

PACDC

Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations



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IMPACT**

2013

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Dear Friends,

We are pleased to share with you our 2013 edition of PACDC Magazine that highlights individual achievement and the collective strength of our local CDC industry which is impacting families and communities across the city every day.

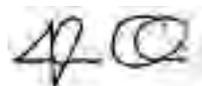
We are continually humbled and honored by the work of our members and hope you will enjoy learning about their accomplishments as much as we relish sharing them. As for our work, which is informed by our members' input, we are pleased to share with you the policy advancements and member services efforts that aim to see CDC work flourish. This past year has been especially gratifying for many reasons:

- "COLLECTIVE STRENGTH," publication of the study which quantified the \$3.3 billion local economic impact of the CDC Industry on Philadelphia ;
- Strong collaboration among many toward achieving a Philadelphia Land Bank; and expansion of Philadelphia's CDC Tax Credit Program;
- Delivery of more highly-rated trainings and workshops than any other year; along with a record-breaking 20th Anniversary Gala;
- Announcement of Wells Fargo as PACDC's CDC Tax Credit Program Partner; and
- Confidence in PACDC demonstrated by the Oak Foundation's \$1 million Operating Support grant over five years.

We thank you for your support that is enabling PACDC to have a **Strong Voice in Policy**, build **Strong CDCs**, for a **Strong City**.



Rick Sauer, Executive Director



John Chin, Board President



Supporting CDCs. Strengthening Neighborhoods.

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PACDC Magazine is published by the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations to report on information, individuals and events of significance to community development professionals. PACDC Magazine is distributed free of charge to members and friends of PACDC. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of published information.

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Supporting CDCs. Strengthening Neighborhoods.

About PACDC

A Strong Voice in Policy

PACDC's advocacy is a unifying and compelling voice in government, business and funder forums where decisions affecting neighborhoods are made.

Strong CDCs

PACDC strengthens CDCs through professional development, funding and networking opportunities.

A Strong City

PACDC and member organizations build strong neighborhoods—and a strong Philadelphia—by increasing housing and economic opportunities and providing programs and services that sustain families and good jobs.

A Strong Voice in Policy

Strong CDCs

A Strong City

Our Supporters

*PACDC gratefully acknowledges these funders for their leadership in supporting our efforts to build **A Strong Voice in Policy, Strong CDCs, and A Strong City:***

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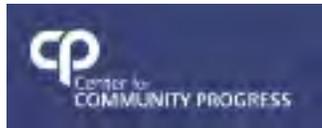
TD Bank

To learn more about PACDC, the work of its members or how to join, visit us at www.pacdc.org.

CDCs in Motion is an information sharing resource highlighting the major achievements, honors, and initiatives that keep CDCs moving forward in their efforts to strengthen Philadelphia's neighborhoods. We are pleased to share these highlights with you.

PACDC Hosts National Conferences Highlighting CDC Work

PACDC is the co-host, along with the City of Philadelphia, of **Investing in The Future: Unlocking Hidden Values, Reclaiming Vacant Properties**, September 9 to 11 at the Loews Hotel. In addition to learning about the latest trends in vacant property reclamations, convention attendees from across



the country will learn about best practices among Philadelphia CDCs. For more information, visit communityprogress.net.

The International Economic Development Council's Annual Conference, October 6 to 9 at the Marriott Hotel, will attract nearly 1,400 economic development professionals to the city where CDC innovations will be part of the 3 day showcase. For more information visit www.iedconline.org.

Women's Community Revitalization Project Building Homes and Healthy Food Choices

WCRP received \$8 million in tax credit and other financing from the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency and the city toward major renovation of the organization's three oldest housing developments, comprising 77 affordable apartments. Construction activities began in late spring of last year and are being completed in phases over an 18-month period.

Helping to strengthen bricks and mortar developments, WCRP is in its second year of a three year USDA Community Food Project, entitled Food for All. The program seeks to increase access to fresh, affordable, locally grown food in Eastern North Philadelphia. Highlights of the program include establishing a Farmers' Market at Fairhill Square Park (4th and Lehigh) and engaging 30 corner stores to build capacity and commitment to selling fresh produce—in partnership with The Food Trust. WCRP also continued to operate a Farm-to-Families community supported agriculture site with funding from St. Christopher's Foundation for Children and recently moved its site to Maria de los Santos Health Care Center.

Additional funding for WCRP's food access work comes from the Claneil Foundation. "At WCRP we realize that real community building starts with having a decent affordable home and being able to grow a healthy family. Both our construction projects and fresh food access programs are what our community has said it wants. We are so honored, with their leadership and support, to have had some encouraging results," said Nora Lichtash, WCRP Executive Director.



From left to right: John MacDonald, President/CEO, Impact Service Corporation, Inc., Governor Tom Corbett, Philadelphia Representative John Taylor; back row: City Council Members Maria Quionez-Sanchez and Mark Squilla.

Impact Services Corporation Hosts Land Bank Bill Signing

Legislation sponsored by Rep. John Taylor (R-Philadelphia) that gives cities a new tool in the fight against blight was ceremoniously signed by Gov. Tom Corbett in January at the headquarters of Impact Services Corporation. Act 153 of 2012 allows Pennsylvania's municipalities to create public land bank authorities in order to efficiently acquire, manage, and develop tax-foreclosed and other vacant properties. Attending the ceremony were, in addition to Governor Corbett and Representative Taylor, City Councilwoman Maria Quinoes-Sanchez, Councilman Mark Squilla, and a large number of supporters. "Vacant and abandoned properties are a major drain on our city and neighborhoods," Taylor said. "They cripple property values, attract vermin, and when their owners are delinquent on taxes they force the rest of us to pay what they won't." This law will help the city reclaim these properties and fight blight. The legislation, which received support across the state, enables any county, city or borough with a population of 10,000 or more to form a land bank to acquire and manage properties and prepare them for reuse.



WCRP's Tillmon Villanueva Townhouses.



Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation Moves Community Center Closer to Groundbreaking

PCDC has made significant progress on the Eastern Tower Community Center project at 10th and Vine Streets over the winter. In December, PCDC Executive Director John Chin, traveled with Mayor Michael Nutter to China to promote the project to prospective foreign investors. In February, Citibank stepped up as the lead lender on the project and is working to bring a significant portion of its New Markets Tax Credit allocation to the project.

KlingStubbins completed design and development plans for the project. In March, after a very competitive bid process, PCDC chose Hunter Roberts as the Construction Management firm. PCDC continues to raise funds and awareness for this transformational project, aiming for financial closing in the fourth quarter of 2013. “The partnerships formed and supporters of this project have been a critical component of our progress to date. We look forward to building on these achievements and seeing the Center become a truly important part of Chinatown’s future,” said John Chin.



Germantown United CDC Greening and Cleaning Vital Commercial Corridor

The Germantown United CDC is partnering with the City Planning Commission, the City Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society’s TreeTenders program on streetscape improvements on the Cheltenham Avenue commercial corridor. The improvements include street tree planting, improvements to a SEPTA bus stop, and the re-design of a small plaza adjacent to the bus stop and Vernon Park. “We are so excited about the work ahead of us. The community is poised for these projects to help make some important advances in Germantown’s long-term revitalization,” said Andrew Trackman, Interim Board President.

Above left: Rendering of PCDC’s Eastern Tower Community Center; Above: Germantown United CDC Tree Planting and Plaza Redevelopment. Right: Chestnut Hill’s Home and Garden Festival.

Chestnut Hill CDC Preparing for A Festival Season Full of Fun

Helping to strengthen community and build customers for both existing and new businesses, Chestnut Hill will be hosting its annual series of family friendly festivals starting with Chestnut Hill Home and Garden Festival (May 5th), Chestnut Hill Book Festival (September 22nd), Chestnut Hill Fall for the Arts Festival (October 6th), culminating with Holiday House Tours and Sundays with Santa. “Both our local neighborhood residents and businesses really look forward to these events each year because they bring back long-time friends and attract new ones,” says Kate O’Neill, Deputy Director for Chestnut Hill CDC.



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE: UNLOCKING HIDDEN VALUES

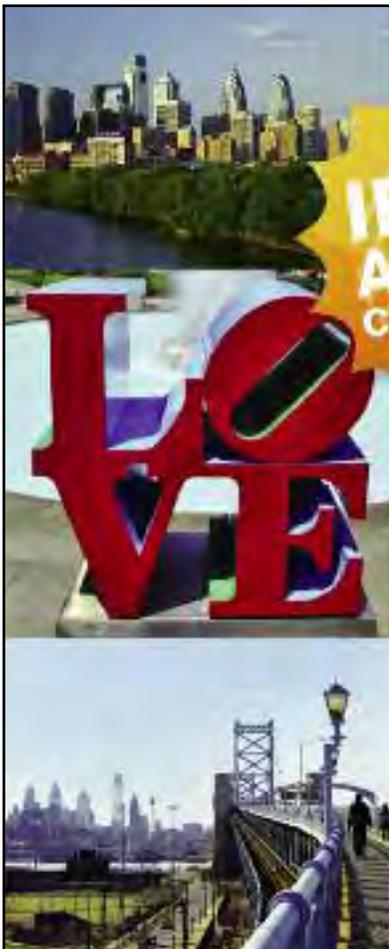
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We Salute PACDC on 21 Years of Service to Philadelphia's Neighborhoods.

