

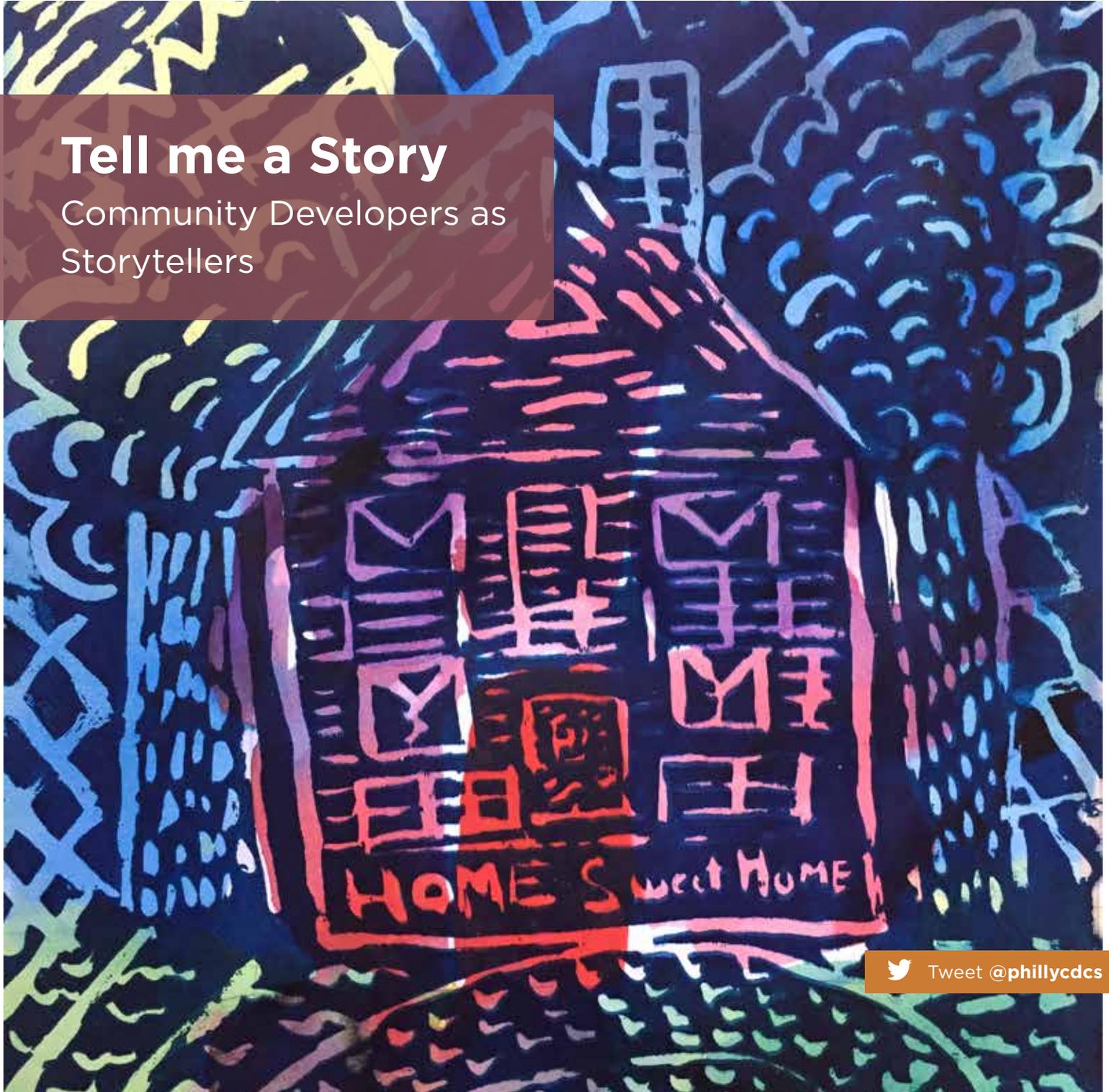
PACDC

2020

PHILADELPHIA ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS

Tell me a Story

Community Developers as
Storytellers



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YES

ARTIST: STACI MOORE

In this Issue...

Tell me a story

Community Developers as Storytellers

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Five Key Takeaways from This Edition

1 Planning for the Crane began when the Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation (PCDC) was still in embryonic form after legendary community activist and unofficial “godmother” of Chinatown, Cecilia Moy Yep, together with her neighbors and others, protested the bulldozing of the community’s homes and stores.

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2 La Bomba is a West African-influenced dance from Puerto Rico. It comes from the coast, where many of the African slaves who were brought over by the Spanish settled and began to establish roots with the indigenous Tainos. La Bomba was created as a way to tell stories and release stress.

KATSÍ MIRANDA LOZADA, **PAGE 25**

3 What makes a neighborhood feel like home? The feelings of belonging and responsibility are what make a neighborhood feel like home. The ability to create genuine relationships and sharing in the struggles and triumphs.

RACHEL EHRGOOD, **PAGE 34**

4 I miss the late-night fire alarms that forced hundreds of tired bodies to quickly shuffle down the smoky stairwell. The cool air hitting our faces as we finally took in breaths without the fear of suffocation. People passing off blankets to children, food offered by concerned strangers. “My mom brought corn bread down if anybody wants it!”

AIDEN GIBBS, **PAGE 14**

5 My neighborhood, block, and home are all changing, and though change is not always a bad thing, the way change comes about and the who and why the change is occurring can be an issue. Ultimately, how people perceive it—negatively or positively—depends on whether the changes are the ones they want to see or the changes that others want for them.

GAIL LONEY, **PAGE 16**

PACDC 2020

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[COVER]

"Home Sweet Home," by Juanita Jones. Born in 1974 and a life long resident of Philadelphia, Juanita is a mentor and teacher who empowers community through organizing and art-making practices. These efforts help many navigate journeys of self-expression and resilience. Her favorite mediums are charcoal, watercolor, and printmaking.

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

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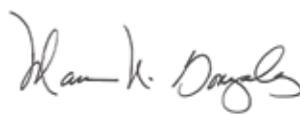
Dear Friends:

We are thrilled to be able to share with you our newest edition of *PACDC Magazine*. "Tell Me a Story" features narratives and images from neighborhoods across the city. Our contributors span an age range from the very young to the young at heart and combine generations of history and connection to a community with those just starting to make new history in the place they now call home.

These stories have a common theme: a sense of place and community and identity. These are the same themes our member organizations have dedicated themselves to protecting and advancing. Also in this edition, we honor and celebrate exemplary achievement recognized through PACDC's Awards for Community Development Excellence. The awards highlight the tremendous accomplishments of large and small organizations, as well as the individuals who are working so tirelessly to make a difference in their communities and in the field of neighborhood revitalization.

We thank our contributors, our awardees and finalists, but most of all you, our supporters and friends, who continue to encourage our storytelling.

Warmly,



MARIA N. GONZALEZ
BOARD PRESIDENT



RICK SAUER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Acknowledging Those Who Make Our Work Possible

PACDC works to create an equitable city where every Philadelphian lives, works, and thrives in a neighborhood that offers an excellent quality of life.

As a membership association, we foster strong community development corporations and nonprofit community organizations by enhancing their skills and advocating for resources and policies to create a just and inclusive Philadelphia.

PACDC cannot pursue its mission without the support of numerous organizations and individuals. While this magazine showcases our 2020 Signature Events Series Sponsors and Advertisers, PACDC gratefully acknowledges the following institutions and individuals for their additional financial investment:

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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.

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At JPMorgan Chase, we believe that everyone should share in the rewards of a growing economy. We seek to improve neighborhoods and advance promising solutions that connect families and business owners to economic opportunity. Reducing inequality and creating widely-shared prosperity requires collaboration of business, government, nonprofit and other civic organizations.

We are proud to participate in these efforts and support PACDC.

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Tell me a story

Community Developers as Storytellers

The exercise of imagination is dangerous to those who profit from the way things are because it has the power to show that the way things are is not permanent, not universal, not necessary. Having that real though limited power to put established institutions into question, imaginative literature has also the responsibility of power. The storyteller is the truth-teller.

—URSULA K. LE GUIN

In this edition of *PACDC Magazine*, we wanted to honor and celebrate the power of imagination and stories as the magic that drives community development. Cleaning a trash-strewn lot and transforming it into a community garden, repurposing an empty storefront to house poetry readings for women returning from incarceration, transforming an unused commercial space for after-school programs for teens—all take imagination and tell the story that beauty and vitality can blossom anywhere with careful cultivation. Building homes for seniors and young families in neighborhoods real estate agents had long forgotten also takes imagination and tells a story that despite trends and forecasting, there are people and families and hope still to be nurtured even in places long thought dead.

Community developers for all of their struggles and triumphs are at their heart storytellers and culture keepers. As Ms. Le Guin suggests, things are not permanent, but stories

have the ability to tether us to each other and to place. We wanted to amplify that idea in this edition by initiating a call for stories, whether upbeat or sad, angry or delightfully happy.

We sought short poems, longer narrative fiction or non-fiction, and everything in between and, of course, added visual storytelling. When words fail to capture what we want to communicate, a picture can say it with a clarity that is astonishing. In imagining how a place can grow, change, and evolve; how families can sustain themselves within that change; how communities are fighting for change and sharing the story of these endeavors, we can mark, claim, sustain a place—and ultimately our ideals of what it is to be a human residing there.

We hope you will enjoy these stories and be inspired to tell your own story—for yourself and for your community. The world is waiting.

In Memoriam to What Remains

We started out in February of this year seeking to memorialize four fallen community developers who were brilliant in their generosity of spirit and commitment to the people of their neighborhoods: Kyle Shenandoah, Elmira “Miss Myra” Smith, Felix Torres-Colon, and Andy Trackman. Just as we were about to go to print, another colleague and collaborator, Jeff Allegretti, passed. Then the pandemic hit.

Many, many, many more people were lost—if not in our immediate circle, then in the circle of the universe of fellow humans on the planet earth trying to carve out dignity and happiness in the face of the everyday.

How do you pause and memorialize the people who are no longer here in the sunlight of a new world so changed from what any of us thought we knew? How do we create moments of pause and appreciation for those we have lost but also for that which remains?

We tell stories.

We tell the story of a young man who working on his own and with his neighbors made his Grays Ferry neighborhood better through his presence there. We tell the story of a nearly 80-year-old woman in Kensington with more style and energy than those half her age who nurtured a forgotten neighborhood to help find

itself again. We tell the story of a man who came as an unknown volunteer in Germantown but left a well-loved leader. We tell the story of a wise and quiet man in Kensington too whose dedication to equity is still sounding a bell that all of us who knew him can still hear. We tell the story of a gruff but lovable builder who understood the power of how bricks and mortar are just the first steps toward healing wounded communities here in Philly but also across the eastern seaboard.

In honor of these people we knew and cared about, as well as for the people no longer here we did not know, we will continue to tell stories of how people working together on common goals can heal and rebuild neighborhoods, communities, cities, nations, and a world for the betterment of those remaining and those still to come.

PHOTO CREDITS: (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT) KYLE SHENANDOAH, LOWELL BROWN, TIESHKA SMITH

KYLE SHENANDOAH



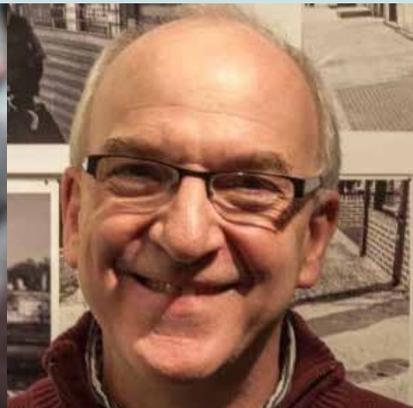
ELMIRA SMITH



FELIX TORRES-COLON



ANDREW TRACKMAN



What Makes a Neighborhood a Home?

BY CATHERINE BROWN

I am a born and raised Germantowner, proudly born on a block where my best girlfriend was delivered three days before me in Germantown Hospital; she was born on the 17th of June and I was born on the 20th. How about that! East Rittenhouse Street produced two girls within the same week in the summer of 1966 who would become lifelong friends.

Our grandmothers' doors faced one another on the small block. We both grew up there, our families intertwined as one. From birth this was our neighborhood, one big family, caring, sharing, living, and loving one another for generations. This is a part of what made our neighborhood our home!

The smell of the rain in the summertime washing down the hot city streets was a treat for the senses. As long as the storm didn't produce thunder and lightning, we were free to roam the house. If it did, being raised by parents and grandparents from Kingstree, South Carolina, we had to go sit down somewhere and do absolutely nothing until the storm passed!

But when it was just pouring down rain, the kind of strong rain that literally cleaned our atmosphere and created overflowing streams of water at the curb, my little brother and I would wait until our granny was deep in the kitchen. Then in our bare feet we would take off and run through Pickwell's parking lot, hit the curbside stream flowing down Haines Street, jump back on the pavement on Germantown Avenue, pounce on whatever puddle was available in an unoccupied parking space, and book it back up Rittenhouse Street! The stream was the biggest at the corner of Germantown Avenue and Rittenhouse Street, which made the kick-splash running we did from the corner to home the absolute best fun to be had on a rainy day in our neighborhood.

