loomis Mayfield and Nacho Gonzales, the task of review, critique, and reorganization was a collaborative product of more than fifty people from UIC, from Pilsen and west side community organizations, and from the City of Chicago administration. The sheer size and diversity of the group that participated in the retreats and the meetings that followed was less a demonstration of support than it was an indication of the *diversity of interests* that UICNI serves. It is clear from the evidence in the specific reports above that UICNI has served diverse interests through its projects and through a considerable amount of technical assistance, information sharing, matchmaking, and brainstorming that occupy the attention of Nacho Gonzales, Loomis Mayfield, David Perry, Wim Wiewel, Pat Wright, Yittayih Zelalem, Lauri Alpern, Tom Forman, and George Hemmens, to name only a few. Nacho, Cynthia Boyd, and David Perry are now positioned to prepare a strategic plan for the next four years to present to an expanded and revitalized Steering Committee.

### **The Role of Projects in the Neighborhoods Initiative**

From the UICNI coordinator's perspective, the core of the strategic plan is projects in the neighborhoods. These projects are generated by two main sources, as they have been since the beginning—from university faculty and academic professionals and from people and organizations in the neighborhoods. Prior evaluation reports show that the source matters less than the understanding of neighborhood issues and how they might be confronted. The capacity for attracting important projects has increased considerably with the connection between east campus and west campus provided by Cynthia Barnes Boyd's assumption of the UICNI directorship. This is a connection that faculty and community partners have sought since 1995.

Even with increased capacity for scouting good projects, the position that Nacho has taken (with what appears to be the tacit support of the Steering Committee) is risky. UICNI is in a strong position to get new money through answering RFPs, even if it means adapting UICNI's mission to funders' priorities and funders' views of how to bring about change in what they understand to be local communities. Selling projects and the UICNI's perceptions of what communities are about, what they see as their needs, and how they need to change to funders who have their own ideas on these matters is not easy and will surely be frustrating. We learned this with the Parent Leadership program, arguably the most successful project in profoundly changing people's lives in UICNI's six-year history. But we have also learned from Ben Kendrick and Steve Tozer that it can be done and that the funding that makes projects happen can come from unexpected places. Scouting projects instead of chasing money may be risky, but leadership is about taking risks.

There is solid evidence in this report to support Gonzales's position that projects are and should be the core of the Neighborhoods Initiative. With the exception of the Pilsen Commercial Development project, all of the other projects described above are poised to either accelerate or to expand. The Affordable Housing Fund coordinators appear to have solved the problems of organizing for audits and of vouchering the city for staff salaries. This makes the loan-grant process smoother in its functioning. With a one-year extension, these funds should be entirely disbursed. The Senior Managers Fellowship project shows promise as an effective vehicle for retaining executive directors in non-profit community development organizations and for expanding fellows' organizational capacities for collaboration. The Juarez project is set to expand its activities within the school and, possibly out into the Pilsen community. The West Side Consortium day care training project is expanding its student base and stands as a model for other day care training programs in other communities. CityLab has already demonstrated its effectiveness in several communities and, with some tweaking, can achieve its goal of integrating architecture and urban planning students into equally effective teams. Esperanza Familiar is expanding its sites of operation and needs only some very specific kinds of capacities that Jane Addams students can provide. All of these programs have expanded because they serve neighborhood people's expressed needs and interests—rehabbing homes, bringing in a full service drug store, connecting students to career paths through classroom work, helping parents convince themselves that they do not have to be victims of violence or to commit violence on their children. One can argue theories of change endlessly, but the facts of change are what decide arguments. Gonzales is on very firm ground.

### **The Role of the Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee, through a sustained process of critique and brainstorming, has provided itself a very full plate of issues that need discussion, decision, and action. The issues listed in the section on the Steering Committee report above will take at least a year to discuss, probably two, that is, if the members of the Steering Committee are serious about turning them into policy decisions. It is important, therefore, that the list is prioritized and a discussion format is devised to make the transition from discussion to policy decision possible. This assumes that the Steering Committee wants to take on the role of formulating policy for UICNI (the original role of the "Planning Committee" from which the Steering Committee evolved).