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NEF & LISC are
pleased to sponsor
PACDC's
21st Annual Gala



National Equity Fund, Inc. and LISC
are dedicated to revitalizing neighborhoods,
fostering economic development and creating
affordable sustainable housing. Together we have
invested \$300 million of equity in Philadelphia,
creating hundreds of jobs and thousands of
homes for those in need.

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Passo Verde - Transit Oriented Development, 120 units - Eastern North, Philadelphia
Developed by APH and Jonathan Rose Companies. To be completed June 2013.
LISC and NEF investment: \$11.4 million; Total development cost: \$48 million



PACDC's Member Services Committee provides input on upcoming trainings.

Ready, Set, Go: Helping CDCs Improve Impact

PACDC provides a range of technical assistance, trainings, networking and information sharing to help our members do their work more effectively and share the impact of that work with a wide audience.

Here are highlights of our key programs:

Collective Strength Report

PACDC's release of *Collective Strength: The \$3.3 Billion Impact of Philadelphia Community Development Corporations* was met with enthusiastic response as seen in the broad array of online and print media coverage. Building on these strong results, we are working to increase the reach of the report release by seeking strategic ways to have new conversations around the role CDCs are playing with a broad array of decision makers and funders. PACDC is working with Fairmount Ventures to help us think through this component of our work for maximum results.



View a pdf file of PACDC's Collective Strength Report with your smartphone.



PACDC's Collective Strength Report

Training and Technical Assistance

Since September 2012, PACDC presented eight trainings and three webinars in partnership with a range of providers to strong participant feedback. These included: a Community Leadership Institute in conjunction with NeighborWorks America (see side bar); Commercial Corridor Market Analysis with Larisa Ortiz Associates; two technical assistance sessions on Social Enterprise Development; Integrating Minority-Owned and Small Businesses into Community and Economic Development, featuring Washington, D.C.'s office of Small Business Development; a panel discussion on the expanding role CDCs are playing in education, featuring Ogontz Avenue Revitalization Corporation, Universal Companies, Philadelphia Education Fund, and Bainbridge House; Commercial Leasing; and Asset Management; as well as desk-side learning sessions on Low Income Housing Tax Credit Financing, Financing Renewable Energy Projects, and New Market Tax Credits.

We want to thank our partners – NeighborWorks America, Larisa Ortiz Associates, Philadelphia Department of Commerce, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, BFW Group, Blakney Hayes Architects, Cornerstone Consultants, the School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia VIP LawWorks, National Development Council, Citi, and PECO – for their support of these trainings.

Information on additional 2013 trainings and networking sessions will be available online at www.pacdc.org. Anticipated sessions include: developing relationships with your representatives and senators; undertaking successful individual giving for introductory and intermediate fundraisers; an exploration of financing and launching food access programs as economic development activities; passive home and commercial space redevelopment, a practical guide for CDCs using Act 135 Conservatorship; and access to a limited number of free and or discounted training slots to NeighborWorks America's August Training Institute. In addition to the NeighborWorks Training Institute, PACDC is also actively engaged in planning for two other national conferences coming to Philadelphia this Fall: the National Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference in September and the International Economic Development Council's Conference in October.

PACDC Wins Grant to Fund Expanded Training and Peer Mentoring

Thanks to a \$40,000 grant from Citi Foundation, PACDC will expand its range of training, peer learning and technical assistance programs for CDCs and other practitioners to sustain and grow their capacity to better serve their constituencies. Additional on-the-ground training topics planned for 2013 range from food access programs as economic development drivers to individual giving. PACDC will also develop and launch a pilot Peer Mentorship Initiative, pairing seasoned CDC staff with less experienced ones. In addition, PACDC will convene key stakeholders to explore the development of a Philadelphia Community Development Training and Leadership Institute, a collaborative training and technical assistance umbrella to better coordinate and institutionalize local community development capacity building efforts and build awareness of the role of CDCs in strengthening low and moderate income communities through issue convenings. ■

Right: District Attorney Seth Williams speaks to neighborhood leaders.



East Falls Development Corporation's Executive Director Gina Snyder and Tacony CDC's Commercial Corridor Manager Alex Balloon present discussion points at one of PACDC's Trainings.

Above: PACDC Members working hard during a workshop.

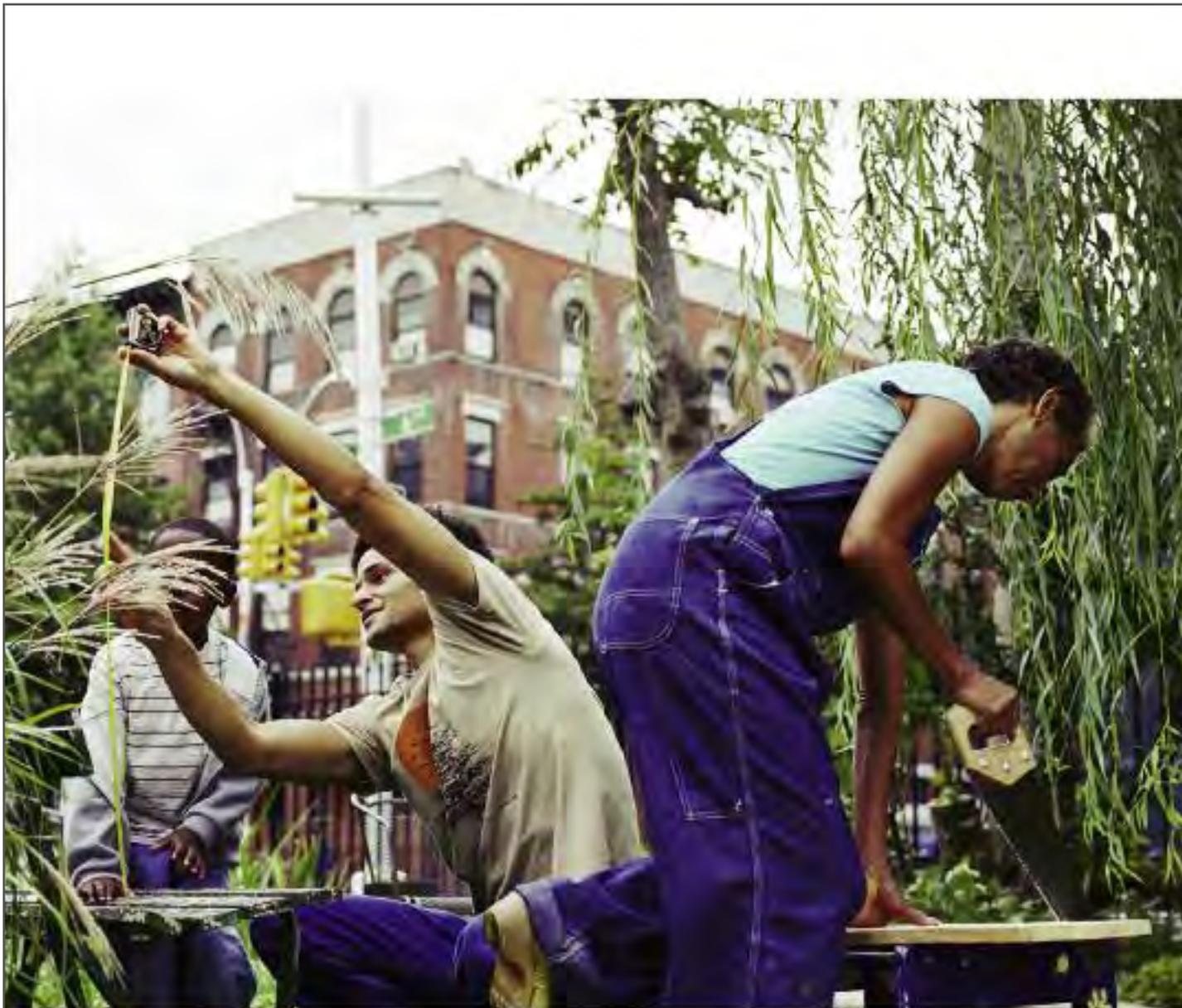


Obama was an Organizer, Why Can't I be One Too?! PACDC and NeighborWorks America Celebrate Successful Training

When President Barack Obama made his first run for the White House, his background as an organizer helped fuel conversations about the role organizing plays in strengthening communities and mobilizing action. In September, PACDC hosted nearly 50 neighborhood residents from across the city to continue that conversation as they participated in an at-capacity, day-long training session on community organizing at Temple University's Student and Faculty Center in North Philadelphia.

