

Partnership **Update**

 news and information from *The Partnership for New Communities*

University of Chicago's new President to join Partnership



The Partnership welcomes Robert J. Zimmer, the recently elected 13th President of the University of Chicago, to The Partnership's Advisory Committee. Zimmer assumes this position from Don Randel who, after serving in the university's top post since 2000, became President of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in July.

Zimmer, a mathematician specializing in geometry, group theory and analysis, was a faculty member at the University of Chicago for more than two decades. While at the U of C, he also served as mathematics department chair, deputy provost and vice president for research and for Argonne National Laboratory. He left the university in 2002 to become Brown University's provost.

The University of Chicago has been actively involved in The Partnership since 2003 and has been instrumental in creating sustainable changes in a number of transformation communities. The University operates charter schools in five communities, provides police services to the community surrounding its South Side campus, relies on a strong minority procurement system, and operates other programs to assist and engage the community.

Support for Jobs

Polk Bros. Foundation announces support of Partnership Initiative

The Partnership is pleased to announce a planning grant of \$55,000 from the Polk Bros. Foundation in support of its Workforce Development Initiative – a three-year effort to help prepare public-housing residents for work and to improve the workforce system's ability to meet the needs of low-skilled job seekers.

"Like The Partnership, we strive to make Chicago a place where all people have the opportunity to reach their full potential," said Nikki Will Stein, executive director of the Polk Bros. Foundation. "We are proud to support The Partnership's efforts, which will reduce the impact of poverty and provide area residents with better access to quality education and employment opportunities."

"The Polk Bros. Foundation's support of this initiative is crucial to developing a comprehensive workforce strategy that will lower the employment barriers many public-housing residents face, such as low literacy levels and little or no work experience," said Partnership Executive Director Maria Hibbs.

More information on the Polk Bros. Foundation can be found at www.polkbrosfdn.org.

Partnership's role in transformation highlighted for national housing leaders

Civic collaboration offers Chicago "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity"

"As members of The Partnership for New Communities, we want history to record that on our watch we seized the chance to revitalize inner-city Chicago and improve the lives of thousands of our fellow citizens."

So stated Partnership Advisory Committee Co-chair and MacArthur Foundation President Jonathan Fanton (pictured right) at a recent meeting of the Council of Large Public Housing Authorities. The Chicago Housing Authority hosted the meeting.



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Partnership support makes dream of homeownership a reality for CPS employees

The dream of homeownership has become a reality for 20 Chicago Public School employees, including 18 full-time teachers, who used \$7,500 in financial incentives to purchase their first homes in the mixed-income developments being constructed through the Chicago Housing Authority's Plan for Transformation.

With Partnership support, CPS employees who are first-time homebuyers with at least one year of academic service are eligible for interest-free, forgivable loans under the Teacher Homebuyer Assistance Program. These loans assist with closing costs and down-payments for affordable and market-rate homes in transformation communities.

CPS' Teacher Housing Resource Center is partnering with the mixed-income housing developers to offer the program. The Resource Center is also working with the Rogers Park Community Development Corporation to provide housing counseling services for CPS teachers interested in buying a home.

More information is available at www.teacherhousing.cps.k12.il.us

Looking at CPS Employee Homebuyers

Where they buy

- 5 homes in Jazz on the Boulevard
- 4 homes in Westhaven Park
- 4 homes in Oakwood Shores
- 3 homes in Roosevelt Square
- 2 homes in Park Boulevard
- 2 homes in Shakespeare Court (Kenwood)

50% of all purchasers moved closer to their school than the community where they previously lived

50% of employees purchased their homes at the "affordable" rate

Terms of Service to CPS

- 50% have 1-5 years
- 16% have 6-10 years
- 34% have 11+ years

Former Rockwell resident building success in construction



Marcy-Newberry Employment Specialist India Jenkins with former Rockwell resident Michelle Towns, who is newly employed by Burling Builders.

The Partnership-supported Rockwell Leadership Network, a collaboration between Leadership Greater Chicago and the Marcy-Newberry Association, recently reported that one of its participants, Michelle Towns, who attended the Network's Fall 2005 job seekers series, is now employed by Burling Builders, making more than \$30 per hour.