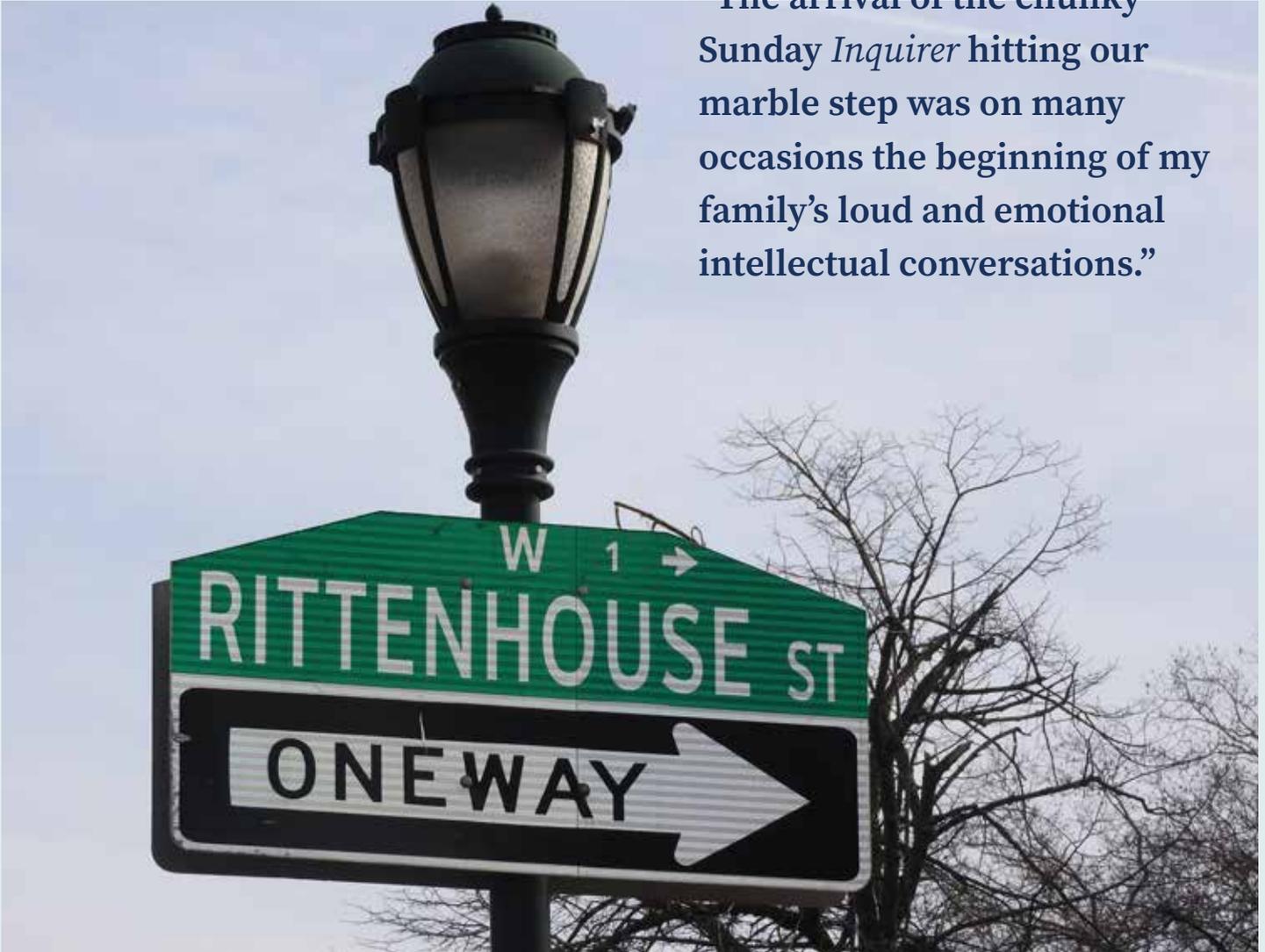
We would run back into the house soaking wet, sit down to dry off while Granny continued to busy herself in the kitchen. We don't think she ever knew we left the house. This too was a part of what made our neighborhood our home.

The arrival of the chunky Sunday *Inquirer* hitting our marble step was on many occasions the beginning of my family's loud and emotional intellectual conversations. The more the opinions differed, the louder the conversation. And so with fried chicken, grits, eggs, and biscuits served up by my granny, the conversation between my mom, my uncle and aunt, and my grandparents all sitting around the dining room table was an event to behold. If you were walking by outside, you would assume they were in a heated argument, but not so. They were all making their points be heard. To me it appeared they wanted all of Germantown to hear their opinions.



Catherine Michele Brown (Lena) is a Director for a senior citizens program in Philadelphia. Catherine is the author of *Rockette Sockettes*. Her love of education and the blessed experience of parenting her children have led her to the joys of creative writing and investing in the reader's experience. Catherine enjoys all things creative, coaching new writers, attending church, mentoring married couples, dancing, and traveling. She has been married to her high school sweetheart, Dana Brown, for thirty-three years. He is her creative supporter and adviser.

“The arrival of the chunky *Sunday Inquirer* hitting our marble step was on many occasions the beginning of my family’s loud and emotional intellectual conversations.”



Street marker in Germantown. PHOTO CREDIT: (THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE) CATHERINE MICHELE BROWN

This custom was carried on in my family for years, especially when there was something outrageous on the front page of the paper. I especially remember the emotions in the house involving the MOVE headline. I can’t remember the actual words of their opinions, but I clearly remember the feel of the emotions running high in the conversation.

This was my family. Those occasional Sunday morning meet-ups for breakfast and conversation. I don’t think they were actually planned; they just happened. I felt very protected by them in these moments. It was my safety net. It was loud and I listened. I never participated. It was grown folks’ business, but it made me feel connected and safe. That Sun-

day paper arriving on my step, the large home-cooked breakfast, those deep conversations, me and my family all in this one space at one time, this was a part of what made my neighborhood my home.

Me, my brother, and my best friend were thick as thieves. We were always together—the Three Amigos—whether we wanted to be or not. We frequently went to the library, which back then was inside Vernon Park. I had a thing for walking on what I called the “lip” of the park. It was a small raised border made out of cement. I walked on it often like a balance beam. I think all of us did. When we were feeling athletic, we would jump two feet on, two feet off. Most times your rhythm was right, and

it served you well, just some added fun and challenge to your walk.

Well, one day my rhythm was off and down I went! Out of all the body parts that could’ve gotten tagged, somehow I tagged my eye. Talk about dumb luck. Anything other than a black eye could have easily taught me my lesson. After the many jokes my brother and girlfriend made at my expense, I became way more careful when walking the little border. But this experience too is a part of what made my neighborhood my home.

With every neighborhood we endure some good, some bad, and some ugly. But it is all of those stories combined that makes our neighborhood our home.

When people
pull together,
every day is a
giant leap
forward.



We're proud to support PACDC for driving the change that makes each day better than the one before.

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Blumberg

BY AIDEN GIBBS

Hopscotch at Blumberg site. PHOTO CREDIT: AIDEN GIBBS

I miss the projects. The two 18-story buildings spray painted and surrounded by corner store trash. Little boys playing baseball with two-liter soda bottles, bases made from bricks they stole from the park. Little girls that played Double Dutch made from long clotheslines, shouting various chants, from “Johnny over the ocean” to “Girl Scouts, Girl Scouts, would you do,” their laughter resounding between Judson and Hamburger Way.

I miss the late-night fire alarms that forced hundreds of tired bodies to quickly shuffle down the smoky stairwell. The cool air hitting our faces as we finally took in breaths without the fear of suffocation. The sleepy eyes and drooping shoulders all waiting for the fire department to come. People passing off blankets to younger children, food offered by concerned strangers. “My mom brought corn bread down if anybody wants it!” My mother would sit us down on the bench near the park, my youngest brother attempting to lean on me and fall asleep. I would push him off me every time, complaining to my mother, “Dyeme keeps trying to lay on me. I don’t want to sit next to him.” She would look at us with eyes still half closed: “Just let your brother go to sleep.” He’d attempt to lean on me again, and I’d stand up, letting his head hit the cold bench. My mother would scold me for being so self-centered, making me sit back down and let my brother lean against me. I would eventually fall asleep with him after long bouts of complaining until the fire department gave the all clear for us to go back inside.

I miss the school across the street from the Judson Way building. The early mornings in Ms. Dune’s kindergarten classroom with Arnold and Avon, my best friends. She told us, “You can be anything.” The playground that was empty except for two broken-down basketball hoops. But Jada brought her chalk so we could play hopscotch, Quamaine brought his brother’s basketball, Jared brought the football, and the school provided what they could—hula hoops and jump ropes. We played tag or “helicopter, helicopter.” Someone would swing the rope high in the air while a group of girls chanted “Helicopter, helicopter, please come down.”



“And how could I not miss Christmas? My brothers and I laughing at the table with hot chocolate, the smell of homemade peanut butter cookies in the oven making us antsy. My mother blasting holiday music, forcing us to dance around with her to ‘Jingle Bell Rock’ and ‘Santa Claus Go Straight to the Ghetto.’”



Aiden Gibbs is a 17-year-old creative writing major at CAPA High School in Philadelphia. They currently reside in the northeast with their mother and two brothers, but grew up in North Philadelphia’s Blumberg Projects. They spend most of their time writing and plan on going to college to be a psychology major.

I miss having friends that were an elevator ride away. Spending the night at Avon’s house on the seventh floor, forgetting my toothbrush, and taking a quick ride up to the twelfth floor to retrieve it. Doing my homework at Mrs. Reggie’s house with Arnold while she made dinner. Mr. Reggie’s walking into the apartment, giving me as warm a hug as he would his own son, “Hey sweetie.” He’d ask me if I needed help with my homework, his wife laughing as she mixed spaghetti on the stove. “You know that girl don’t need no help. She’s smart as a whip, ain’t that right, sweetie?” I’d peer up from writing my three times table, bashful from the eyes that looked at me with affection. At the end of the night, Mrs. Reggie would take the eight-stop elevator ride to the twelfth floor with me, giving me a long, tight squeeze with a kiss on my forehead. She always smelled like spring.

And how could I not miss Christmas? My brothers and I laughing at the table with hot chocolate, the smell

of homemade peanut butter cookies in the oven making us antsy. My mother blasting holiday music, forcing us to dance around with her to “Jingle Bell Rock” and “Santa Claus Go Straight to the Ghetto.” Our neighbors who would bring gifts to help fill an otherwise empty tree, because to them we were family. “Merry Christmas,” they’d say while passing off dolls, trucks, and footballs for us kids in the community center. There wasn’t time to feel poor or hopeless, but to hug and be thankful for the people who loved and appreciated us.

This was home. Eighteen stories of love and community, where people cared in a way that went beyond the idea of neighbors. We were a family, all living together under one roof. I will never forget the only place that has truly felt like home, 1516 Judson Way, and all of its memories.



Home is Love!

BY GAIL LONEY

As I turn onto the block, I can't help but think, I can't wait to get home. I've been out all day, and I hope there's a parking space. There are never parking spaces on the block anymore. People don't go out, they don't move their cars, or they're home early. I can't say anything because I do the same thing. Oh, wow, a parking space right in front of the door.

When I see my house, I feel relieved. I made it back home. With keys in hand I open the door and let go of that first sigh of relief. Once in, my pets, London and Coco, are at the vestibule door barking and meowing like they haven't seen me in days. I act like it's no big deal, but I can't wait to see them either. And

if they aren't at the door when I come in, I'm looking for them, wondering where they are. And that's home.

My neighborhood, block, and home are all changing, and though change is not always a bad thing, the way change comes about and the who and why the change is occurring can be an issue. Ultimately, how people perceive it—negatively or positively—depends on whether the changes are the ones they want to see or the changes that others want for them.

For me, having a neighborhood with amenities is important, whether they're a short drive away or within walking distance. But the most important thing about community and

neighborhoods and homes are the "People." The people make it "Home."

I still live in the house my parents moved to when I was 13 years old. We had a devastating fire and lost everything but each other. So home to me means everything, and home includes community and neighborhoods. There's no separation here because they all are interconnected and intertwined. That fire taught me that if your community and neighborhood care about you, they will help you, be there for you, and always remember you.

Once in the house, the warmth embraces me. I breathe in the smells, and memories of my past and present self, events, family, food, feelings, and so much more, rushes in. I look around, and I see the influences of the past in my present. I see the changes that I've made on top of the changes my parents made when we all were here together. They showed me how to build, care for, maintain, and preserve on top of what they built. And it taught me how to keep it for future generations. Home, community, and this neighborhood are intertwined because they all raised me. They taught me how to live, and I took it out into the world to live a better life than they had. Some are now ancestors, and some are just old, but I keep them and what they taught me in my mind, body, and spirit.

Home is love! Ms. Artie, Lewis, Margaret, Ms. Maxine, Mr. Ralph's corner store, and Ms. Cora's restaurant, just to name a few people and places. Growing up, they told on me when

Gail's community gathering space. PHOTO CREDIT: GAIL LONEY



“I’ve lived in this neighborhood through gang wars, drug wars, and now corporate takeovers of my community by developers, studification (student-driven housing development), and gentrification. Housing should be affordable and accessible, and neighborhoods should be the vision of the people who live there now.”

I was being “fresh” or bad but looked out for me if something was going on, and they took care of and checked on me when I was sick. We fed and clothed each other, we took each other in when needed. If you had money and I didn’t, you paid this time and I paid the next time or baby sat, or did a favor in return. We shared, cared, cried; we loved and we died, to only do it all over again and give birth to a new kind of family. And when I had my daughter, I raised her the same way. I didn’t turn out so bad, and with the help of some of these same neighbors I grew up with, neither did she and her friends, who still come home and hang out on the steps with each other.

I’ve lived in this neighborhood through gang wars, drug wars, and now corporate takeovers of my community by developers, studification (student-driven housing development), and gentrification. Housing should be affordable and accessible, and neighborhoods should be the vision of the people who live there now. Any future creations and decisions should be with their vision input and consideration.

Home is everything—and everyone, no matter the income level, deserves their own HOME!