The session, "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Community Organizing and Then Some," was led by Karimah Nonyameko-Moore, a NeighborWorks America trainer. This was the inaugural program of the Philadelphia Community Leadership Institute, a collaborative project with NeighborWorks' national Neighborhood Leadership Institute. Participants learned the basics of mobilizing and organizing and culminated with tools to affect change right away in their neighborhoods. Keynote speaker District Attorney Seth Williams described his background as a community organizer and how organizing helps to prevent crime. "The best crime fighting tool we have right now is community organizing and my office needs your help in the neighborhoods to lead the way," said D.A. Williams. ■





We put our energy into the community.

At PECO, our employees invest thousands of volunteer hours and contribute more than \$5 million annually to help our communities grow and prosper. We also champion efforts that impact education, the environment, arts and culture, and community enrichment in our region.

PECO is proud to support the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporation's 21st Anniversary Gala and Awards Ceremony.

Find out more at www.peco.com/community

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Communities are like families



When everyone comes together, wonderful things can happen. This event is the result of a lot of hard work by many talented people. The spirit of community is alive and well, right here and now.

To all of tonight's award winners, you represent the heart and soul of true community.

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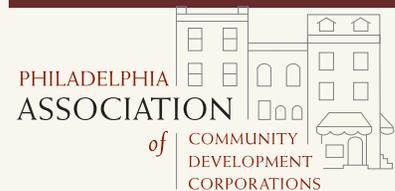


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Join a growing list of the city's leading established and emerging community-based innovators and entrepreneurs. Learn from experienced colleagues and be re-energized by new voices and fresh approaches, share resources and insight, and most importantly gain a seat at the table in development decision-making—have your community's voice be heard!



Supporting CDCs. Strengthening Neighborhoods.



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Measuring What Matters: Impact of CDCs Goes Beyond Numbers

by Lee Huang

Community development corporations play an important role in nearly every neighborhood in Philadelphia. Their impact can be measured in lives transformed, families changed, and communities restored. These metrics remain the most important ones to measure.

But, increasingly, CDCs speak of the economic impacts that result from their work: local economies stimulated, jobs supported, and tax revenues generated. At a time of economic uncertainty, high unemployment, and distressed fiscal budgets, these positive outcomes of CDCs' work are particularly welcomed.

Consider the work of the following PACDC members, most of which I have had the pleasure of working with:

ACHIEVEability breaks the generational cycle of poverty for low income, single parent, and homeless families through higher

education, affordable housing, supportive services, community and economic development, and accountability. This reduces families' reliance on subsidies and increases their earning potential, which translates into more spending power for families and more tax revenues for local governments.

Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha is a Latino-based health, human services, community and economic development non-profit organization serving the Philadelphia area. Its transit-oriented development near 9th and Berks Streets, Paseo Verde, offers a mix of uses in a aesthetically pleasing and transit-proximate location, thus activating the value of vibrant public space and of multi-modal mobility for its users.

Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia transforms lives and our city by building and repairing quality homes in partnership with families in need. Working in areas of blight, Habitat for Humanity restores dilapidated

homes and neighborhoods, reversing the negative property value effects they have on surrounding residences and thus strengthening the local property tax base.

Esperanza focuses on strengthening Hispanic communities through community redevelopment, workforce development, education, capacity building, and advocacy. In Hunting Park, its work in filling supply chain gaps by connecting local businesses results in more intra-city commerce, thus reducing leakage out of Philadelphia and increasing the multiplier effect of this business activity.

Impact Service Corporation's mission is to empower people in need to attain the hope, motivation, and skills necessary to reach their fullest human potential and highest level of personal and family self sufficiency. Their job counseling and placement services have resulted in a significant increase in household earnings and in local wage tax revenues.

The Whole is Much More Than Equal...



Local culinary entrepreneur Chef Leslie

by Don L. Haskin

Impact Services started in 1974 in an abandoned carpet mill. It now operates in seven locations. It has a staff of 120 and provides services ranging shopping center development to creating housing for veterans. Nice work, keep at it, guys!

Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha (APM) is about to finish Paseo Verde, a mixed-use \$48 million transit-oriented development project with 144 apartments as well as commercial and retail space. This is in addition to providing oversight and care for foster children in two of Philadelphia's toughest police districts, building a shopping center and creating the Sheridan St. houses, the most technologically advanced houses in Philadelphia. Super job, APM!

Among its latest accomplishments is The Enterprise Center CDC's \$5.5 million Center

for Culinary Enterprises. What a great idea. Take an abandoned market, install a state-of-the-art 13,000 square-foot kitchen and you have a recipe for community transformation—and LEED Silver certified, by the way.

And so it's gone over the past 20 years. Taken individually, these efforts are significant and their contributions to the city are truly noteworthy. But overall, they've been like shooting stars in a vast universe. Momentarily visible to Philadelphians and the larger world only if they have the good fortune to pierce the pages of that day's newspaper, pop for an instant across a TV screen, or flash on an Ipad or cell phone.

However, to carry on this celestial metaphor, it hasn't been until now that an observatory has turned its powerful lens on these streaks in Philadelphia's skies to take in the totality of the community development industry's



Volunteers rebuilding houses with Habitat for Humanity-Philadelphia.

New Kensington CDC's mission is to revitalize its target neighborhoods through community development that is responsive to local needs. NKCDC's first time home-buyer counseling and foreclosure prevention services are some of the largest in scope in the city helping to reduce the chances of foreclosure, which have a significant negative impact on neighborhoods

Project H.O.M.E. empowers people to break the cycle of homelessness, address the structural causes of poverty, and attain their fullest potential as members of society. Project H.O.M.E.'s multi-purpose service centers have been proven to have a positive

impact on the viability of our city 331 years after William Penn granted its charter.

That view through the telescope was what Citi Community Development found irresistible. The opportunity to help define the CDC heavens in a way that would capture the imagination of an entire region and a nation in a way that would make it impossible to just stare at the heavens and see nothing is what intrigued us.

What emerged from the PACDC effort was an invaluable document called, "Collective Strength: The \$3.3 Billion Impact of Philadelphia Community Development Corporations." The research was done by Econsult Solutions. And, as the introduction says, "Philadelphia's community development corporations are among the best and most respected in the nation, and for good reason."

effect on neighboring property values, and its work in bringing individuals and families out of homelessness results in cost savings for Philadelphia.

The Enterprise Center CDC's mission is to build neighborhoods where individuals are willing, able, and organized to achieve common goals. As the social and economic development arm of The Enterprise Center, the CDC operates programs that aim to create sustainable neighborhoods through social development and implement physical redevelopment projects that spark economic revitalization by rebuilding infrastructure and creating jobs. Through its youth entrepreneurship, community education, and urban agriculture initiatives, it is strengthening social and commercial linkages within its West Philadelphia community.

All of these examples reflect the positive influence of CDCs not only on the lives of the people they serve, but on the local and

As positive as it was in detailing progress to date, the study does not signal an end, but rather a milestone on the eternal journey of one spot on planet Earth – a spot where abandoned and affordable housing are ongoing challenges, where poverty rates and unemployment among the underserved remain stratospheric.

The Philadelphia Inquirer recently reported that Philadelphia has the highest rate of "deep poverty," defined as people with incomes below half the poverty line, among the nation's 10 largest cities. The annual salary for a single person at half the poverty line is \$5,700. For a family of four at that level, it's approximately \$11,700. In Philadelphia, 12.9 percent of the population or 200,000 of our neighbors live at those levels. Its numbers, the Inquirer said, come from an analysis of the U.S. Census conducted by

Every day, CDC staff, board members, and volunteers roll up their sleeves to make an impact on individuals, families, and neighborhoods.

regional economy. Every day, CDC staff, board members, and volunteers roll up their sleeves to make an impact on individuals, families, and neighborhoods. In doing so, they are also stimulating economic activity, supporting a wide range and large number of jobs, stabilizing and growing property values, and generating local tax revenues. In the aggregate, they therefore represent a significant engine of positive economic impact within Philadelphia and throughout the Philadelphia region. ■

Lee Huang is a principal of Econsult Solutions, Inc., and the lead analyst for PACDC's *Collective Strength's Report*.



*Impact Services Corporation
Job Counseling Program*

the Inquirer and Temple University sociologist David Elsh.

The "Collective Strength" of all Philadelphians – lead in large part by our city's CDCs – will be required to meet the cosmic challenges ahead. ■

Donald L. Haskin is Senior Vice President of Community Development for CITI Community Development and the lead funder of PACDC's *Collective Strength Report*.



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CDC

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community change.