Towns had previous construction training, but no luck finding permanent employment. The job seekers' program helped her refine her resume and hone her interviewing skills through seminars, group practice sessions and a mock interview with LGC Fellow Sallie Gaines. LGC's partnership with the Council for Adult Experiential Learning resulted in several interviews.

Towns says "the Job Seekers program set me on the right path...[T]he Leadership Greater Chicago group made it possible for me to get this job. I tell everyone that these are the people to go see if you need help. They are really serious and they can help you do what you need to make something of yourself."

Story courtesy of Leadership Greater Chicago's (www.lgcchicago.org) Connections (Winter 2006) newsletter.

New Congressional Caucus to “improve cities across America”

Former Mayors to offer unique viewpoints on impact of federal decisions on cities

When Representative Mike Turner (R-OH) returned to Washington after a visit to Chicago to learn more about the Plan for Transformation, he was determined to bring the knowledge and experience of Congress’ former mayors to bear on federal policies. This includes HOPE VI, cuts to which would threaten urban revitalization plans throughout the country.

He and other former mayors in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate will come together to bring an urban perspective to federal policymaking as members of the recently formed Congressional Former Mayors Caucus. Jonathan Fanton, co-chair of The Partnership’s Advisory Committee and board member of Living Cities — a National Community Development Initiative comprised of

15 major financial institutions, foundations, and government agencies committed to the revitalization of America’s great urban centers — helped to announce the Caucus. “The Mayors Caucus creates an extraordinary opportunity to address [the issues impacting our communities] and to improve cities across America,” he said.

Turner explained in Ohio’s *The Western Star* newspaper (June 15, 2006): “Our cities are in a crisis. The members who have joined [the Caucus] know this first-hand and want to be part of a bipartisan opportunity to craft a federal response for attracting jobs and redevelopment to our cities. They want to be part of making our cities better places to work, live and visit.”

Partnership honored for contributions to Plan for Transformation

The Partnership’s dedication of time, fundraising expertise, and vision for community development was recognized recently with a 2006 Chicago Housing Authority Partner Appreciation Award at a June ceremony at Harris Bank.

The Partnership was recognized for its contributions to:

- developing a plan for retail investment near 39th and State Streets;
- stimulating investment interest in two other locations near mixed-income communities;
- creating two Centers for Working Families;
- supporting employer-assisted housing programs;
- assessing grocery and retail needs on the City’s West and South Sides; and
- placing nearly 200 residents in jobs, and laying the groundwork for thousands more through its Workforce Development Initiative.

“The Partnership for New Communities is really the front-runner in the development of retail and job opportunities for residents returning to our mixed-income communities,” said Terry Peterson, CEO of the CHA. “Their vision for fundraising, job creation and placement, and community renewal will be an asset to the Chicago Housing Authority and the city beyond the completion of the Plan for Transformation.”

Two Partnership Advisory Committee member organizations were also honored for their service to transformation communities and contributions to the Plan: The University of Chicago and Peoples Energy.



*Photo courtesy of the CHA
CHA Board President Sharon Gist-Gilliam (right) presents the CHA Partner Appreciation Award to Partnership Executive Director Maria Hibbs at a recognition event hosted by Harris Bank in June.*

Partnership Advisory Committee cited as “catalysts for change” *(from page 1)*

Fanton discussed The Partnership’s formation and its contribution to the Plan for Transformation.

“We want to help the new neighborhoods to succeed by encouraging people of diverse means to live there, generating economic opportunities for lower-income residents, and connecting them to the economic and social mainstream,” he said.

He cited several examples of the roles of The Partnership’s Advisory Committee as catalysts for change in neighborhoods across the city.

- Capri Capital and Bank of America have loaned executives to help neighborhoods craft plans for commercial development to keep economic activity in their communities.
- Peoples Gas, Bank of America, and the University of Chicago’s hospital complex are hiring public-housing residents in entry-level jobs with good wages and health benefits.
- The Illinois Institute of Technology, U of C, Bank of America and MacArthur have started employer-assisted housing programs that help their employees buy homes in the new

communities. Twenty-five other employers are following suit.