Gail D. Loney is currently a community activist and Stadium Stomper, working with various organizations and coalitions in the city on housing and land justice issues and education. A military veteran and block captain, she recognizes the importance of service. Holding an associate’s degree in marketing management and a bachelor’s in business management, she worked in back office operations for the banking industry and later the financial and investment industry. Gail retired from Macquarie Bank as a Senior Compliance Analyst in 2012 when her sickle-cell disease would no longer allow her to work.



PHOTO CREDIT: PROJECT HOME

HOME SWEET HOME

ARTIST: JUANITA JONES

Teaching Artist: What does community mean to you?

Community is made up of diverse people who come together to support one another. Community members come together to work through change or issues that will affect us as a whole, as our families grow. In a community, everyone comes together to create one voice to speak for those who are not strong enough to speak for themselves. Community provides a place where everyone matters and all are important to each other.



Juanita Jones, born in 1974, is a lifelong resident of Philadelphia. Juanita is a mentor and teacher who empowers community through organizing and art-making practices. These efforts help many navigate journeys of self-expression and resilience. Her favorite mediums are charcoal, watercolor, and printmaking.

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PECO is proud to partner with the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations in their commitment to rebuilding communities and revitalizing neighborhoods.



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TELL ME A STORY

How My Neighborhood Has Shaped Me

BY SARAH L. NGUYEN

PHOTO CREDIT: COLLEEN BOYD



The bus roars past me in the blink of an eye. I can hear different languages collide from one block to another. As I walk down South 7th Street, I can smell Cambodian noodle soup from three different restaurants. The strong smell of freshly brewed Vietnamese coffee diffuses into my nose as the cafe door swings open, back and forth. Laughter and joyful conversations fill the air during the day. Elders are sitting in front of their steps reading newspapers, playing chess on the sidewalk table, and catching up on their events in life. Parents walk their kids to school early in the morning and pick them up in the afternoon. After school, some children play a game of curb ball with their deflated basketball; other kids are stuck in a serious game of TV tag. Throughout the years my neighborhood experienced many changes, some for the worse and some for the better. My neighborhood, with its adversity and unity, has shaped me into the person I am today.

I was born at Jefferson Methodist Hospital 10 blocks away from my house. I've lived in this house since I was a couple of days old, and my family has never had a desire to relocate. My house is adjacent to a heavily diversified street that is filled with different businesses where everyone can shop and stroll. As I walk down the corridor, there is a Mexican corner store where I can purchase chicken and cheese empanadas. On the other end, I can also grab a hot bowl of Cambodian noodle soup with a cold cup of iced Thai tea, which is my favorite. South 7th Street is a one-stop-shop business corridor. While waiting for laundry to be done, I can get my hair cut or even my nails painted from the variety of beauty salons owned by immigrant women. My family is very grateful to have easy access to a diverse set of grocery stores within walking distance.

As I look back at my childhood, it brings a smile to my face. I remember so many good times I had with my grandma. Some days we took a walk and stopped at a video store; I would always beg her for coloring books and little toys. Yes, they do have coloring books and little toys in a video store. I was very fond of the little knick-knacks the sweet lady would sell. At a young age, I was aware of the different cultures that filled my neighborhood and that made me feel warm and welcomed. I loved seeing different cultures come together on one block because it represents the unity and strength of the community.

As the years have gone on, this neighborhood has changed. Sometimes, as I walk to the corner store, there are people under the influence passed out on random steps and some people selling illegal substances on shadowed corners. I might hear violent cries from a couple having a dispute. Police sirens, the blue and red lights that come rushing to my neighborhood, have always intimidated me. People became more angry and negligent. I would feel waves of trash hit my feet when I was walking to school. I felt like the neighborhood began to be unsafe, dark, and dirty.

To have a community is very important. There's a community within anything and everything. Even animals have their communities! Communities are supposed to be a safe space for people to live, where people can communicate their thoughts and share concerns. It matters so much that a community is a place where people can voice their opinions without being judged or ignored. There are seasons of everything, and this is the season to be grateful, joyful, and thankful. Despite all the negative changes, I still see light at the end of the tunnel for this neighborhood. These past few years, I see some improvement which I believe will bring a positive change to my neighborhood. I see the increase in police presence, brighter lights at night, police cameras being installed, and cleaning crews improving the cleanliness of the corridor.

Regardless of what has happened or what the neighborhood is going through, this neighborhood is still my home. This is where my heart resides. I believe I can be a part of making a change to better my community. I wish to see many more people get involved and care about one another. Everyone can bring a positive change through small actions, such as picking up their trash or waiting until they find a trash can to dispose of it. Also people can stop committing illegal activities on the streets. My goal is to see my neighborhood as a safe and fun environment for everyone, including the current residents who have resided here for decades and future generations that will build their lives in those very homes in the neighborhood.

A Cambodian-Vietnamese American, Sarah Nguyen was born and raised in South Philadelphia. She is currently in her freshman year of college studying dental hygiene. Her passion for community work and patient care goes hand in hand with one another in being able to help and connect with people. She believes that community development has shaped her into the person she is today and says, "It will always be a part of me!"

Tell me a story

BY SOLOMON J. COREANO

Without you, I could not be
You give me hope, opportunity
You take me as I am
Doesn't matter who I was
My pain has purpose
Together our future is nourished
You give me a chance to grow
First college graduate of my household
Early mornings and late nights
Sacrificing time to do what's right
To fulfill my future, to benefit my family
To move forward and live happily
A home away from home
I am not alone
Oh, Esperanza
You support us neighbors
Oh, Esperanza
You point us to the savior

Solomon storytelling with his father, Solomon Sr., at Esperanza Academy Charter. PHOTO CREDIT: ESPERANZA



The Esperanza community is truly special. I'm pleased to become part of the history that Esperanza has brought forth to our section of the city. The college along with its expert faculty has been more than I could have ever imagined.

Esperanza has impacted my life in a few ways. For example, it has given me the chance to not only get a quality education that fits my needs but also bring some of my visions to fruition. Esperanza created the opportunity for my father to see one of his written works come to life. I helped him to bring a children's book he had written to final publication. We donated a copy and held a reading session at Esperanza Academy Elementary School to present his children's story and had a fantastic experience doing so. Being able to see the smiles on the children's faces and their anticipation to ask a question was really gratifying for both my father and me.

When it comes to a neighborhood, there are a few things that make it feel like home in my opinion. First is feeling safe in your community. Second is having the opportunity to become more and not be held back by your surroundings. When you are at Esperanza, you will not only feel at home but determined, motivated, welcomed, and at peace.



A Philadelphia native, Solomon J. Coreano is a family man, a businessman, and a man of faith. He has experience in the industrial and sales and marketing fields and is currently undertaking studies in business administration. This past Halloween he released a children's story written by his father titled *Delvalle's Silver Mask*. Solomon has also been involved in the music scene over the last decade. Songwriting is his passion, and he is currently a freelance songwriter and continues entrepreneurial endeavors.

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Together we'll go far





PHOTO CREDIT: KATSÍ MIRANDA-LOZADA

KENSINGTON LOVE

ARTIST: KATSÍ MIRANDA-LOZADA

I was born and raised in the North Philly/Kensington section of the city. Like most communities of color, my neighborhood was and is vibrant, exciting, and full of families that looked out for each other no matter what. All neighborhoods have their issues with violence and drugs. The media often highlights the negative issues most communities of color face and not the things that help us thrive. In the past few years the narratives about my neighborhood have gotten darker and more toxic. The place that we've built and that has raised us was now being called "Zombie land" by media outlets. While, yes, we still

Katsí Miranda-Lozada is a proud Puerto Rican raised in Philadelphia and currently the Director of Community Engagement at New Kensington CDC. Her artwork draws on the diverse cultures and experiences of her life and is a mixture of classical techniques, self-taught strategies, and skills honed over the years. She says this about her creative process: "Everything I create is manifested in a dream state and then poured into reality. I never know where the piece is going; I just know when and how to start it. When the piece is complete, I can hardly remember the process; it's as if someone else takes control of the wheel. I didn't choose to be an artist. This life chose me!"

have drugs, homelessness, and violence, we did not create these circumstances on our own. Through all the changes and turmoil, we keep moving forward; we keep pushing for a better quality of life, for our neighbors, our children, and our children's children.

Kensington Love is my way of changing the narrative—reminding everyone who sees it that we are a community! We have families that call Kensington home. We are raising children there. We're building futures, establishing legacies. We are more than our "issues." Love lives here.



BOMBASO!

ARTIST: KATSÍ MIRANDA-LOZADA

Kensington has a large Puerto Rican community. Growing up Latina in the city was not easy because the expectation is that we are supposed to shed everything that makes us beautiful and assimilate to what an “American” is. My neighborhood was a safe place to embrace everything that made us unique. The food, music, and language wasn’t seen as an asset outside of the community. Growing up, I was yelled at by people outside of the community and told to speak

English. The more Puerto Rican I was, the less I was accepted. I am the first generation of Philaricana (a Puerto Rican from Philly) in my family. My mother missed her Island, and so she started teaching the dance and history of Puerto Rico in the neighborhood for free, to anyone who wanted to learn. Eventually the need and interest of keeping a connection to the Island that made us who we are grew.

La Bomba is a West African–influenced dance from the Island (of Puerto Rico). It comes from the coast of the Island, where many of the African slaves who were brought over by the Spanish settled and began to establish roots with the indigenous Taínos. La Bomba was created as a way to tell stories and

release stress. It was also used as an act of resistance to the conditions that the African and Taíno slaves endured. A Bombas is a gathering of people who come together to sing, dance, and strengthen community.

My piece “Bombaso” is a tribute to my culture and my community. It’s a way to bring my two worlds together—my love for the neighborhood I grew up in and the culture that exists within the community and my heart. I take pride in where I come from and where I am. Keeping a strong connection to your history builds resiliency. Resiliency makes us stronger and more equipped to tackle barriers that arise growing up in a disinvested community of color.

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LOOSIES, LOOSIES, TWO FOR A DOLLAR

BY STEPHAN ALAS

The man shouted over the train
Sweat dripped from his hair to his collar,
as he breathed the air that foreshadowed the rain

The train shook the pillars of the elevated tracks
as it eased to a halt and hissed like a metal snake
Across the street, there was a girl in black
whose tears could have salted a lake

“LOOSIES, LOOSIES” He proclaimed to the poor
Sweaty stench and cigarette smoke formed a smelly breeze
A man with sores said “Big man, lemme get four”
He paid with nickels, dimes and pennies

“I don’t take pennies” said the man as he handed them back
“Lemme just get three instead”
He reached in his back pocket and pulled out a pack
then thunderclaps began overhead

The high pitched hum started the stiff snake
The roars silenced as it slithered away
He thought, This might be the last sell I make today,
I feel the raindrops coming down anyway

He trod with rhythmic steps and skips
to avoid the pissy puddles and trash below
Passing rows of sick, hopeless cliques
he thought, at least I got a place to go
The drops fell like skydiving bullets
as he reached his shoebox of a home
He left the door open, even though he shouldn’t
Outside, he heard some faint moans

A few quarter hours later and it would have been a vigil
The girl in black, bent at the knees, wept at a shallow stream
Under her head were candles and sigils
used to mourn her love and innocent dreams

His gorilla eyes were glued to the sorrowful sight
Lightning bolts struck him at his core
Her pain gripped his throat unbearably tight
but then, he immediately fastened the door

He roved his shelter and later yearned
for empathy, A ride he could not tame
He sifted his mind, but couldn’t discern his woes from hers
like tears shed in a thunderous rain

The clouds held a cease fire and the man left the hollow house
The framed picture on his internal wall left him bothered
But then, he reached the corner and hollered
“LOOSIES, LOOSIES, LOOSIES, TWO FOR A DOLLAR”



PHOTO CREDIT: GARRETT O'DWYER

Stephan Alas is from the Bronx and has lived in Philadelphia for the last three years. He has spent ten years of his life homeless. “While growing up, both of my parents suffered from drug addictions and mental illness. When I was seven years old, they decided to separate. I spent the rest of my adolescent life in the middle of custody battles, cycling from apartments to shelters, and constantly switching schools.” He joined the army when he was 18 and got married when he was 20. His goal in life is to become a published author and to write novels for a living.

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Rebuilding Together volunteer Sigrid Lundby spackling during 2018 Kensington Block Build.



Elmira "Miss Myra" Smith at Kensington Block Build.



NKCDC staff members cleaning a lot.

PHOTO CREDIT: LOWELL BROWN



Lowell Brown is a freelance photographer and Communications Manager for New Kensington CDC. He lives in East Kensington with his wife, kids, dog, cat, and four free street trees. You can see more of his work at nkcdc.org.

A Sense of Place

JOYCE SMITH

It was an idyllic spring day in 2019, and I was enjoying an impromptu stroll along Parkside Avenue, a scenic block in my community. But that serenity soon came to a screeching halt.

Just a few feet in front of me two women were walking with squealing children in tow. By tuning into their conversation, it was easy to see that they were visitors from the Please Touch Museum, a popular children’s venue, just a stone’s throw from the residential section of East Parkside. After commenting on the recent improvements to the Parkside edge of West Fairmount Park, their talk shifted to the historical context of my beloved community—home to the 1876 Centennial Exposition. I silently marveled with the visitors at the splendor and the ornate architectural features of the beautiful mansions lining Parkside Avenue. “You can’t build houses like that anymore,” the younger of the two noted. Turning and looking southward, the eldest visitor responded with dread tinged with disgust and said, “But what sits behind here is a nightmare.”