Change Places



Change Lives

Content credit:
Massachusetts Association of CDCs

The Impact of CDCs Extends Well Beyond Philadelphia

By Joe Kriesberg

The extraordinary achievements of CDCs in Philadelphia that are documented in this publication, are impressive, but thankfully not entirely unique. CDCs across the United States are helping to ensure that more and more families and communities are able to participate in and benefit from the nation's slow economic recovery.

While the financial and economic collapse that began in 2008 has had a disproportionate impact on lower income families and families of color, it is truly scary to contemplate what would have happened but for the tenacity and talent of community developers in urban, rural and suburban communities across the country. CDCs have helped to prevent thousands of foreclosures, stabilized struggling local businesses and helped new ones get started, provided stable, affordable rental housing to millions and provided the local capacity needed to help communities build for a better day.

It is difficult to obtain reliable and comprehensive data on the work of CDCs nationwide because there is no universally agreed upon definition of which organizations qualify as a CDC and no centralized system for collecting data. (A study by National Alliance of Community and Economic Development Associations in 2010 did estimate that CDCs produce nearly 100,000 homes per year.) The challenge of collecting this data makes sense when one considers that CDCs are defined by and shaped by their local context, so our nation's CDCs are as diverse as our nation's communities. That said, there is robust academic research and tremendous on-the-ground evidence that CDCs are a critical part of the

The power of the CDC model lies in its approach. CDCs provide a vehicle for local residents and stakeholders to initiate, implement and steward community change by fostering a virtuous and reinforcing cycle that strengthens the local civic culture, changes places and ultimately transforms lives.

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larger community development eco-system. The power of the CDC model lies in its approach. CDCs provide a vehicle for local residents and stakeholders to initiate, implement and steward community change by fostering a virtuous and reinforcing cycle that strengthens the local civic culture, changes places and ultimately transforms lives.

Change How People Work Together

The first step is to change the way people in a community work together to create a functioning civic culture that includes everyone and allows things to get done. In many places, each constituency has just enough power to stop things, but none have enough power to get things done on their own. This can lead to gridlock. Effective CDCs help people in the public, private and nonprofit sector work together. They also help address another common problem in the civic life of many communities – the fact that certain groups in the community are not always at the table – lower income people, new comers, linguistic minorities, youth and disabled people are generally less likely to be engaged unless there is an intentional effort made to include them. In Boston, we are seeing the power of this model as CDCs, with the help of our local LISC office, lead comprehensive community initiatives in Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan in which literally hundreds of new community leaders have stepped up to reshape and redefine their neighborhoods.

Fishing boats returned to Chatham Harbor after a day of commercial fishing off Cape Cod, Massachusetts.



Change Places

As communities begin to come together, the physical environment in a neighborhood or community can begin to change. New housing, businesses, jobs, parks, and infrastructure can provide residents with the stability, safety and access to opportunities that they need to improve their lives. CDCs have the technical and financial capacity to undertake the complex development projects that are needed to create and sustain effective local economies, while also creating safer and healthier environments for local residents. In Massachusetts, our members consistently produce or preserve over 1,200 affordable homes each year. Often, CDCs are able to undertake a series of development projects over a period of years to completely transform a neighborhood, as the Neighborhood Developers have done in the Box District of Chelsea, MA.

wealth and provide critical services to local communities. On Cape Cod, the Community Development Partnership is helping local fishermen manage new federal restrictions on fishing as well as increased competition through the Cape Cod Fisheries Trust. In Western Massachusetts, the Franklin County CDC's Food Processing Center helps local farmers bring their products to market.

A key common thread to all of these success stories is that they are specifically designed to leverage the assets of the local community.

By tailoring their initiatives to the local context, CDCs are able to achieve durable results. Moreover, as these efforts help to stabilize people's lives and they gain entry to the economic mainstream, they are better able to participate in the civic life of their

communities. Time and again, we see participants in CDC programs become leaders in their communities, helping to pay it forward for the next family that needs help. And the cycle begins anew.

This approach is validated by the stories in this publication and by the experience of practitioners across the country. More and more academic research is also coming out that documents the ways that improved neighborhoods, stable housing and economic security produce positive outcomes in public health, educational attainment, public safety, and environmental sustainability. Policy makers at the state and federal level are recognizing these linkages in new programs like Choice Neighborhoods and Promise Neighborhoods at the federal level and the



Some of the food that is processed at the Franklin County Community Development Corporation's Food Processing Center in Western Massachusetts.

Community Investment Tax Credit recently enacted in Massachusetts. Philadelphians should be proud that they have known this for a long time and invested in their CDC sector through its CDC Tax Credit and other programs. The neighborhoods and neighbors in your City are no doubt benefiting – as are millions of others across the country. ■

Joe Kriesberg is President and CEO of the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations, and a frequent contributor to national community development publications.

A key common thread to all of these success stories is that they are specifically designed to leverage the assets of the local community. By tailoring their initiatives to the local context, CDCs are able to achieve durable results.

Change Lives

As the place where they live transforms, people can begin to change their life trajectories. Stable housing enables adults to better compete for jobs or obtain the job training they need. Students with a stable home do better in school and have the ability to pursue their dreams and talents. CDCs often complement their placed based work with a wide variety of programs designed to help residents enter the economic mainstream and connect to the regional economy. These programs can include financial education and savings programs, homebuying classes, foreclosure counseling, ESOL and youth programming. Here in Massachusetts, many of our members work with local businesses to create jobs, build



Above: Land Bank community briefing.
Left, Pedro Ramos, Philadelphia School Reform Commission Chairman, addressing PACDC's Annual Members Meeting.



Advocacy Transforms Philadelphia's Community Development System

As the “go-to” organization for community development in the city, PACDC and its 100 members has built some encouraging wins thanks in large part to the range of coalitions launched and partnerships formed. The following is a brief overview of our most recent achievements.

- Philadelphia CDC Tax Credit Program**
 We worked with Councilman W. Wilson Goode, Jr. to expand the Philadelphia CDC Tax Credit Program to 40 partnership slots for CDCs and Nonprofit Intermediaries that is allowing both CDCs at the end of their initial ten-year term as well as new groups to participate. This flexible funding allows organizations to do long-range planning and

implementation for their neighborhood economic development initiatives.

- Vacant & Abandoned Property Reuse**
 We worked with public officials and our partners to “open” the City’s “Front Door” to streamline the process to acquire, maintain and dispose of vacant and abandoned properties; supported the successful effort to obtain state authorization for local land banks; and built a strong citywide Philly Land Bank Alliance that is advocating for an effective Philadelphia Land Bank. (See Do-It-Yourself Kit).
- Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund**
 We continued to play an instrumental role in shaping the strategic direction of

the Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund, including the release of a Housing Preservation RFP resulting from our successful advocacy to expand Housing Trust Fund revenues. To date, the HTF has raised more than \$80 million to expand local housing opportunities, repair homes, and prevent foreclosure and homelessness for more than 8,500 families.

- Zoning Reform**
 We continued to work with allies to finalize implementation of the City’s New Zoning Code and signage controls, and to maintain important advances in commercial district zoning.

PACDC Welcomes New Policy Director

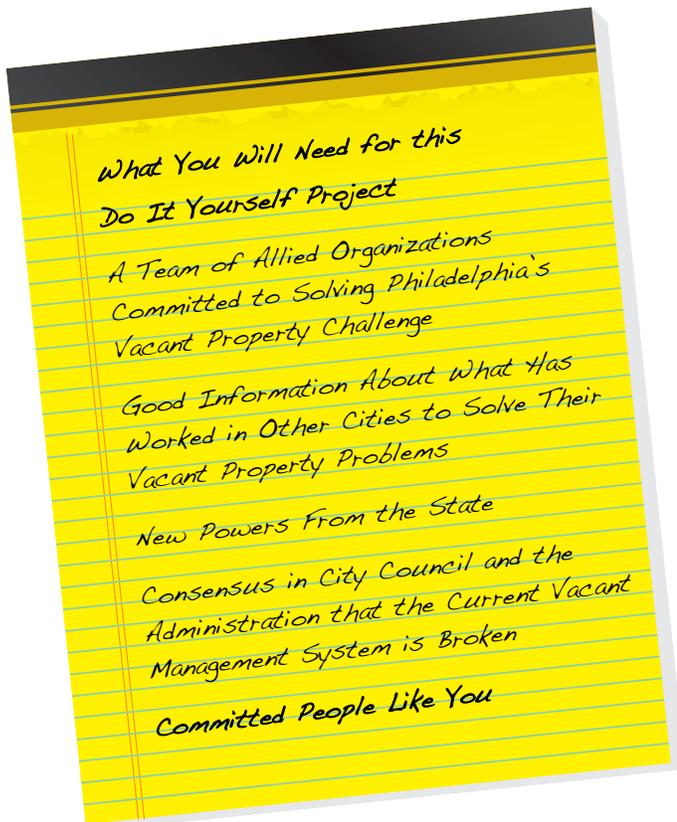
Beth McConnell started in March of this year overseeing advocacy and policy development for PACDC. With nearly two decades of experience working to address key policy issues for media and other causes, Beth brings a wealth of national and local experience to the PACDC team. Prior to her arrival, she was Executive Director of the national advocacy group, the Media and Democracy Coalition, and before that was State Director at PennPIRG overseeing a range of consumer and environmental policy efforts. We welcome her! Beth can be reached at bmconnell@pacdc.org.