At the conference, executive directors from housing authorities across the nation learned more about the Plan from Terry Peterson, CEO of the CHA. They also toured new mixed-income communities and attended panels on how city agencies are working together to improve schools, parks, and economic development in those neighborhoods.

Feedback on the conference was positive, with a number of attendees expressing an interest in developing entities like The Partnership to support revitalization efforts in their own cities.

Michael Kelly, executive director of the District of Columbia Housing Authority, commented: “We are excited by The Partnership as a model of civic collaboration. Such an entity in our community would make it possible for us to leverage our individual contributions by forging partnerships at the highest level in support of transformation, undoubtedly making our efforts more effective.”

To read more of Jonathan Fanton’s remarks to the Council of Large Public Housing Authorities, visit www.thepartnershipfornewcommunities.org/pdf/CouncilLargePublicHousingAuthorities.pdf

500 child-care entrepreneurs access business supports at expo



Expo attendees browse the exhibition hall containing more than 50 booths featuring insurance vendors, bankers, child care associations, state agencies which regulate the industry, and toy and curriculum vendors – just one of the Expo’s many activities.

More than 500 women – budding entrepreneurs and veterans alike – all interested in creating high-quality child care businesses learned how to balance business and self and how to keep their businesses fresh and healthy by attending the 8th Annual Child-Care Business Expo, presented by the Partnership-supported Women’s Business Development Center.

Attendees accessed business guidance and support by attending the day-long event designed for prospective and existing, home- and center-based child-care business owners. The event featured discussion of important issues, including key elements of business planning, how to obtain financing to expand child-care facilities and how technology can help them operate their businesses more effectively.

The Expo is one component of the WBDC’s Partnership-supported Franchise/Retail and Child-Care Business Initiative, which identifies community needs and offers a range of economic, social, and employment opportunities in transformation communities through the creation of new and expanded small businesses, the delivery of goods and services, and access to quality early childhood education and child care.

Mayors urged to use smart policies to eliminate concentrated poverty in American cities

US Conference of Mayors called upon to “unleash the full market potential of cities”

“Special focus must be devoted to the high concentration of poverty in inner city America if progress is to be made toward alleviating poverty, growing a strong and resilient urban middle class and unleashing the full market potential of cities,” according to Brookings Institute Senior Fellow Bruce Katz.

At a recent meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors Task Force on Work, Poverty, and Opportunity, Katz suggested:

- The high concentration of poverty in inner city America—by impeding access to good schools and quality jobs—undermines all efforts to help individuals grow income and build wealth.
- There are a series of policy tools that have a proven track record in expanding residential choice, stimulating neighborhood revitalization, and breaking up concentrations of poverty.
 - The best programs use market forces to drive wealth creation, poverty alleviation, neighborhood revitalization, and inner city business expansion.

He added, and The Partnership agrees, that high-poverty neighborhoods do not contain the businesses and civic institutions that are essential for a healthy community.

“We have found this to be true in many of the neighborhoods undergoing transformation,” says Partnership Executive Director Maria Hibbs. “Attracting the right infusion of business investment to these areas is the next critical step to ensuring that they become vibrant mixed-income communities with a strong economic base that offers jobs that support families and make available the goods and services neighborhood residents expect.”

Katz offered several recommendations for the Task Force, among them:

- Create federal laws prohibiting the building of any subsidized housing in areas of concentrated poverty, unless it is of mixed income.
- Urge Congress to authorize and appropriate funds for a new HOPE VI effort that could be used to demolish and replace dilapidated housing in areas of concentrated poverty.

The Partnership for New Communities

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The Partnership for New Communities is a funders collaborative bringing together business, civic and philanthropic leaders to solicit funds and invest them in strategic economic development, community-building and employment-related initiatives to bring about large-scale improvements to the neighborhoods most affected by public-housing transformation in Chicago.

The Partnership Update is published regularly by The Partnership for New Communities to provide information on a variety of topics, including status reports on the CHA's Plan for Transformation, updates on The Partnership's activities and projects, highlights of relevant research findings and recent news coverage.

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