Jolted, I instantly felt ashamed, but that reaction gradually settled into insult. Was I too being judged? I resided behind the “Parkside Façade.” I could guess what they were thinking—the dreaded “blight” word equating an undesirable neighborhood with its downtrodden denizens. They saw elements of disinvestment: empty lots, abandoned properties, and homes in various stages of disrepair due to decades of systemic redlining and economic decline and now exacerbated by speculating investors. A distressed community in peril.

However, I slowly realized that they only could see the façade, like the exterior of the Parkside homes. We, the visitors and I, were looking through different lenses. They could easily see the weaknesses but not our strengths lying under the surface: stakeholders with hopes and visions of community building. What they couldn’t see was the heart, the spirit, and the sweat equity of East Parkside residents, people like me, who chose to live and remain in the community.

Did they know that the highly acclaimed restoration of the Parkside mansions was due to our own longtime and current resident James Brown? But then I understood that they didn’t have opportunities to

witness the irrepressible energies and perseverance of senior neighborhood heirs, like Gertrude Johnson and Naomi Smith who maintained a community garden for over 30 years, and the exemplary work of Calalily Cousar, a 47-year resident, who dedicated her life to helping youth and seniors. They had no clue about the community members who attend city council sessions and zoning hearings and sit outside their council representative’s office steadfast in their chance to be heard.

There are countless other grassroots actors who bring attention and resources to East Parkside. The East Parkside Residents Association was successful in employing Habitat for Humanity to build energy-efficient homes on a struggling block. A civic group, Viola Street Residents, won a service grant to do an award-winning conceptual design by the Community Design Collaborative and to fund a block captains’ application to bring Rebuilding Together to repair residents’ homes. In 2015 a group of residents established the Centennial Parkside CDC with a mission to preserve the neighborhood and reverse the decline. All of this and more happens behind the walls of Parkside Avenue.

And this is why I call East Parkside home. I’m at home in a place where I am part of a collective actively improving the welfare of its community. Some of our efforts are ad hoc, and sometimes we are proactive or reactionary; I thrive in the activity and organizing. As a child I saw my neighborhood destroyed because of urban renewal. I was young and powerless.

My East Parkside community gives me an opportunity to work on a grassroots level to help correct the years of strife born out of the targeted destruction that I experienced. Yes, aesthetically pleasing neighborhoods with amenities are desirable places to live. But my sense of place and purpose doesn’t rest solely on comfort, convenience, and a perfectly manicured block. East Parkside, a scarred canvas brimming with potential, is striving because of the unrelenting energy of its people. It’s my domain, where difficult challenges intersect with human fortitude. This is a community where I can grow and stretch in my journey to live my authentic self.



Joyce at Centennial Park event with Mayor Jim Kenney and State Senator Vincent Hughes. PHOTO CREDIT: ALBERT YOO

“And this is why I call East Parkside home. I’m at home in a place where I am part of a collective actively improving the welfare of its community. Some of our efforts are ad hoc, and sometimes we are proactive or reactionary; I thrive in the activity and organizing. As a child I saw my neighborhood destroyed because of urban renewal. I was young and powerless.”

Joyce Smith’s advocacy centers on making connections and utilizing collaborations to help find solutions for housing issues plaguing distressed communities. She employs strategies to support development initiatives in her East Parkside neighborhood. Joyce works at Philadelphia Legal Assistance representing homeowners facing foreclosure. She is the Chair of Centennial Parkside CDC’s Real Estate Committee. She also serves on the Citizen’s Planning Institute Advisory Board and Viola Street Residents Association and is the recipient of PACDC’s 2015 Community Leadership Award. She has a BA in communications and journalism from Temple University.

TIRED

ARTIST: RACHEL EHRCOOD

What makes a neighborhood feel like home?

The feelings of belonging and responsibility are what make a neighborhood feel like home. The ability to create genuine relationships and sharing in the struggles and triumphs of neighbors are what make a neighborhood feel like home. Having a shared identity between people and the landscape, this is what makes a neighborhood home.



Rachel Ehrgood is an explorer, evaluator, and service provider working and living in Philadelphia since 2008. Art compositions and interaction have been the methods through which she makes the most of the world and neighborhoods lived in. The piece *Tired* is a collage about searching for ways of reckoning with waste and understanding it is more than one can deal with.

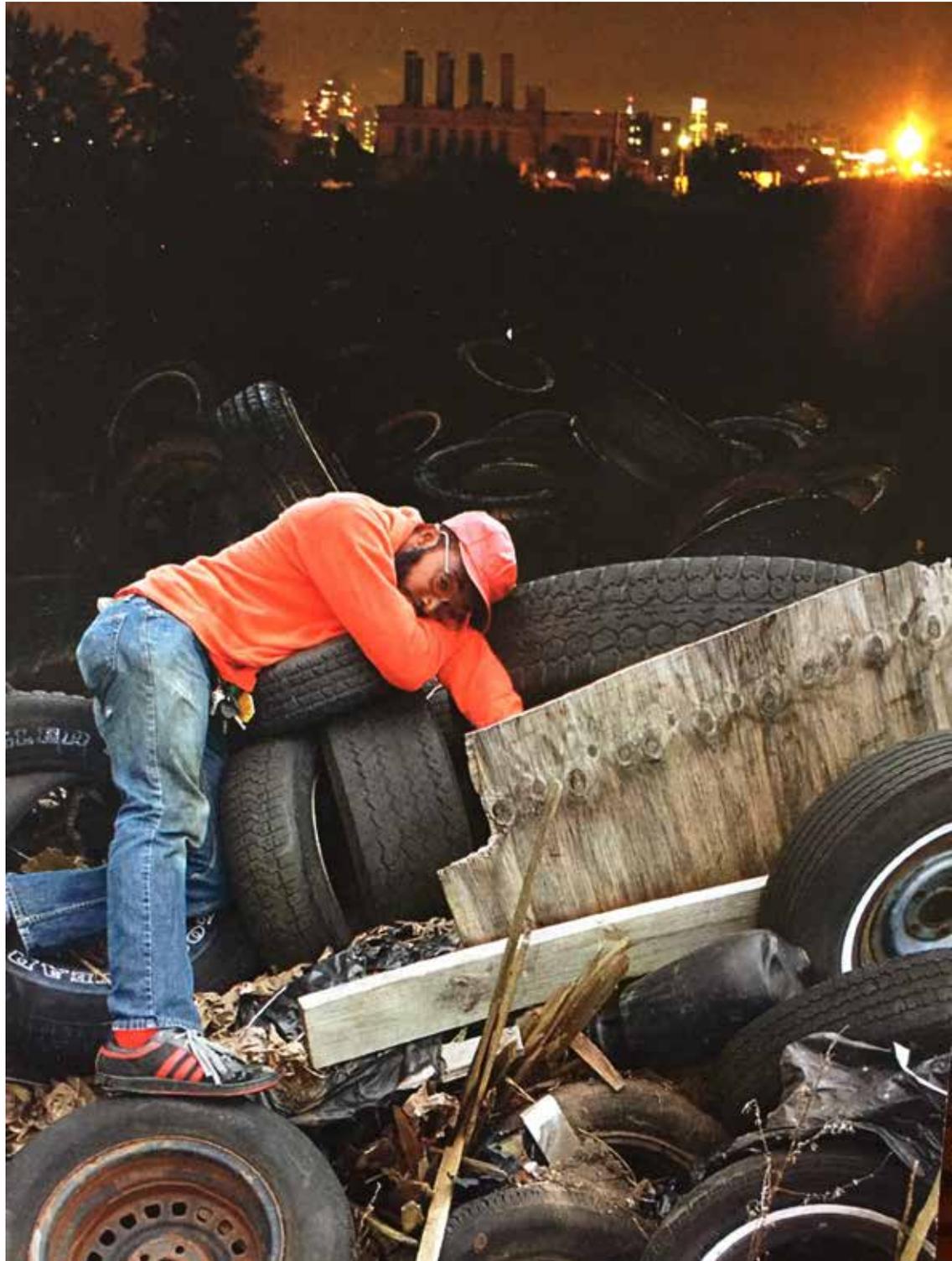


PHOTO CREDIT: RACHEL EHRCOOD

Our review committee, and some small thanks for a big job

PACDC could not have launched this edition without the careful, diligent help of our review committee made up of folks who tell stories of community for their daily bread. They brought insight, laughter, and a genuine willingness to help uncover and share the work we are so honored to showcase. Not listed here as a reviewer, but no less an ardent cheerleader, is our friend Laurel Raczka of the Painted Bride Arts Center. She didn't laugh at our idea but steadfastly said, "Do it, and let me connect with some folks." Thanks, Laurel, and thank you to our review committee for showing us the true meaning of community.



JARED BREY

Jared Brey is a freelance journalist based in Philadelphia. He is a reporter for NextCity.org and a contributing editor at *Landscape Architecture Magazine*. He previously worked as a staff writer for *Philadelphia Magazine* and as a beat reporter

for PlanPhilly at WHYY. His work has also been published in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *Philadelphia Weekly*, and others.



STACI MOORE

Staci Moore is a visual artist and board chair of the Women's Community Revitalization Project serving low-income women and their children with high-quality affordable housing and resident leadership development. Staci's work has

been featured at the Philadelphia Museum of Art as part of an extensive social practice of the arts project, *Philadelphia Assembled*.



AMELIA LONGO

Amelia Longo is a writer, occasional theatre maker, and lifelong Philadelphian. She grew up in East Oak Lane and has called Point Breeze home for the past five years. Her creative work has been a part of the First Person Arts Festival, SoLow Festival, Hybridge Arts, and Painted

Bride Art Center's Souls of Black Folk, a group residency culminating in a collaborative multidisciplinary performance in response to Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow*. She also works in business development, communications, people operations, and community management, with a focus on building processes and policies to support diversity, equity, and inclusion. She serves on the boards of Camp Sojourner, the La Salle University Art Museum, and the Friends of the South Philadelphia Library, and some of her favorite places to volunteer are Girls Rock Philly, Mighty Writers, and Bread and Roses Community Fund.



STARFIRE

STARFIRE is a lover, an artist, and an educator who has been a part of the Philadelphia theatre community for more than 15 years as an actor, a director, and a facilitator. She has artistically collaborated with such companies as Philadelphia Young Playwrights, Walnut Street and Arden Theatre Education Departments, ASAP

Drama Program, Shakespeare in Clark Park, 1812, Theatre in the X, Painted Bride Arts Center, Theatre Horizon, Found Theatre Company, Revamp Theatre Collective, and Powerstreet Theatre Company. She has also been a producer for DG Jam and many more. She is a part of the 2019 Keepers Leadership Philadelphia Program. As an advocate for performing arts in America, curator of energy and creative expression, and master mistress of ceremonies, STARFIRE uses her energy to love, create, and inspire artists of all mediums.



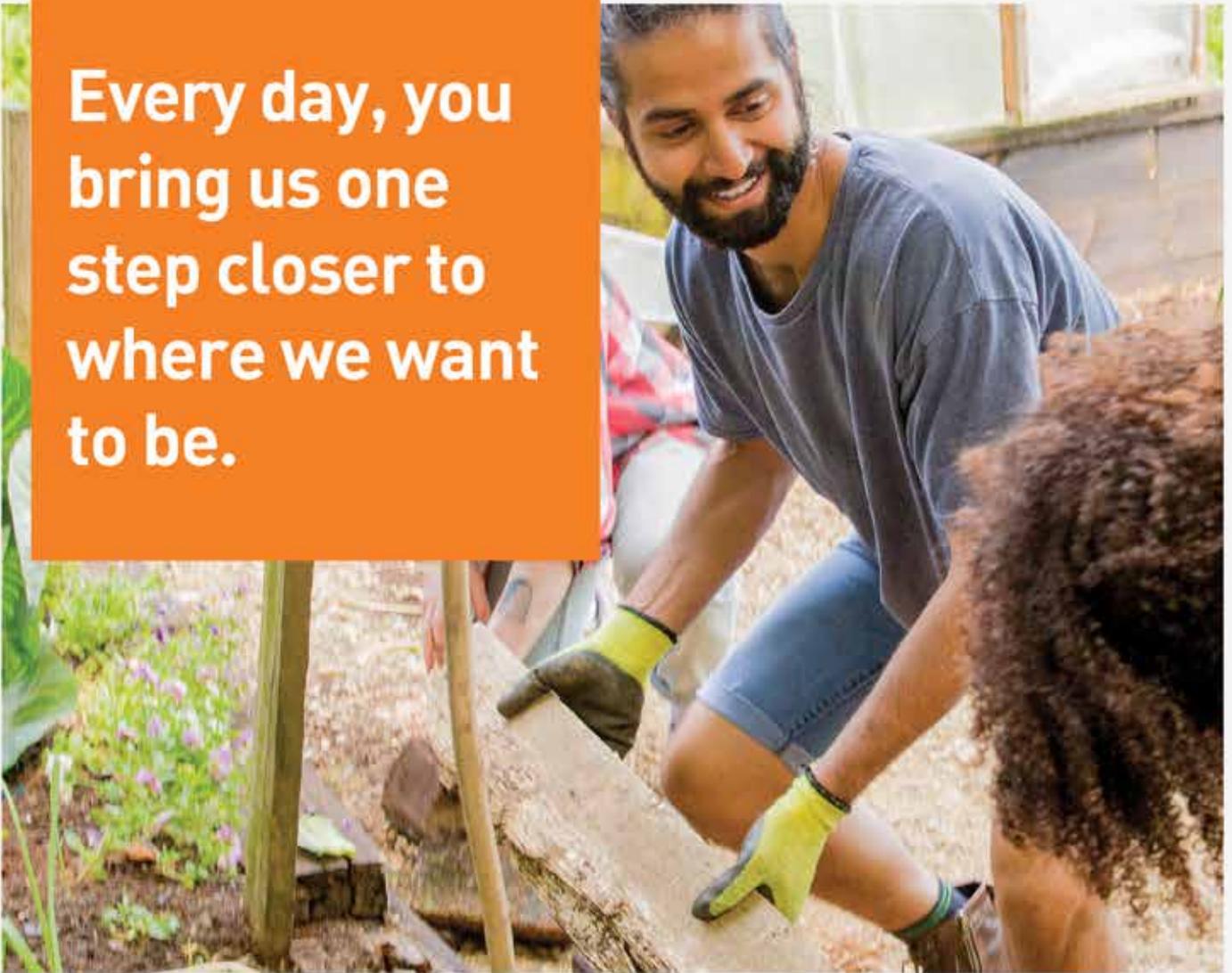
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LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Brian Hudson Sr., formerly with the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency

By Mark Schwartz

Helping to Turn Opportunity into Achievement with a Fish in-Hand

When PACDC asked me to write a few words about Brian and his impact on affordable housing in Pennsylvania, I thought it was funny given they told me I had a word count of something like 750. Seven-hundred-and-fifty words. No, it can't be done. Even the best writer with a razor-happy editor couldn't put into such succinctness the true impact of what Brian in his role at the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) has accomplished. Brian has made the agency one of the most effective and impactful in the nation and has helped ensure that thousands of families and individuals are living better lives in homes that are safe and affordable. And he has done this while being a genuinely nice man, an honest man, and a man who knows how to work with a range of people from different walks of life and treat them fairly and equitably.