PACDC Do-It-Yourself Kit:

Create a Land Bank to Solve Philadelphia's Vacant Property Problem (Step-by-Step Instructions)

By Karen Black



Are you tired of reading articles about the vacant property problem in Philadelphia that recite the problem over and over without offering a solution? Do you want action that will actually help responsible owners take control of vacant properties in your neighborhood? If so, read the instructions for the PACDC Do It Yourself Create a Land Bank to Solve the Vacant Land Problem Kit Below. **Then go to www.phillylandbank.org and sign on to help us.**

How To Instructions:

1) Step One: Assemble Your Team

Philadelphia has no greater challenge than getting its 40,000 vacant properties back into the hands of responsible owners for reuse as homes, businesses, gardens, sideyards and other uses that benefit the community. So maybe it isn't surprising that some of the city's most well-respected organizations have joined together to form the Philly Land Bank Alliance. The allies are working together to make a land bank in Philadelphia a reality. The allies are:

Building Industry Association, Campaign to Take Back Vacant Land, City-Wide NAC Alliance, Design Advocacy Group, Greater Philadelphia Association of Realtors, LISC, Next Great City, Penn Future, Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia, Regional Housing Legal Services and the Sustainable Business Network. Our website is www.phillylandbank.org.

2) Step Two: Understand What Has Worked in Other Cities to Address Thousands of Vacant Properties that Blight Neighborhoods

The scope of Philadelphia's vacant property challenge is daunting. We have over 40,000 vacant properties and 25% of those are owned by one of four public agencies. Yet last year the city only sold 54 publicly owned vacant properties, and sales haven't exceeded 600 properties annually during the last decade, according to a Philadelphia Inquirer series by Patrick Kerkstra March 10-12, 2013. So how do other cities reactivate their vacant properties and get them back on the tax rolls? They put sole authority and responsibility for vacant properties in a land bank and systematically bring vacant properties back to market.



What is a Land Bank? A land bank is a public authority created to handle acquisition, maintenance, and sale of vacant properties in a timely and efficient manner. Land banks have clear streamlined procedures to clear title, transfer properties to responsible owners, and acquire tax delinquent properties without risking their sale to speculators. Land banks are a best practice that more than 75 governments have adopted, including Cleveland, Louisville, Atlanta, and Genesee County, MI.

Left: Vacant land in Eastern North Philadelphia

3) Step Three: Put all 10,000 Publicly Owned Vacant Properties Into a Land Bank Quickly

First pour all 10,000 publicly owned vacant properties into a single agency. Create an accurate inventory and make these properties available to responsible owners today through a single sales process. No longer should a Philadelphia business owner or resident be required to identify the agency owner of a publicly owned property and then figure out what their 40-step process is to purchase the property. The properties should be available for less than market value where the new use will benefit the community.

4) Step Four: Gain Necessary New Powers from the State

Philadelphia auctions all foreclosed properties to the highest bidder and has been unable to stop speculators from buying and mothballing the sites. The City has also been limited in its ability to bid on and buy foreclosed property and has a poor record of ensuring that publicly owned vacant properties have clear and clean title at the time of sale. After a significant statewide campaign led by the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania, the State legislature passed authorizing legislation that allows municipalities to form land banks, and the Governor signed it on October 24, 2012. The new law is important to Philadelphia because it offers the City new powers that it can only tap into if it creates a land bank, including:

- A new expedited quiet title process
- Transfer of land from the Redevelopment Authority to a land bank without a redevelopers agreement
- Transfer of properties without being bound by municipal competitive bidding requirements
- Acquisition of foreclosed property in a less expensive manner



Peace Plaza at 29th Street in Philadelphia.

5) Step Five: Create an Effective, Transparent and Accountable Land Bank

Ensure that the land bank will be transparent, accountable to voters, and offer predictable consistent decisions about future uses for land that are consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and accepted community plans. A quality land bank will have the following features:

- The central goal of the transfer of vacant property will be for productive reuse that benefits the community
- Key approvals from the Administration and Council will occur upfront before a buyer incurs significant costs
- Transparent and accountable operations that provide the public with detailed information about all property requests and transfers
- Governance by an expert board with strong community representation
- Adequate funding to operate
- Ability to strategically acquire privately owned vacant properties through foreclosure, donation and other means, and to assemble developable sites

6) Step Six: Bring Properties onto the Tax Rolls and Obtain Greater Revenues for the City and the School District

Much of the debt on vacant properties in the form of delinquent taxes just isn't recoverable. At the same time, many of these properties haven't generated any revenue for our city or schools in decades. Let's bring these vacant properties back onto the tax rolls today.

7) Step Seven: Observe Neighborhoods Improving by Leaps and Bounds

Picture your neighborhood as a vibrant community full of new homes and businesses and open space on formerly vacant properties. Picture how safe, and beautiful, and full of life it will be. Then join us and help make it happen. Go to www.phillylandbank.org to take action today! ■

Karen Black is Principal of May 8 Consulting and working with PACDC to obtain an effective Philadelphia Land Bank.



2012 Blue Ribbon Award Winner (Large CDC)
Habitat for Humanity-Philadelphia



2012 Blue Ribbon Award Winner (Small CDC) Community Ventures

PACDC 2012 Gala & Awards Ceremony



2012 Community Development Champions
Zoning Code Commissioners with Deputy Mayor Alan Greenberger
and Eva Gladstein



From left to right: 2012 Rising Star Awardee Kevin Gray, Community
Leader Sherita Glenn, and Rising Star Awardee Jennifer Rodriguez

PACDC 2013 VIP Reception



From left to right: M.A.P. Holistic CDC's Rev. Lewis Nash with
Nictown CDC's Majeedah Rashid, Chief Operating Officer, and
Zakariyya Abdur-Rahman, President and CEO.



Above, from left to right: Rick Sauer, PACDC Executive Director,
Keith Richardson, Commissioner, Department of Revenue, Carol Lawrence,
Vice President, PNC Bank, John Chin, Executive Director, Philadelphia
Chinatown Development Corporation and PACDC Board President.



From left to right: East Falls Development Corporation Executive
Director and PACDC Board Vice President, Gina Synder, New
Kensington CDC Executive Director Sandy Salzman.

Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations

Honoring Our 2013 Award Winners and Blue Ribbon Finalists

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Working for the community. Inspiring the community. PNC supports those who are striving to do amazing things every day. That's why we're so proud to be a part of PACDC.

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2013 Community Development Champions

CDC Tax Credit Program Leaders Saluted As Community Development Champions

While some folks might have discounted the potential of a small “pilot project” to provide stable funding for CDCs, one visionary deserves credit for creating and championing it.

Philadelphia City Councilman W. Wilson Goode, Jr. introduced legislation in 2001 that brought together businesses and community development corporations in an innovative program which provides consistent funding. Today, Keith Richardson, Commissioner of the Department of Revenue, runs the agency that administers the program (with help from the Commerce Department), and CEOs from diverse businesses partner with CDCs to support their economic development work. Collectively, they are being recognized as PACDC’s 2013 Community Development Champions.

From his work with the Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation and in the Commerce Department during the Rendell administration, Goode knew that CDCs needed a stable source of funding for their economic development work. Once elected to City Council, Councilman Goode was able to create the tax credit program and set aside 5% of CDBG funds for CDCs.

“Together, both of those things helped build the CDC Industry in the city and stabilize neighborhoods,” said Councilman Goode. “The CDCs were poised to flourish, and neighborhoods like East Falls, Mt. Airy, and South Philadelphia were stabilized,” he said.

Richardson agrees: “It is an excellent program which has made our city and neighborhoods stronger.”

The tax credit business partners are diverse and include Wells Fargo, Comcast, Wallace Roberts & Todd, Northeast Building Products Corp., Tenet Health System, Duane Morris, Deloitte & Touche, Penn Distributors, and dozens of others.

Patterned after a state initiative, the initial Philadelphia CDC Tax Credit Program gave 10 local businesses the opportunity to contribute \$100,000 per year for 10 years to CDCs in exchange for a tax credit against their Philadelphia Business Privilege Tax. The funds could be used for CDC economic development efforts based on the specific needs of neighborhoods.

With the support of PACDC, the Tax Credit program was made permanent in 2003, expanded several times to increase the number of participants, and changed to include non-profit intermediaries supporting CDCs. Today, the program is fully subscribed, and includes 40 partnerships slots, which consist of 37 CDCs and three non-profit intermediaries and their business partners. Each organization gets \$85,000 per year for 10 years.