While access to the chancellor arose more often than any other issue at the retreat, it is well on the way to being resolved with Gonzales's membership on the Chancellor's ABLE task force, Cynthia Barnes Boyd's appointment as UICNI director, David Perry's appointment as Dean of CULPA, and Wim Wiewel's appointment as Dean of the College of Business. More urgent at this point is the issue that Pat Wright raised at the retreat (and a majority of meeting participants voted on) about UICNI projects "nibbling at the edges" of change in communities. It is urgent because it encompasses every other issue that was raised (and listed above).

Consensus or near-consensus on what core and what are peripheral issues of change in the communities UICNI collaborates with will establish at minimum

1. What UICNI believes communities are about
2. What UICNI believes constitutes effective, directional change in communities
3. What UICNI believes to be the means most appropriate for bringing about change in communities.

Consensus or near-consensus on these principles determines the direction of the Neighborhoods Initiative for the foreseeable future. It determines the criteria for what kinds of projects are sought and for what kinds of projects UICNI personnel and partners commit planning time, effort, and resources. One ultimate outcome of the discussion-to-policy-to-implementation process is the identity of the neighborhoods Initiative. Given that this is the most fundamental issue the Steering Committee will confront, then the sooner the committee begins, the sooner the decisions that follow from it fall into place.

### **Generating Useable Knowledge**

The single most important contribution any university has to make to any community is its capacity for generating and synthesizing useable knowledge. Because UICNI deals with a spectrum of neighborhood issues from housing to education to domestic violence, and because that range of initiatives has been documented since UICNI began, UICNI has the capacity to compare experience across projects to see *patterns* of organizational processes. Some of these processes are intriguing in and of themselves. For example, in every project that focuses on participants' writing—the Parent Leadership program, BPPI's newsletter, *Our Voices*, the classroom writing assignments in the Juarez Project—the result is empowerment of the writers. It does not seem to matter how the projects are organized or what their goals are. The outcomes are similar. Why? This is a matter of curiosity, and one need not know why to be able to use writing as a program tool. There are other issues, however, that require an answer to be useful.

Almost all of the UICNI projects from the beginning have involved organizational turnover at one or more times during the course of the project. Turnover has resulted in crippling some projects (e.g., the Horner Needs Assessment). It has delayed some projects (e.g., the Affordable Housing Fund), and it has had little if any affect on others (e.g., the Madison St. Commercial Development project). What sorts of designs and/or work plans make a project more or less vulnerable to turnover in one or more of the partner organizations? Is it possible to design a project that makes it immune to organizational turnover? If the answer to either or both of these questions is yes, then are these designs generic, or do they depend entirely on the specific circumstances of specific projects and particular partners involved? From the point of view of a researcher, these are important research questions that impinge on a range of social theories. These questions allows for hypothesis testing procedures that make the research scientifically valid. From the perspective of people conducting projects to develop some aspect of neighborhood functioning, these are practical questions. Their

answers are potentially useful across a range of collaborative development initiatives in communities. The procedures that excite the researcher are the means to get these practical answers. This is not a hypothetical case.

Eve Pinsker is about to join the Great Cities Institute as a research associate. One of her jobs will be the final evaluation of the Joint Community Development grant projects. Based on this work and our previous work on UICNI projects, Pinsker plans to apply for funds to focus her research effort on organizational turnover in UICNI. Hopefully the Steering Committee will support her work, and the work will provide answers to these questions.

### **The System**

A system is a set of parts *and the relationships between the parts* inside some boundary processing inputs to turn them into outputs. The parts of the Neighborhoods Initiative have been present and functioning in one form or another since the beginning. This has been the first year in which all of the parts—the coordinators, the projects, the community organizations, the Steering Committee, and city administrative entities—are becoming integrated in common concerns and the tasks that implement them. The state of the system is that it is finally beginning to look like and acts like a system. The recommendations herein have been designed to complete the process of integration.