Since the mid-1990s I have had the opportunity, as a PHFA board member, to work with Brian. One word I would use to describe Brian is mensch—a Yiddish word to describe someone who is responsible and a good soul. He truly wanted to use his position at PHFA to help those most vulnerable, those with fewer opportunities to achieve. In addition to being very skilled with finances and public policy, he is the most-skilled person I have ever met in saying “no” to an elected official while not making the official angry or upset.

Brian Hudson retired in February after working at PHFA for 45 years. He was a transformative figure for housing finance agencies not just in Pennsylvania but nationally as well. Brian, along with Kim Herman in Washington State, helped to show the value of state housing finance agencies as an alternate vehicle to deliver housing and community development products and policy solutions. PHFA is now viewed in Harrisburg as the go-to agency for new housing initiatives and resources in large part because of Brian's transformative leadership. Leaders in Harrisburg are now fully aware of what PHFA does and what PHFA could do with additional resources.

“ Brian has made the agency one of the most effective and impactful in the nation and has helped ensure that thousands of families and individuals are living better lives in homes that are safe and affordable. ”

Brian, of course, also had his faults, the primary one being the godawful fish he caught many years ago and had mounted and hung in his meeting room to torture visitors. Brian will be missed by many throughout Pennsylvania, but his fish will be missed by none.

Thank you, Brian, for hard work, a clear head, and a strong heart. Now, Rick, can I get a new hat for this?

Mark Schwartz is the Managing Director of Regional Housing Legal Services and a board member of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency.

BRIAN'S MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Established PHFA's mortgage insurance fund, PHIF, to combat redlining in parts of Pennsylvania.

Brought loan servicing in house, with more than 65,000 loans valued at more than \$5 billion.

Developed programs and initiatives that serve those most in need, including people experiencing homelessness, MBE/WBE, veterans, at-risk children, and individuals with special needs.

Maintained PHFA's "top tier" rating with S&P and Moody's, while using more than \$425 million of PHFA earnings to support special initiatives.

Created Commonwealth Cornerstone Group to pursue New Markets Tax Credits for developments in Pennsylvania with \$400 million allocated to 40 deals in distressed communities throughout Pennsylvania.

Navigated PHFA through the Great Recession while maintaining ratings, testifying before Congress, and negotiating with the Treasury for liquidity products and bond purchases to assist all housing finance agencies.

Helped find resources to maintain HEMAP after the legislature stopped providing annual funds to operate the program.

Served as President of the National Council of State Housing Agencies and was one of only two people to receive that organization's highest honor, its Leadership Award.



Groundbreaking in North Philadelphia. PHOTO CREDIT: ESPERANZA

And the list could go on and on. However, I'd like to highlight three accomplishments that I believe are special:

1. Brian nurtured and supported a high-functioning board at PHFA. With Brian as the Executive Director, the PHFA board has always been congenial; it listens to all opinions, makes decisions, and then moves on to the next issue. This has been the case despite the board including a number of people with strong personalities and opinions. Under Brian's leadership, PHFA developed the reputation as an agency that implemented programs efficiently and effectively and that responded to needs on a bipartisan basis throughout Pennsylvania.
2. The Governor's Office and the Legislature began to look at PHFA as a place to invest housing resources. When efforts were made by the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania to create the state housing trust fund (PHARE), all parties involved agreed that PHFA would put any new resources to good use throughout Pennsylvania. More recently, PHARE funding was increased by 60 percent, from \$25 million to \$40 million annually. When a number of people got together with Senator Jay Costa to work on a new mixed-use state tax credit, the issue was how big, not who would administer it. And finally, as part of discussions with the Housing Alliance and others on creating a state LIHTC, again there was no question that PHFA should administer it. All this highlights how Brian has built the reputation of PHFA throughout Pennsylvania.
3. He used earning to support special initiatives. Under Brian's leadership, PHFA has used a substantial portion of its earnings, more than \$425 million, to support its public mission, not just to build its balance sheet. Activities funded included Penn Homes, Homeownership Choice, housing counseling, down-payment assistance, and the special homeless facilities initiative.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CHAMPIONS

Recognizing outstanding leadership and dedication in advancing the field



Councilmember
**Cherelle
Parker**



Former Commerce
Director
Harold T. Epps

Championing Clean Commercial Corridors

Philadelphia Councilmember Cherelle Parker is guided by a famous Maya Angelou quote: “People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” This is why Parker has been laser-focused on reinvesting tax dollars into the aesthetic appeal of our communities. “If I walk down my commercial corridor and it’s dilapidated, and there are vacancies, and there’s trash, and it looks terrible, that is government saying to me that I don’t matter. That we don’t matter.” Showing people that they matter drove Parker to work with her council colleagues to budget more funding for commercial corridor cleaning and other programs. Thanks to her advocacy, funding for corridor cleaning more than doubled in fiscal year 2019 to more than \$2 million, then increased sixfold in FY 2020 to more than \$12 million.

While working for former Councilmember Marian Tasco, Parker learned that politics was all about how we direct resources. “Politics is simply a tool that is used to define how scarce resources are allocated. You can’t call yourself an effective user of politics if you’re not securing those resources back into the community,” she said.

Parker’s 10 years representing the 200th District in the Pennsylvania legislature is where she learned how to get things done through the hard work of negotiating, dealing with the issues, and forging compromises. Her skills have served Philadelphians well. During her time on the City Council, Parker has championed commercial corridor programs, as well as the Power Up Your Business program now run by the Community College of Philadelphia; the Restore, Repair, Renew program that provides loans for home repair; and the Philly First program that provides down-payment assistance to first-time homebuyers.

The engagement work of community development guides her decision making. “My grandmother always said, you have two ears and one mouth for a reason; use them in proportion.” Bringing the community together, asking them what they want to see, and listening and working with residents and businesses to create the neighborhood they envision are all essential components of Parker’s approach to improving the Ninth Council District.

“

My grandmother always said, you have two ears and one mouth for a reason; use them in proportion.

”

—Councilmember **Cherelle Parker**



Parker Cleaning Crew. PHOTO CREDIT: PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL

“
*This cleaning program
 will allow us to invest in
 these fundamentals
 in other parts of the city.*
 ”

—Former Commerce Director
Harold T. Epps

That’s also the approach former Philadelphia Department of Commerce Director Harold T. Epps sees as critical to the agency he led until March 2020, when he returned to the private sector. “There must be good leadership and management from the community to ensure there is a plan for that part of the city. Our job in Commerce is to partner with them to create the neighborhood and business corridor that they want, not what we want, and to improve it on their terms,” said Epps.

As Commerce Director, Epps toured as many as 70 commercial corridors, spending countless hours with small-business owners to find out what their challenges are and what could help them grow. “Commerce doesn’t happen until the corridor is safe, clean, and well lit,” said Epps, noting the success of the Center City District’s three decades of keeping downtown clean. “This cleaning program will allow us to invest in these fundamentals in other parts of the city.”

Epps has also been deeply committed to supporting and growing minority-owned and women-owned businesses. Under the direction of Mayor Jim Kenney and through Epps’s leadership, city contracting with these businesses increased from 32% to 36% over three years.

During Epps’s tenure, Philadelphia has seen three straight years of job growth that has outpaced the national average. Epps attributes this success in part to telling the story about Philadelphia on the national and global stages through a marketing campaign, Philadelphia Delivers (www.philadelphiadelivers.com). “It’s gone a long way in lifting the brand and reputation of Philadelphia.”

It is for the Commerce Department’s staff that Epps sings his highest praises. “I call them the James Brown of city government

because they are the hardest working, and they’re here because they have a passion and commitment to Philadelphians.”

An avid golfer, Epps sees similarities between the game and economic development. “Both require patience, dedication, commitment; both take time and attention before you get the desired results, but when you get it, it brings a smile to your face.”

Here at PACDC, our faces are smiling because Councilmember Parker and former Commerce Director Epps and their hard-working teams came together to dramatically boost resources for commercial corridor cleaning in every part of the city. We’re thrilled to honor them with our 2020 Community Development Champion Award!

Epps tours the Italian Market. PHOTO CREDIT: PHILADELPHIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE





COMMUNITY LEADER

Given to a dedicated neighborhood volunteer

Betty Turner, Germantown

“Relationships are how we get the work done.”

Daring to Lead in Germantown

Just about anyone who knows anything about community development in the City of Philadelphia knows Germantown’s Betty Turner. And why shouldn’t they? The spry 82 years young educator and community activist, retired from two posts running undergraduate programs in the city, serves as Vice Chair of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, sits on the Advisory Committees of LaSalle University and Greene Street Friends School, and is a cofounder of Germantown Community Connection, to name but a few of her roles. Her email tag line quotes lifestyle guru Dean Ornish: “The need for connection and community is primal, as fundamental as the need for air, water and food.”

Betty Turner lives this quote day in and day out and has done so on behalf of Germantown and its residents for the last 60 years.

“Betty continues to be a strong leader who has made a real difference in her community of Germantown,” says Nora Lichtash a longtime resident of the neighborhood and Executive Director of Women’s Community Revitalization Project. “I’ve had many an opportunity to witness Betty’s commitment to bringing people together and making sure that the community has the information we need to make thoughtful decisions about issues that affect our neighborhood.” Ms. Betty’s steadfast work advising and connecting people with one another has led to a host of citations and awards, including a Pennsylvania House of Representatives Citation for Dedicated Community Endeavors and induction into the Germantown Hall of Fame.

But these achievements only tell half of the story. While Ms. Betty worked to connect her community to resources, she raised a family of five children and at the same time completed undergraduate and graduate degrees, all while coaching and mentoring a generation of community leaders, such as Dr. Sheila Perkins, former Director of Admissions at Antioch University. “One of the earliest lessons I learned about leadership, integrity, and connection was observing—and interacting with—Betty. She would dare to lead; she didn’t claim to have the answers in order to solve problems, but she didn’t avoid difficult or crucial conversations or challenges. I would describe her as a courageous leader.”

When asked about how she started on her path, Ms. Betty cites her early upbringing in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, “where working on behalf of community was how I was taught living alongside Mennonites in the community. It’s a central part of who I am.” When asked what she wants people to know about Germantown, she responded, “Germantown is an historic and contemporary community of preservation, conservation, and growth with new development opportunities that are becoming increasingly evident as we move forward. ... Germantown is a great place to live, work, and invest.” Thanks to Betty Turner’s efforts, that is truer than ever.

PACDC congratulates Betty Turner as one of our 2020 Community Leader Awardees.



COMMUNITY LEADER

Given to a dedicated neighborhood volunteer

Marion Johnson, Logan

“I’ve been so blessed. I just wanted to return that love.”

Still Serving and Still Making Noise

At 86 years young, this tiny but fiery mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother still commands attention and respect in Logan not only because she talks the talk but also because she walks it too. At a recent protest against a youth immigrant detainee site being planned for the community, “Ms. Marion was right there with us in the street, protesting and fighting to protect young people. She will set you straight in a minute, that you cannot come into our community and do just whatever,” says Charlene Samuels, longtime Logan resident and staffer at Councilmember Helen Gym’s office. “She is in her 80s and is still out advocating for the community with energy and enthusiasm. It makes me feel like I need to step up my game,” Samuels continued.

Marion Johnson has lived her life working to revitalize the Logan community. Known respectfully and lovingly as the “Zoning Czar” who “out-lawyered the lawyers,” she spent many years working for Councilmember Marian B. Tasco, fighting to make sure zoning matters in Logan would benefit local residents’ well-being and desires for their community. “I wanted to educate people about the importance of zoning issues on quality of life, particularly for the seniors. I wanted to arm the community with the kind of information I would use if it were my mother I was fighting for,” Ms. Marion said. “I would still be working for City Council now, but I promised my family I would step down and spend time with them.”

Among her many accomplishments, Ms. Marion led the way in working with Logan CDC in developing the Logan Neighborhood Plan. Her motto is “Make some noise,” and she certainly did. That noise led to the completion of the Logan Neighborhood Plan even after the CDC dissolved and the plan had to be completed by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority. The document is the planning umbrella under which major development decisions for the future of Logan will be made. Ms. Marion’s latest effort was fighting to get a new facility for Barrett Playground through Rebuild, the City of Philadelphia’s initiative designed to improve and revitalize parks, recreation centers, and libraries citywide. Ms. Marion made sure that she was at every public meeting and involved in every discussion about Rebuild, reminding city officials, “Don’t forget Barrett!” Ms. Marion made sure that Mayor Jim Kenney came to Barrett in person to see the conditions of the facility. The Logan community is now in the process of planning and building a new \$9 million Barrett Playground. Through it all, what keeps this extraordinary senior citizen activist going is her family and faith. “God has been good to me.” Ms. Marion has been and continues to be good to Logan.