According to Rick Sauer, Executive Director of PACDC, the Tax Credit Program “provides CDCs with the ability to engage in



Left: Keith Richardson, Commissioner of the Department of Revenue. Right, Councilman W. Wilson Goode, Jr

long-term planning, cover operating costs, and better serve their neighborhoods. It has made a tremendous difference in CDCs’ ability to strengthen neighborhoods and add to the tax base of the City.”

This year’s awardees continue to raise the bar and join past recipients –Partners in Zoning Reform, PA State Rep. John Taylor, Judge Annette Rizzo, Denise McGregor Armbrister and Brian Hudson.

The Philadelphia CDC Tax Credit Program has helped the local CDC Industry achieve an economic impact of \$3.3 billion to the city and \$5.1 billion to the state during the past two decades. With such strong results, leaders are optimistic that both the CDC Industry and the City of Philadelphia are “poised to flourish” even more in the future. ■

2013 Rising Stars



Paris and New York — Training Grounds for Tacony

Alexander Balloon
Commercial Corridor Manager, Tacony CDC

Paris and New York. Consulting and planning. Cleveland and Tacony. Historic preservation and urban redevelopment. Hoagie Trails and Golden Brooms.

That unusual combination of places and things may seem unrelated unless you've met Alexander Balloon, PACDC's Rising Star, who is Commercial Corridor Manager for Tacony Community Development Corporation.

With an undergraduate degree in urban studies and history from Wooster, Ohio, and a graduate degree in preservation and urban redevelopment from the University of Pennsylvania, Balloon did semesters in Paris and New York and added internships in Akron, Cleveland, Baltimore and Philadelphia to the mix.

"I loved studying architecture and historic preservation in those cities, but a bad job market after graduation led to work as a tour guide in Philadelphia's Italian Market.

Working with immigrant populations along a bustling business corridor fueled his love of preservation, engagement with business owners, and tangible results.

Then, following a stint at LISC, he was a consultant for Heritage Consulting in Philadelphia, where he "gave people lots of advice but never saw the results." Then came Tacony CDC.

According to Balloon, "Saying 'yes' to Torresdale Avenue business owners with good ideas, working to build trust with the community, and marketing a vision with passion and commitment are terrific. Changing the psychology of the community from resignation and withdrawal to engagement and enthusiasm is very, very rewarding." He attracted 17 new businesses in three blocks.

Three competing and highly-rated hoagie shops became Tacony's Hoagie Trail – with sales increasing 15%. Balloon marketed the trail, got media coverage, and the three enjoyed more new customers.

After the Hoagie Trail it was "clean and safe" and the "Golden Broom Awards."

Borrowing the idea, Balloon presented gold, spray-painted six-foot brooms – very ceremoniously — to businesses throughout the year.

One dedicated volunteer, known affectionately as the "Queen of Clean," reigns over the Golden Brooms which rest majestically in Tacony's offices when not being presented in a photo opp to deserving merchants.

Proud of these high-profile but "low cost wins," Balloon wishes he could change one thing, "I would reach all vacant property owners and get them engaged on commercial corridors and elsewhere." He added: "I am grateful for all that PACDC does for us and other commercial corridor managers."

He advises other corridor managers to work to build passion and commitment, develop skills for the job, be resilient and communicate and sell the community's vision.

In the future, Balloon wants to "manage a commercial or a downtown district. It gives

you the opportunity to invest in a 10-year timeline. Sometimes it takes that long to get the job done."

Many folks bet this Rising Star will "get the job done." ■



Tacony CDC Golden Broom Award Winning Shopkeeper and volunteers.





Rising Star Follows Her Dream Home to Fairmount

Rebecca Johnson
Executive Director, Fairmount CDC

When Rising Star Rebecca Johnson says she wants “the Greater Art Museum area to be a strong, healthy, economically diverse neighborhood,” there’s no reason to doubt her.

Her experience in real estate law, policy development, non-profit research on crime and justice, negotiating, open space and greening, municipal sewer authorities, political campaigns, nonprofit management, and degrees in sociology and law prepared her to get the job done.

It’s not that she hasn’t faced choices and challenges as Executive Director of the Fairmount Community Development Corporation since 2009 and also earlier in her career.

She was lauded for her real estate work and ability to deal with diverse constituencies when she worked for a suburban law firm. For example, she did real estate work for everything from municipal sewer authorities and township open space committees to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

and private real estate developers. She excelled, and she got the job done.

Other experiences included volunteering — on neighborhood committees, political campaigns, and with local organizations. “Volunteering is a great way to meet people.”

While working at the law firm in Blue Bell and living in Fairmount, she yearned “to make her home town a world class city.” Every day, she observed many opportunities — and challenges — and wanted to do something about them.

After practicing law for three years, she fielded a call about the position at Fairmount CDC. “I jumped at the chance,” Johnson said. As Executive Director at Fairmount CDC, Johnson has used her skills, accomplished much, and works hard to maintain “work-life balance.”

Johnson has acquired 10 vacant properties and, in conjunction with a private developer, new homes are under construction. She’s working to grow local businesses and has attracted 23 new ones. She’s

launched an expanded business district including Spring Garden, Francisville, Brewerytown and Fairmount.

And, she’s willing to tackle tough issues.

Sometimes, she says, “You just have to say uncomfortable things. People need to trust you. To create social cohesion in a place like Fairmount, neighbors have to feel part of the process.”

“With gentrification, old and new families, and race and class differences, there needs to be a genuine meeting of people from all these groups. Girard Avenue has to be a meeting place rather than a dividing line.”

“You also have to listen a lot. Do what you say you’re going to do. And keep working on relationships. You always must be collaborative,” she added.

Whether working, volunteering, tackling tough issues or balancing life and work, this Rising Star seems to have found the formula for success. ■



Left to right: Vital Neighborhoods renovated home; Arts Crawl; Restaurant Week With Art.



2013 Community Leader

Community Leader is True “Angel” to Her Clients

Angel Palmer
Manager of the Emergency Food Program
M.A.P. Holistic CDC



To hear Angel Palmer tell you about her work, you'd think she was drawing a really big salary.

Just consider her schedule. Palmer, now Manager of the Emergency Food Program at M.A.P. Holistic Community Development Corporation, sees 20-30 people per day every day from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. But that's not when her day starts. She's the first person in the office every morning around 7:20 to “open things up and get organized.” Then she's joined by an office manager and the executive director, Ossie Parker.

Palmer is a volunteer—a very dedicated one—since she joined M.A.P. Holistic in 2010. Of her arrival there, Parker said, “Little did I realize that I would ever find such a worker at this time in my life.”

The Executive Director applauds Angel Palmer's diligence.

“She started here as a cleaner, doing everything including emptying trash, cleaning the rest room, doing floors and straightening up, Parker said. “She had a knack with people, and she quickly moved to Intake Counselor and now to Manager of the Emergency Food Program.”

From left to right: Sign in front of M.A.P. Holistic CDC; Feeding attendees at their monthly community meal, Veronica Anderson, Vice President of M.A.P. Holistic CDC, Evangelist Johnette Dickie-Holloman, Trustee, Angel Palmer, Manager of the Emergency Food Program, and Deacon Carlton Dickie-Holloman, Chairman of M.A.P. Holistic CDC.

With her quick smile and pleasant attitude, “Angel makes people feel comfortable and lets them know they are in competent hands,” said Parker.

She was recently recognized by City Council President Darrell L. Clarke and Pennsylvania State Representative Gary Williams for her loyal and dedicated volunteer service to M.A.P. Holistic.

Previously, Palmer provided community leadership through her involvement with the Harrison Tenant Council and the Philadelphia Housing Authority.

Since she began this full-time volunteer work, she has seen an increased need.

“During the past three years, there has been a big increase in the number of people who need clothing, food, and help with emergency services for their gas and electric,” Palmer said. We work closely with Rev. Lewis C. Nash, Sr., Founder and CEO of Faith and Advocacy Outreach.

We could use a few more offices and more money, but for now we're getting the job done.

Now, as Emergency Food Manager, she and her colleagues serve 170 clients each day. But the more she does, the better she feels.

“I feel so good when someone comes back to me and says ‘thanks.’ They give me hugs, thanks and they tell me how things worked out. And they now have places to live. We help them do whatever they need,” she says. “This work gives me a reason to get up in the morning and get in to the office,” she added.