PACDC is honored to recognize Marion Johnson’s work with a 2020 Community Leader Award.



EQUITABLE ENTREPRENEUR

Recognizing outstanding achievement by an individual entrepreneur that advances equity and economic opportunity for low-income residents in their business model

Ariell Johnson, Amalgam Comics & Coffeehouse

Changing the World a Little with Comics, Coffee, and Community

As the daughter of a science fiction nerd and comic aficionado, Ariell Johnson bleeds geek. The Baltimore native wasn't initially a comics fangirl, but everything changed when she came across the character of Storm, who is one of the X-Men. In an interview with Bitch Media, Ariell explains, "Before seeing her, I always felt like I was watching someone else's adventures. After watching, I thought I could be a part of it."

Today, Ariell Johnson stars in her own adventure as the owner and head nerd-in-charge of Amalgam Comics & Coffeehouse. Her bookstore and coffee shop is the only black woman-owned comic book store in the country, and it's located in the heart of Kensington on Frankford Avenue. As an accounting student at Temple University, Ariell found her safe place at a coffee shop across the street from the comics store, but when it closed, she struggled to find another welcoming space. After her mother tragically passed away when Ariell was 28, she realized, "I may not have as much time here as I think. Do I want to be unhappy the whole time?" Through a conversation with her sister and brother-in-law, she found the spark to start her own business.

Although Amalgam garnered national attention and enthusiasm before opening its doors in December 2015, Ariell is no stranger to the challenges facing burgeoning entrepreneurs. Kensington's vibrant arts community attracted her to the area, but the building that holds Amalgam was one of many vacant and underutilized spaces on Frankford Avenue. Nevertheless, New Kensington CDC (NKCDC) was proud to assist with developing a business plan, exploring available property, and supporting her applications to city programs.

Amalgam is more than just a comic shop and café combined. It's a community gathering space for geek culture aficionados and a second home for local high school students, low-income residents, and new families moving into Kensington. Here, everyone is free to be who they are and "with their powers combined, change the world a little bit." The Amalgam team also hosts author signings, watch parties, game nights, book clubs, open mic nights, concerts, and other community events.

Ariell may not be able to change the weather like Storm can, but her work has changed the forecast for the Frankford Avenue Corridor and diverse authors alike. The area has grown into a "mini-enclave for black-owned businesses," says Bea Rider, the Interim Executive Director at NKCDC. Ariell also supports independent artists by carrying their work in the store and cultivating their professional development.

In 2016, Ariell received her own Marvel comic book cover, showing her with Marvel superhero RiRi Williams. And it's no wonder: Ariell is a real-life superhero!

Congratulations to Ariell Johnson on being named a PACDC 2020 Equitable Entrepreneur.

Enjoying a wide selection of Amalgam Comics. PHOTO CREDIT: NKCDC





EQUITABLE ENTREPRENEUR

Recognizing outstanding achievement by an individual entrepreneur that advances equity and economic opportunity for low-income residents in their business model

ZarZo Lian, Hope Myanmar

“I feel like the best version of myself when I help people.”

Going Above and Beyond to Help Newcomers

Helping Burmese immigrants in Philadelphia achieve empowerment through supportive services and job opportunities is more than just ZarZo Lian’s job; it’s her passion. And she relates to the Burmese Chin community through her own story as a Burmese immigrant.

“I know because I am from Burma. I know the people from Burma in Philadelphia. I help them, and I wanted to also create a job for them.” In addition to working part-time with SEAMAAC as the Burmese Chin Outreach Worker, she is a sushi chef. ZarZo is currently an independent manager of three sushi counters located across South Philadelphia, where all 15 of her full- and part-time staff members are Burmese refugees from her home neighborhood in South Philadelphia.

ZarZo is a compassionate person with a devotion to uplifting people. In her words, “Life is not easy, and if every day some people are struggling for living, struggling for health, struggling for finances, I want to help these people.” Her support for the Burmese community runs deeper than merely providing a job for them. She is sensitive to her staff’s broader needs: she actively hires mothers with children who need part-time work, and she welcomes them to bring their children or other family members to work when their schedules require it. She ensures that they are paid a living wage because she is all too familiar with her community members working minimum-wage jobs because of language barriers and cultural biases.

She cares deeply. This is evident in the way that she connects to her community. In addition to helping people get to doctors’ appointments and find jobs, she also offers counseling when people reach out for emotional support. She willingly walks alongside the Burmese immigrant community to get to the heart of their troubles, once again going above and beyond for her cause.

ZarZo will continue to push for what she believes in. Her future goals include opening a full-sized restaurant in the heart of South Philadelphia, creating even more accessible jobs for Burmese immigrants. “I feel like the best version of myself when I help people get a job, and what I am doing is providing a very important job for people.” We couldn’t agree more.

PACDC thanks ZarZo Lian for her dedicated work with the Burmese community and is proud to recognize her as a PACDC 2020 Equitable Entrepreneur.

ZarZo’s special sushi. PHOTO CREDIT: SEAMAAC





RISING STAR

Recognizing staff under the age of 40 at PACDC member organizations

Jessica Collazo, LISC Philadelphia

Advocating for Equity and Community

While managing reporting, outcome measurement, and grants administration for a large intermediary organization may sound daunting, add running a Financial Opportunity Center Network and co-leading a Racial Equity Initiative, and you’ll get a glimpse of a day in the life of Jessica Collazo in her role as Assistant Program Officer for LISC Philadelphia.

Jessica believes that LISC is only as strong as the communities it works with. She’s adamant that the organization’s programs should support and shine light on the successes and the challenges its partners are facing. “We want to be the voice of our community organizations and hear their stories, so we can hold them up to the funders, the government and the public at large.”

One way that LISC is addressing the needs of its partners is through the Family Income and Wealth Building Program that Jessica spearheads, which helps community partners deliver financial coaching and job placement services to the underemployed and unemployed. “This is so important to me. It’s at the center of all of my work—finding that entry point into the world and establishing financial stability—knowing that it’s one of the basic building blocks of success.”

With LISC’s support, two of their partners, Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha and Eastern North Philadelphia Workforce Development Corporation, now provide walk-in facilities that help people tackle all facets of financial life—from earning a steady paycheck to building good credit and saving for retirement. LISC also connects participating organizations to training and funding opportunities that help build organizational capacity. “It’s been extremely fulfilling fundraising for these services while gaining a deeper understanding of the gravity of workforce development,” says Jessica.

LISC Philadelphia’s Executive Director, Andrew Frishkoff, boasts that Jessica is an “unwavering advocate for racial and economic equity, stewarding her role with the highest level of integrity.” Her leadership on the Racial Equity Initiative is helping LISC embed an equity lens throughout all its programs by paying focused attention—both

internally and externally—to racial dynamics and power structures. Jessica takes great care to engage team members and the community in the process, but she is acutely aware that systemic changes will need to be prioritized along with deeper cross-sector cooperation if they are to be successful. “Until we are all able to really come to terms with the fact that racial disparities are born out of policies that are racially tainted, then we really can’t dig ourselves out of the hole of racial disparity.”

Congratulations to Jessica Collazo on being named a PACDC Rising Star Award winner for 2020!

PHOTO BY GIBSON HURST™ ON UNSPLASH





RISING STAR

Recognizing staff under the age of 40 at PACDC member organizations

Rodney Mobley, New Kensington CDC

Teaching and Leading by Example

Rodney Mobley, Outreach and Engagement Specialist at New Kensington CDC (NKCDC), is working toward a future where young men and women of color can flourish instead of struggle to survive. For Rodney, this dream is deeply personal.

Although he chose to become homeless at 13 and faced drug charges as a high school freshman, Rodney earned a new start after getting his record expunged through community service. The West Philadelphia native laughs about his start in community development: “I didn’t choose to do it. I was volun-told.” In fact, Rodney met Cass Green, previously from the People’s Emergency Center CDC (PEC), while participating in programs to stay off the streets. Cass recalls, “The day I met Rodney, out of a group of 20 or so teens, they identified Rodney as their leader. I knew then I was in the presence of greatness in the making. It’s not every day you meet someone whose light shines so brightly.” As one of PEC’s first Community Connectors, Rodney led neighborhood improvement projects, engaged residents, and grew to manage more than 30 youth connectors over four years. Today, Rodney and Cass are back in action as colleagues in the community engagement department at NKCDC.

After just two years, Rodney has had an outsized impact on organizational culture and community engagement practices in his current role. Andrew Goodman, former NKCDC Community Engagement Director, shares, “Rodney has accomplished more in his 23 years than many people do in their entire lifetimes. As a supervisor, I can say that I have learned more from Rodney than he has learned from me.” With Rodney at the helm of NKCDC’s work with youth, the organization hosted Philadelphia’s first Hip-Hop Architecture Camp and hired two youth connectors. Rodney also co-instructs at Kensington Health Sciences Academy’s Global Leadership track. As a trauma-informed care facilitator, Rodney knows that “people live and die from toxic stress,” and he wants to break this cycle by helping them cope and supporting them in a way they can understand.

When Rodney envisions the future, he sees it through the eyes of his four-year-old son, Dylan. He wants his son to know, “Life is going to happen. Change is inevitable. Never, ever give up. And never feel like you’re not enough.” These words are lessons for Dylan but also inspire the young fathers of color that Rodney mentors and helps navigate through bail, record expungement, and child support issues.

As he discovers how to truly live instead of survive, Rodney could choose another career, but he feels called to this work. “Being in power, being impacted by these decisions is one of the greatest experiences,” he says with joy.

Congratulations to Rodney Mobley on being named a PACDC 2020 Rising Star!

PEC COMMUNITY CONNECTORS





RISING STAR

Recognizing staff under the age of 40 at PACDC member organizations

Stasia Montero, HACE

A Passion for Meaningful, Intentional Inclusivity

Born in New York City and raised on Long Island, Stasia Monteiro was grateful for the privileges provided to them but was also keenly aware of their family’s struggle to make ends meet. This simple awareness is foundational to who Stasia is as a person and their approach to the world. It’s an awareness of the complex interaction between identity and experience and how this combination influences who we are always in the process of becoming. As a nonbinary queer person of color, Stasia understands the need to be intentionally inclusive of others and empathetic to their needs. It’s no surprise that, grounded in this mindfulness, Stasia dedicated themselves to being of service to others.

Stasia moved to Philadelphia in 2012 and worked as a high school English teacher in Strawberry Mansion. They saw firsthand how the structural issues of poverty affecting the community and the individual lives of their students manifested in the classroom every day. They worked to support their students and to make the classroom a welcoming space to develop student interests and self-expression. During this time, Stasia also completed a master’s degree in urban education from the University of Pennsylvania.

In their time living in Philadelphia, Stasia has immersed themselves in a number of different neighborhoods, but through the parochial and idiosyncratic veneer of our communities, they saw “the same problems playing out with their own individual flair.” This recognition of the impacts of deep poverty is what first drew them to seek to address the root causes, to engage in community development, and ultimately to work at HACE. Stasia dove in to build HACE’s nascent Neighborhood Advisory Committee program and convene Team NAS—resident leaders whose lived experience and knowledge were the backbone of the program’s direction and success.

Stasia’s time at HACE has been grounded in their conviction that “a just society and an inclusive community is one that centers resident experiences and amplifies their agency to shape where they live.” Stasia is a conduit to help channel the energy, creativity, ideals, passion, and perspective already in the Eastern North Philadelphia community to create

meaningful change that benefits residents. To that end, they have played a role in developing the Livability Academy, collaborated with the Clean Air Council on reaching youth and young adults on issues important to their health, collaboratively organized the annual celebration at Jose Manuel Collazo playground, fought for traffic-calming measures that yielded \$500,000 in funding (with more on the way), and much more.

Stasia is proudest when they see people coming together to do the things that they could not do alone and becoming excited to take on joint challenges. They are proud to be a part of helping people “lead better lives at home, in the classroom, and in their neighborhoods.”

We join HACE in being proud of Stasia Monteiro and offer them our congratulations on being named a PACDC 2020 Rising Star!

Celebrating Community at Collazo Playground. PHOTO CREDIT: HACE





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 our vision:

“An equitable city where every Philadelphian lives, works, and thrives in a neighborhood that offers an excellent quality of life”

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

- **INNOVATION:** The organization has created a new or pioneering project or program, or approached a project or program in a new and inventive way.
- **IMPACT:** The organization shows a demonstrated capacity to have positively influenced or enhanced the community or population served.
- **LEADERSHIP:** The organization displays 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.
- **ADVANCES EQUITY:** The project or program demonstrates the use of an equitable development strategy that works toward equality in housing, health, education, or economic opportunity for low- and moderate-income households.

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

Past Blue Ribbon Winners and Finalists

2019

WINNERS

Community Ventures
Centennial Village

Project HOME
Gloria Casarez Residence

FINALISTS

African Cultural Alliance of North America
Woodland Revitalization

Frankford CDC
Frankford Pause Pilot Park

2018

WINNERS

Esperanza
Roberto Clemente Homes

Germantown United CDC
Open Doors in Germantown

FINALISTS

HELP USA
Lural L. Blevins Veterans Center at HELP Philadelphia V

Office of Community Development-Catholic Human Services
St. John Neumann Place II

People's Emergency Center CDC
4050 Apartments

2017

WINNERS

Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha
Food Buying Club

Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation and Project HOME
Francis House of Peace Ping An (平安) House

FINALIST

New Kensington Community Development Corporation
Orinoka Civic House

2016

WINNERS

People's Emergency Center CDC
Neighborhood Time Exchange

The Village of Arts and Humanities
People's Paper Co-op

FINALISTS

Esperanza
Esperanza Academy Public Charter High School

Women's Community Revitalization Project
Grace Townhomes

2015

WINNERS

Impact Services Corporation
Veterans Housing Center

Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation
Leveraging Night Markets

FINALISTS

Community Ventures
Ingersoll Commons

People's Emergency Center CDC
Bigham Leatherberry Wise

2014

WINNERS

Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha
Paseo Verde

Logan CDC
Logan Park(let)

FINALISTS

ACHIEVEability
Community-Academic Partnerships

The Enterprise Center CDC
Center for Culinary Arts

Uptown Entertainment and Development Corporation
Uptown Youth Got Talent Program

2013

WINNERS

Mission First Housing Group
Walnut Hill West and Temple I & II

Nicetown CDC
Nicetown Courts I & II

FINALISTS

The Enterprise Center CDC
Community Leaders Program

People's Emergency Center CDC
Lancaster Revitalization Plan

2012

WINNERS

Community Ventures
Francisville East

Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia
ReStore

FINALISTS

Friends Rehabilitation Program
Strawberry Mansion Townhomes

People's Emergency Center CDC
Jannie's Place

Women's Community Revitalization Project
Evelyn Sanders II

2011

WINNERS

East Falls Development Corporation
Trolley Car Café and Gateway Center

New Kensington CDC
Sustainable 19125:
Big Green Block

FINALISTS

HACE
Lawrence Court

Impact Services Corporation
Aramingo Crossing

Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation
Tenth Street Plaza

2010

WINNERS

HACE
Mercy LIFE Center

Roxborough Development Corporation
Targeted Block Façade Improvement

FINALISTS

Esperanza
Latin Quarter Project

Impact Services Corporation
Hancock Manor

People's Emergency Center CDC
West Powelton/Saunders Park
Neighborhood Plan

Universal Companies
Universal Plan

2009

WINNER

Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha
Pradera II and TruMark Credit Union

FINALISTS

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

New Kensington CDC
Sustainable 19125

Ogontz Avenue Revitalization Corporation
West Oak Lane Jazz Festival

Women's Community Revitalization Project
Neighborhood Planning

2008

WINNER

Project HOME
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



2020 BLUE RIBBON AWARD *Winner*

ESPERANZA ARTS CENTER, ESPERANZA

Esperanza Dance Ensemble performing. PHOTO CREDIT: ESPERANZA

Building Community and Nurturing Beauty

Truth and beauty. Philosophers and artists of all types have long queried the world in the search for both. Some say you cannot have one without the other, and others speculate that each runs parallel to the other—one hiding quietly, while the other shines brightly depending on the circumstances of the situation or the appetite of the beholder. At Esperanza’s Arts Center, these elements exist codependently—with truth telling the story of a community rich in Latino heritage, and beauty communicating that story to local communities and the wide world in myriad ways. PACDC honors the work advanced by Esperanza through its new arts center as a 2020 Blue Ribbon Award in Community Development Excellence winner.

This beacon for truth and beauty started with “the simple premise of bringing world-class downtown arts to uptown,” says the arts center’s Executive Director Bill Rhoads, former Executive Director at the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society. “Reverend Cortes made it very clear from the beginning that the overarching goal of Esperanza’s work is to advance and support a community of opportunity for the neighborhood. To do so, in addition to high-quality schools and educational options, there also needs to be access to the finest experiences of arts and culture reflective of the Latino culture of this community,” he added.

With that mandate in mind, Esperanza set out to build beauty based on the truths informed by an intensive community-led design and planning process where residents set the parameters of programming choice each season and select the types of programming to be slated for the

center. “I can truly say that this center was developed by the community, and its artistic objective is driven by their continual input and feedback. I have never really seen that kind of approach to building an arts program, and many of our arts organization colleagues both small and large are envious of our ability to see this unfold,” says Rhoads. The 5,000-square-foot, 316-seat theater with flexible configuration ability hosts live performances of drama, dance, and music, as well as housing a recording studio and fine-arts gallery space.

Amplifying the impact of the center is the fact that with the exception of just three positions, the production, box office, house management, and administrative support staff positions are staffed by students enrolled at Esperanza’s acclaimed high school. “We set out to build opportunities for the students to consider all avenues of the arts—administration, production, front of house—as career paths and have established partnerships with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Ballet X, and others to serve as feeder sites for students working at our arts center who want to advance to the next stage in their growth,” says Rhoads.

“Working at Esperanza has taken me out of my comfort zone and into another world of possibilities, and for that I’ll be forever thankful,” says Yashiramarie Hernandez, a senior at Esperanza Academy Charter High School and Production Management Fellow.

PACDC congratulates Esperanza on its awe-inspiring journey in finding and sharing with others meaningful truth and lasting beauty.



2020 BLUE RIBBON AWARD *Winner*

CRANE COMMUNITY CENTER, PHILADELPHIA CHINATOWN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PHOTO CREDIT: PHILADELPHIA CHINATOWN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

A Center for and Keeper of Community

Philadelphia's Chinatown embodies a story of struggle for survival, respect, and self-determination. It's a story of immigrants and American-born people fighting to build prosperous lives for themselves and their families in freedom and with dignity. The Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation's (PCDC) Crane building, a mixed-use residential, retail, and community center is a long-held, long-fought-for, and now fully realized manifestation of this story. It's truly an American story of accomplishment in the face of obstacles and one that PACDC is proud and honored to recognize with its 2020 Blue Ribbon Award for Community Development Excellence.

Planning for the \$75 million, 195,000-square-foot building—in which the community center is the jewel in the crown—began while PCDC was still in embryonic form. PCDC was born when legendary community activist and unofficial “godmother” of Chinatown, Cecilia Moy Yep, together with her neighbors and others, protested the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's bulldozing of homes and stores to make way for the Vine Street extension of Interstate 95. “After many of our community felt pushed out, I stayed with my three children. Our house was the last in the targeted area and was known as the Alamo of Chinatown,” said Moy Yep.

Out of that protest, instead of planning monuments to its past, the community collaboratively worked to build its future by establishing its own development corporation, building affordable housing, supporting

small businesses, and providing low-income residents with a variety of services. After five decades of accomplishment through this work and many more years of vision and planning, the Crane's community center houses ongoing cultural programs, community rooms, and a basketball court. The center will serve as both an anchor and a home to these programs and more in a state-of-the-art facility designed to support, nurture, and defend Chinatown's continued unique vibrancy and cultural legacy. “The project isn't about sustaining PCDC. It's about supporting the neighborhood,” said John Chin, PCDC's Executive Director. “It's our duty as a CDC,” he added.

Chin continued, “We came upon the name Crane because the crane is a prominent aspect of Chinese history. The crane represents the rising of our community that is rooted, forward-thinking, proud, and inclusive.” Moy Yep, a founding member of PCDC, celebrated her 90th birthday at the Crane, the first event held in the community center, further underscoring the Crane as a symbolic victory for Chinatown. Given the importance of place-making for the Chinese community, the Crane espouses all of the defining elements of this neighborhood.

PACDC congratulates Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation on its recognition as a 2020 Blue Ribbon Award winner for Community Development Excellence.



2020 BLUE RIBBON AWARD *Finalist*

KENSINGTON HEALTH CONNECTORS, NEW KENSINGTON CDC

New Kensington CDC Health Connectors. PHOTO CREDIT: NKCDC

Helping Neighbors Stay Healthy

After experiencing homelessness for some time, Augusto finally found stable housing through a local nonprofit. However, he was so afraid of being unsheltered again that he skipped meals in order to pay rent. When he met Ms. Brenda and Chris, Augusto was socially isolated and malnourished, and it became clear that someone else was using Augusto's public assistance cards. Ms. Brenda and Chris quickly ordered him new cards, brought him food, and restored his autonomy.

Ms. Brenda and Chris are two of eleven Kensington Health Connectors employed part-time at New Kensington CDC (NKCDC). With funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Human Services, NKCDC trained Kensington residents to conduct health screenings and match neighbors to health care, healthy food, financial counseling, and more. It also partnered with Jefferson University to design the community health worker and trauma-informed curriculums to serve Kensington and resident trainees.

"NKCDC Health Connectors are deeply committed community members with a deep understanding of their neighbors, their needs, and their challenges," says Dr. Rickie Brawer and Marcy Boroff of the Jefferson Center for Urban Health. Ms. Brenda is 28 years clean and moved to Kensington after losing her only daughter six years ago. Through com-

munity involvement, she reflects, "I was given my life back. Being able to live again and live in my desires and my compassion. It changed me." Ms. Brenda and her coworkers build peer relationships with trust and love, and this approach helps explain why more than 75 percent of the individuals they survey are connecting with NKCDC for the first time.

In just three months, Health Connectors built a list of over 440 local resources, screened more than 260 individuals, and reached 40 of the 188 blocks in NKCDC's North of Lehigh Neighborhood Plan Area. "Their success proves that the qualities that make a great block leader or community organizer also make a great community health worker and employee," says Bea Rider, Interim Executive Director of NKCDC.

Gloria Cartagena, another Health Connector at Kensington, shares, "I've never experienced a job that I've looked forward to going to. I live right down the street. That's a blessing right there." Together, Kensington Health Connectors meet the health needs of their community and restore one another at the same time.

PACDC congratulates New Kensington CDC as a Blue Ribbon Award finalist for its exemplary work!



2020 BLUE RIBBON AWARD *Finalist*

COLAB, IMPACT SERVICES CORPORATION AND NEW KENSINGTON CDC

CoLab open for business. PHOTO CREDIT: JEFFERSON HEALTH DESIGN LAB

Partners in Community, Partners in Better Health Outcomes

For decades, Impact Services Corporation and New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC) have been working to provide vital services to the Kensington, Port Richmond, and Fishtown neighborhoods. These organizations have addressed a wide variety of issues by providing supportive housing services, managing commercial corridors, and fostering social cohesion among community residents. Recently, Impact Services, NKCDC, and Jefferson University's Design Lab have joined forces on a project called CoLab that is working to provide a better response to the health needs of community members.

In 2017, Impact Services and NKCDC were approached by Dr. Robert Pugliese and Dr. Bon Ku of Jefferson, who expressed interest in working together on a Community Design Collaborative Grant. They envisioned using an Airstream mobile camper to be more than just a mobile health unit; they also wanted to create an experience shaped around the most relevant needs of neighborhood residents. Programming includes traditional mobile health unit services, such as blood pressure monitoring and STD testing, but also offers information on job readiness, nutrition, and housing services.

Before launching the program, Impact Services, NKCDC, and Jefferson met with community leaders to brainstorm future programming, discuss how to make the Airstream accessible, and get valuable feed-

back. While these community meetings were fruitful, they also proved to be the most difficult moments of the process. Impact Service's Public Health Projects Manager Zoë Van Orsdol stated, "An obstacle was working as a collaborative, making sure that everybody, Impact, NKCDC, Jefferson Design Lab, and community leaders, were meeting each other's needs. But everybody was enthusiastically meeting the challenge head on." In addition to these crucial community meetings, Jefferson conducted several practice runs to gather data about the way people interacted with the Airstream and what services they would like to see.

All this hard work paid off when CoLab finally launched and was met with widespread support. The Airstream impressed everyone with its beautiful design, and the programming excited people of all ages. The CoLab is able to meet people where they are and tailor presentations to the space it's in, making it accessible and fun for everyone. This past summer, CoLab was able to park in several locations throughout Kensington, such as Trenton and Auburn Park, behind the new Esperanza Health Center, and Cherry Street Park. The CoLab project will continue to engage with the community this coming summer.

Congratulations to Impact Services and New Kensington CDC for being recognized as a Blue Ribbon Award finalist for their innovative work!