In a special way, volunteer Angel Palmer is getting ‘paid’ for the selfless work she does every day. ■



Past Blue Ribbon Finalists and Winners

2012

Winners

Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia
The ReStore

Community Ventures
Francisville East

Finalists

Friends Rehabilitation Program
Strawberry Mansion
Homeownership

People's Emergency Center
Jannie's Place

Women's Community
Revitalization Project
Evelyn Sanders Townhomes
Phase 2

2011

Winners

New Kensington CDC
Sustainable 19125
Big Green Block

East Falls Development
Corporation
Trolley Car Café and
Gateway Center at the Bathey

Finalists

HACE
Lawrence Court

Impact Services Corporation
Aramingo Crossing

Philadelphia Chinatown
Development Corporation
10th Street Plaza

2010

Winners

HACE
Mercy LIFE Center

Roxborough Development
Corporation
Targeted Block Façade
Improvement Program

Finalists

Impact Services Corporation
Hancock Manor

Nueva Esperanza
Latin Quarter Project

People's Emergency Center
West Powelton/Saunders
Park Plan

2009

Winner

Asociación Puertorriqueños
en Marcha
Pradera III Homeownership
and Tru Mark Credit Union

Finalists

Office of Community
Development
—Archdiocese of Philadelphia
St. John Neumann Place

New Kensington CDC
Sustainable 19125

Ogontz Avenue Revitalization
Corporation
West Oak Lane Jazz Fest

Women's Community
Revitalization Project
Neighborhood Plan

2008

Winner

Project H.O.M.E.
St. Elizabeth Phase V
Homeownership Development

Finalists

Asociación Puertorriqueños
en Marcha
Sheridan Street Affordable
Housing Project

The Enterprise Center CDC
Walnut Hill Street Team
Impact Services Corporation
Dual Diagnosis Program

New Kensington CDC
Frankford Avenue Arts Corridor

Ogontz Avenue Revitalization
Corporation
Northwest Greening Initiative

The Envelope Please...

How PACDC Blue Ribbon Award Winners Are Selected

PACDC's Blue Ribbon Awards recognize outstanding achievement by community development corporations that advance PACDC's Vision:

"Vibrant and diverse neighborhoods across Philadelphia that equitably meet the needs of all community members, preserve and enhance community assets, and foster a stronger city and region."

Winners exemplify community development best practices and demonstrate excellence in the following categories:

- **Innovation:** organization has created a new or pioneering project or program; or approached a project or program in a new and inventive way.
- **Impact:** a demonstrated capacity to have positively influenced or changed the community or population served for the better.
- **Leadership:** a proven ability to guide, lead, or influence the direction, course, action, or opinions of stakeholders that results in advancement for the community or population served.

A committee of community development professionals reviews nominations, selects the finalists, and decides the winners by consensus.

PACDC thanks the 2013 Awards Review Committee: Paige Carlson-Heim, TD Bank; Ronald Dutton, Wells Fargo; Karen Fegely, Philadelphia Department of Commerce; Andrew Frishkoff, Local Initiatives Support Corporation; Donald Haskin, Citi; Deborah McColloch, Philadelphia Office of Housing and Community Development; Elizabeth Miller, Community Design Collaborative; Frank Monaghan, Habitat for Humanity (2012 Blue Ribbon Winner); Mark Schwartz, Regional Housing Legal Services; Stefanie Seldin, Philadelphia VIP/LawWorks; and Linda Winfield, PNC Bank.





Temple II



Temple I



Walnut Hill West

2013 Blue Ribbon Winner-Large CDC

1260 Housing Development Corporation

Walnut Hill West and Temple I & II

Walt Kubiak, Executive Director

Mission of Serving the Most Vulnerable Achieves 25 Years of Success

While maintaining a relatively low profile for 25 years, 1260 Housing Development Corporation has been quietly providing safe and sustainable homes for the most vulnerable individuals and enhancing neighborhoods.

Two recent projects are winning examples of the 1,575 rental homes 1260 HDC has created across Philadelphia leveraging \$125 million in public and private funding:

Temple I and II – the largest gut rehabilitation in the U.S. to be certified under the LEED for Homes program at the Gold and Platinum levels respectively – restored 98 affordable rental homes in 50 historic townhouses and preserved the neighborhood’s sense of place. That “place” is near Temple University and its rapidly-gentrifying neighborhoods.

Along the 1700 block of North 16th Street and the 1500 block of North Gratz Street,

these rehabs provide energy-efficient homes, on-site security, and accessibility for disabled individuals while increasing property values for near-by neighbors. The majority of residents have lived in the neighborhood for five or more years, 85% are extremely low income and single-parent households, 21% are living with a disability, and 17% were formerly homeless.

Walnut Hill West – at 56th and Walnut Streets, 1260 HDC renovated 32 apartments in six buildings with energy-efficient appliance upgrades and a white “cool roof” system just a few blocks from a Fresh Grocer and the 56th Street El stop. Working closely with the Veteran’s Administration, Back on My Feet, and Gearing Up on this project, 1260 HDC serves a diverse but vulnerable group of individuals and households with healthy and affordable homes. An on-site Resident Services Coordinator connects people with city services and encourages self-sufficiency.

Despite 1260 HDC’s successful track record, they prefer to operate quietly and efficiently to best serve their residents.

“We are aware of potential “NIMBY” (not-in-my-back-yard) concerns from neighbors about our properties and residents, but our first goal is to serve our residents and their needs,” said Moira Rooney, Director of Strategic Investment for 1260 HDC.

“However, most of the time we usually do projects, residents move in, and the neighbors are pleased that handsome properties have replaced dilapidated structures.”

Many of 1260 HDC units are equipped to address the special needs of their residents, including physical handicaps.

Serving the most vulnerable in our society has been 1260 HDC’s mantra from its founding, a quarter century ago. Starting as a demonstration project between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 1260 HDC – and eight other organizations -- were formed when state psychiatric institutions were mandated to close and mainstream their patients. Today, 1260 HDC stays true to its mission. ■



Nicotown Court I



Nicotown Court II



2013 Blue Ribbon Winner-Small CDC

Nicotown Community Development Corporation Nicetown Court I and II

Majeedah Rashid, Chief Operating Officer

Housing Demand Exceeds Supply When Corridor Puts “Nice” Back in the Neighborhood

If you build it, they will come.

Truer words were never spoken when it comes to the Nicetown of today.

Earlier in its history, Nicetown was a thriving neighborhood of neat, modest row homes alongside once-giant manufacturers including the Budd Company, Midvale Steel, Tastykake Baking and the Brown Instrument Company.

But as “rust belt” industries departed for cheaper locations, Nicetown and the entire city – like others around the country – faced multiple challenges as the housing stock declined and commercial corridors struggled.

The story is very familiar, but what happened next may surprise you.

When the Nicetown Community Development Corporation announced a new, \$10 million mixed-use development with 37

affordable apartments and two commercial spaces in December, 2012, a standing-room-only crowd signed up on the spot for Nicetown Court I.

“We were so surprised with the reaction, we didn’t know what to do,” said Nicetown CDC’s Executive Director Majeedah Rashid.

“We had hundreds of people sign their names on notepads. We’ll never do that again!”

“Nicetown Court I immediately changed the landscape of our commercial corridor, and leveraged Nicetown Court II, a \$20 million development across the street from the Wayne Junction train station,” Rashid said.

“And we were happy to partner with Universal Companies on both of these projects.”

“When we announced the first project, more than 400 people lined up down the block and around the corner to sign up for one of the 50 townhomes. We learned our lesson; This time for Nicetown Court II, we signed up folks online,” she laughed.



Thrilled with the response, Nicetown Court II attracted about “60% of people from the neighborhood and 40% from all over, including as far away as Norristown, Montgomery County. We knew we had another winner,” she added.

Teed up next is a proposed \$1.5 million, mixed use development with space for the Nicetown CDC Business and Cultural Center with two apartments above. All this within the context of a neighborhood economic development strategy – a 10-year, resident-driven, transit-oriented plan to improve the local economy, homes and social programming in Nicetown.

As Rashid works to “put the Nice Back in Nicetown,” she shares some lessons learned: Identify a mentor such as Universal, collaborate, have a passion about your community, and build capacity. “And, take advantage of others who can help you, like PACDC.” ■



2013 Blue Ribbon Finalist

People's Emergency Center Lancaster Revitalization Plan

Kira Strong, Vice President, Community & Economic Development

'Making Their Mark,' Lancaster Avenue Neighbors 'Take Next Steps'

Although most neighborhoods which develop plans engage residents and local businesses in the process, can you name one that also has public meetings, steering committee meetings, confidential interviews, focus groups, door-to-door surveying, and creative place-making?

If you don't know, here's a clue. The "creative place-making" component of this neighborhood planning process used a vacant property at 3961 Lancaster Avenue, where:

- Residents shared their opinions five times over four weeks;
- The temporary installation of a tarp and blackboard paint on the exterior of the wall drew attention to the planning process; and
- Passersby used chalk to adorn the building with their ideas and visions for the neighborhood.

Undoubtedly by now, you guessed it.

This process, labeled as Make Your Mark!, is the name of the Lower Lancaster Revitalization Plan orchestrated by the People's Emergency Center (PEC) and funded

by a \$100,000 grant from Wells Fargo Regional Foundation. While all that is very creative, there's more.

The creative place-making "Open House" also included interactive maps where residents could identify hot spots for crime, illegal dumping, flooding and poor lighting. Residents also sent "Postcards from the Future," helping them to imagine what Lower Lancaster Avenue could be 20 years from now. And at the end of the process, the community was invited to a party at the place-making "Open House" where everyone received a printed copy of the plan they had jointly developed.

"Getting the printed plan was a first for many neighborhood residents who were so very proud of what they accomplished together," said Kevin Musselman, Manager of Neighborhood and Resource Planning for PEC.

A new take on what could be a straightforward process, Make Your Mark! was an experience and a success. But now there's a sequel. After bringing together hundreds of neighbors for this shared visioning process, there are next steps—literally and figuratively.

Now that neighbors have "Made Their Mark," they are meeting quarterly to develop

"Next Steps," supported by a \$750,000 implementation grant from the Wells Fargo Regional Foundation. The branding and marketing of "Next Steps" had residents talking excitedly about a possible "arts hub," decorated bus shelters, and murals.

For more than a decade, PEC has worked with business owners along Lancaster Avenue from 37th to 44th Streets to complete 29 commercial facades and attract 45 new businesses while facilitating more than \$57 million in public and private investments to transform 140 vacant properties and lots into 228 affordable homes.

With a track record like that, it's no wonder the ideas never stop flowing. ■



2013 Blue Ribbon Finalist

The Enterprise Center CDC Community Leader Program

Bryan Fenstermaker, Director of Programs

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

If you're looking for a blueprint to improve your neighborhood, build employable individuals, and cultivate community leaders, one CDC may have just the answer.

The Enterprise Center Community Development Corporation's (TEC-CDC) new Community Leaders Program is getting rave reviews and has yielded 10 success stories in its first year in operation. With the dual goals of personal development and community engagement, this program seems to be a win for the community and a win for individuals.

When the program was first introduced, more than 50 persons applied for 10 slots," said Bryan Fenstermaker, Director of Programs at TEC-CDC. "We purposely wanted to keep the program small so we could accomplish our goals."

"Many folks remember our Walnut Hill Street Team in which residents canvassed the neighborhood, identified problems with

homes, and worked to resolve them," Fenstermaker explained. While that program benefitted Walnut Hill, it did little to help those workers gain more employable skills. Our Community Leaders Program accomplishes both."

This new, nine-month program has an educational component. The curriculum includes 20 modules and teaches skills such as effective communication, customer service, problem solving, community service and service leadership. Participants also canvass and survey neighbors, lead community meetings, and engage volunteers throughout the community.

"We want to build strong neighborhoods at the grassroots level, but we also want to build strong community leaders and employees capable of other jobs as well," he said.

"Out of our first group, several folks already gained employment, and the feedback has been great," Fenstermaker said. In interviews with local employers such as Drexel University and others, the human resources



directors called our Community Leaders "the best-prepared candidates we've seen." In fact, one is now employed as the front desk receptionist at TEC-CDC.

Having achieved success as they move into year two, TEC-CDC is offering to share this model with others.

Beyond improving its own program, TEC-CDC is working to replicate the model elsewhere in the city," Fenstermaker said. People's Emergency Center and Asociacion de Puertorriqueños en Marcha contracted with TEC-CDC to aid in starting similar programs.

PACDC applauds TEC-CDC's new Community Leaders Program—a winner for the community, individuals, and other CDCs. ■



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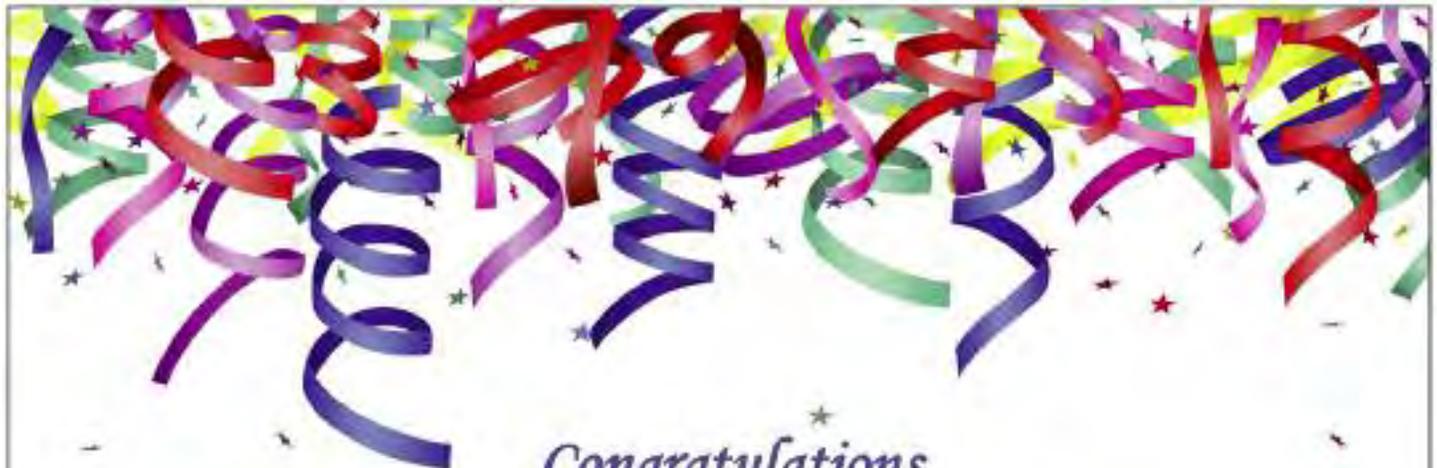
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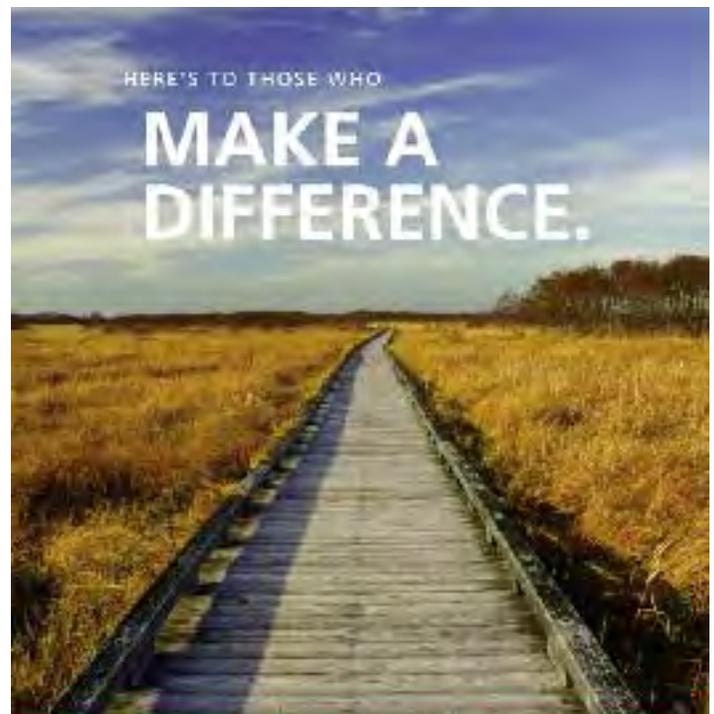
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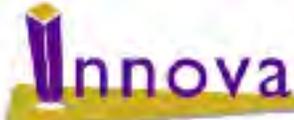
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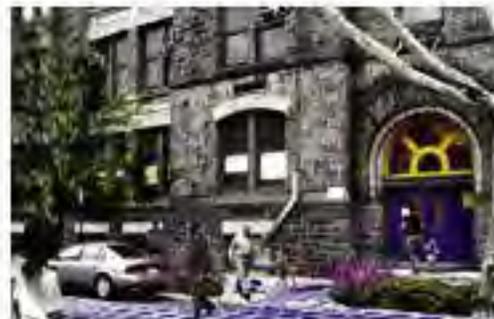


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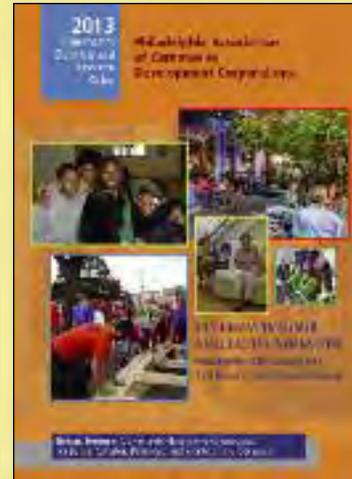


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www.susquehanna.net



TD Bank

1-888-751-9000
www.tdbank.com



Urban Affairs Coalition

(215) 851-1705
www.uac.org



Wells Fargo

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