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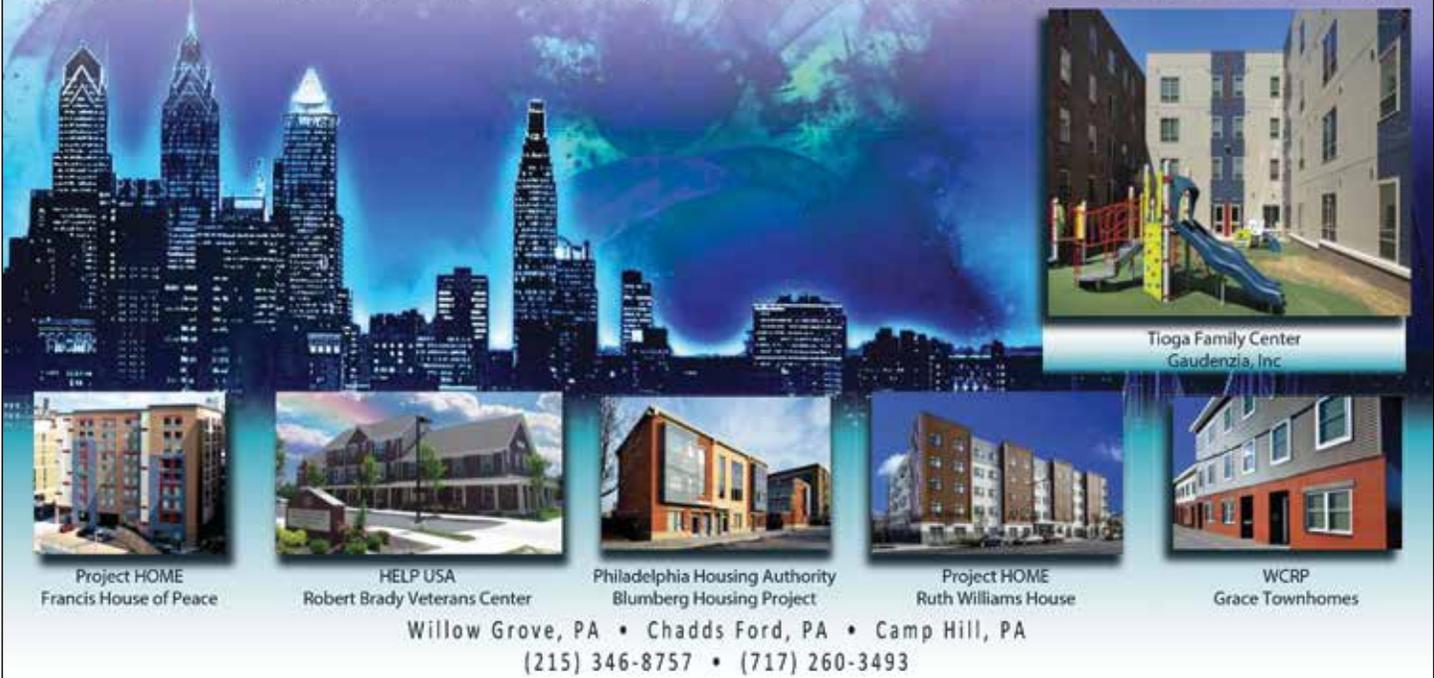
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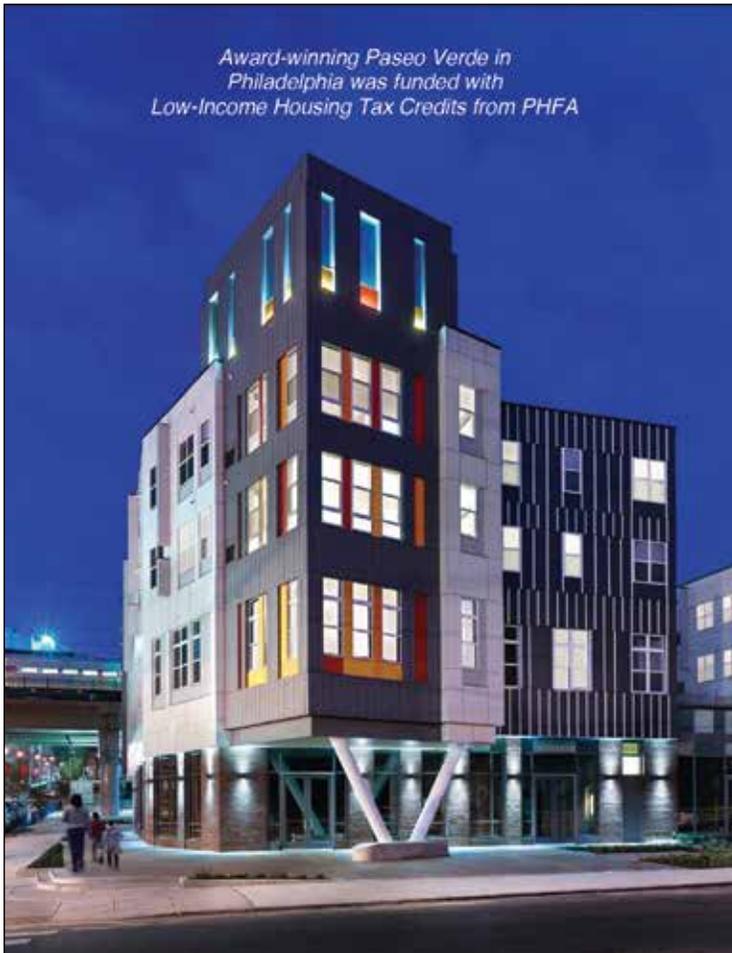
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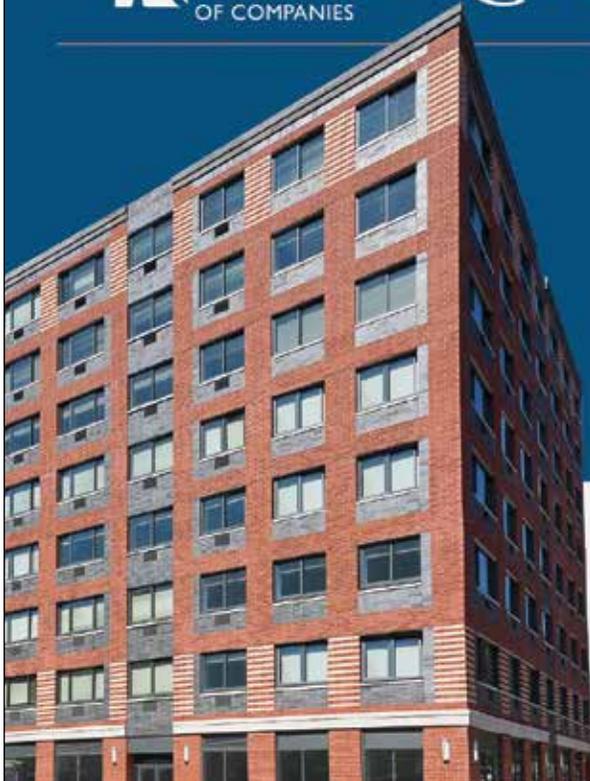
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Membership Directory

ACHIEVEability ● ● ● ● ●
www.achieveability.org
215-748-6969

African Cultural Alliance of North America (ACANA) ● ●
www.acanaus.org
215-729-8225

Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha ● ● ● ● ●
www.apmphila.org
267-296-7200

Beech Companies ● ● ●
www.beechcompanies.com
215-763-8824

Big Brothers Big Sisters Independence Region ●
www.independencebig.org
215-790-9200

Brewertown-Sharswood Neighborhood Advisory Committee/Community Development Corporation ● ● ●
www.brewertownsharswood.org
267-858-4246

Building On Opportunity for Sound Training (BOOST CDC) ● ●
www.boostcdc.com
215-877-9411

Called to Serve Community Development Corporation ● ● ●
www.calledtoservecdc.org
215-588-4940

Catholic Housing and Community Services ●
www.chcsphiladelphia.org
215-587-3663

Centennial Parkside ● ● ● ● ●
www.centennialparkside.org
267-225-8356

Chestnut Hill Community Development Corporation ● ● ●
www.chestnuthillpa.com
215-247-6696

Community of Compassion Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
215-472-9040

Community Ventures ● ● ● ● ●
www.community-ventures.org
215-564-6004

Dignity Housing ● ● ● ● ●
www.dignityhousing.org
215-713-0960

East Falls Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.discovereastfalls.org
215-848-8084

The Enterprise Center Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.theenterprisecenter.com
215-895-4000

Esperanza ● ● ● ● ●
www.esperanza.us
215-324-0746

Fairmount Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.fairmountcdc.org
215-232-4766

Frankford Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.frankfordcdc.org
215-743-6580

Germantown Community Connections ● ● ● ● ●
www.gtowncommunityconnection.org
267-421-1763

Germantown United Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.germantownunitedcdc.org
215-856-4303

Greater Philadelphia Asian Social Services Agency ● ● ● ● ●
www.gpasspa.org
215-456-1662

Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia ● ● ● ● ●
www.habitatphiladelphia.org
215-765-6000

HACE ● ● ● ● ●
www.hacecdc.org
215-426-8025

HELP USA ● ● ● ● ●
www.helpusa.org
215-473-6454

Hunting Park Neighborhood Advisory Committee/Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.huntingparknac.org
215-225-5560

ICPIC New Africa Center Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.newafricacenter.com
610-352-0424

Impact Services Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.impactservices.org
215-423-2944

Inglis ● ● ● ● ●
www.inglis.org
215-878-5600

Jumpstart Tioga ● ● ● ● ●
www.jumpstarttioga.org
267-481-4663

Korean Community Development Services Center ● ● ● ● ●
www.koreancenter.org
215-276-8830

Lancaster Avenue 21st Century Business Association CDC ● ● ● ● ●
www.la21philly.org
215-883-0109

Lower North Philadelphia CDC ● ● ● ● ●
267-225-2605

M.A.P. Holistic Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
215-787-0900

The Maple Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.maplehousing.org
215-419-7360

Mission First Housing Group ● ● ● ● ●
www.missionfirsthousing.org
215-557-8414

Mt. Airy CDC ● ● ● ● ●
www.mtairycdc.org
215-844-6021

Mount Vernon Manor Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.mvmcdc.org
215-475-9492

Newbold Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.newboldcdc.org
267-571-9280

New Courtland ● ● ● ● ●
www.newcourtland.org
888-530-4913

New Kensington Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.nkcdc.org
215-427-0350

Nicetown Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.nicetowncdc.org
215-329-1824

North 5th Street Revitalization Project ● ● ● ● ●
www.shopnorth5th.com
267-331-9091

Old City District ● ● ● ● ●
www.oldcitydistrict.org
215-592-7929

Overbrook West Neighbors CDC ● ● ● ● ●
www.overbrookwestneighbors.com
215-681-6937

Oxford Circle Christian Community Development Association ● ● ● ● ●
www.occda.org
215-288-8504

Passyunk Avenue Revitalization Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.passyarc.com
215-551-5111

People's Emergency Center Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.pec-cares.org
267-777-5800

Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.chinatown-pcdc.org
215-922-2156

Project HOME ● ● ● ● ●
www.projecthome.org
215-232-7272

Real Life CDC ● ● ● ● ●
www.reallifecdc.org
215-792-3298

SEAMAAC ● ● ● ● ●
www.seamaac.org
215-467-0690

South of South Neighborhood Association ● ● ● ● ●
www.southofsouth.org
215-732-8446

South Street Headhouse District ● ● ● ● ●
www.southstreet.com
215-413-3713

Southwest Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.southwestcdc.org
215-729-0800

St. Paul Chapel CDC ● ● ● ● ●
www.spcbc.net
215-334-1303

Tacony Community Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.visittacony.com
215-501-7799

Tioga United ● ● ● ● ●
215-771-5699

Universal Companies ● ● ● ● ●
www.universalcompanies.org
215-732-6518

Uptown Entertainment and Development Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.philadelphiauptowntheater.org
215-236-1878

Women's Community Revitalization Project ● ● ● ● ●
www.wcrpphila.org
215-627-5550

Wynnefield Overbrook Revitalization Corporation ● ● ● ● ●
www.wynnebrook.org
610-660-1241

Yorktown CDC ● ● ● ● ●
www.yorktowncdc.org
215-769-0225

CDC MEMBER SERVICES

- Housing/Housing Counseling
- Social Services/Referral
- Organizing/Advocacy
- Economic Development/Corridor Management

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Membership Directory

Member list as of 6/17/20

AARP Pennsylvania ● ●

www.states.aarp.org/pennsylvania
866-389-5654

Affordable Housing Centers of Pennsylvania ●

www.ahcopa.org
215-765-1221

Bank of America ●

www.bankofamerica.com
267-675-0332

BB&T, now Truist ●

www.bbt.com
215-282-3966

Benchmark Construction Group ●

www.benchmarkconstructiongc.com
717-626-9559

BFW Group, LLC ● ●

www.bfwgroup.net
215-798-1055

BluPath Design Inc. ● ●

www.blupath.us
267-519-3564

Bryn Mawr Trust ●

www.bmtc.com
484-356-9413

Capital Access ● ●

www.capitalaccessinc.com
215-551-2000

Caritas Construction ● ●

www.caritasconstruction.com
610-569-0569

Cecil Baker + Partners Architects ● ●

www.cecilbakerpartners.com
215-928-0202

Ceiba ● ●

www.ceibaphiladelphia.org
215-634-7245

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia ●

www.chop.edu
215-590-1000

CICADA Architecture ● ●

www.cicadaarchitecture.com
215-247-1430

Citizens Bank ●

www.citizensbank.com
267-671-1096

Clarifi ●

www.clarifi.org
215-563-5665

Cohn Reznick ●

www.cohnreznick.com
410-209-2657

Comstock Environmental Services ●

www.comstockenvironmental.com
610-387-6930

Community Design Collaborative ● ● ●

www.cdsignc.org
215-587-9290

Community Realty Management ●

www.communityrealtymanagement.com
609-646-8861

Continuum Urban Residential Services, LLC ●

267-978-4187

CSH ●

www.csh.org
212-986-2966

Cozen O'Connor ●

www.cozen.com
215-665-2000

Customers Bank ●

www.customersbank.com
610-743-8022

Diamond and Associates ● ●

www.diamondandassociates.com
215-732-3600

Domus, Inc. ●

www.domusinc.net
215-849-4444

Drexel University Office of Government and Community Relations ●

www.drexel.edu/ogcr
215-895-2109

Econsult Solutions ●

www.econsultsolutions.com
215-717-2777

Energy Coordinating Agency ●

www.ecasavesenergy.org
215-609-1000

Elon Development Company, Inc. ● ●

www.altmanco.com
215-884-0500

Eustace Engineering ● ●

www.eustaceeng.com
215-346-8757

Fairmount Park Conservancy ●

www.myphillypark.org
215-988-9334

Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh ●

www.fhlp-pgh.com
800-288-3400

FINANTA ●

www.finanta.org
267-236-7000

The Food Trust ●

www.thefoodtrust.org
215-575-0444

Fulton Bank ●

www.fultonbank.com
800-385-8664

Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance ● ●

www.philaculture.org
215-557-7811
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Holstein White, Inc. ●

www.holsteinwhite.com
215-322-7711

Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania ●

www.housingalliancepa.org
215-576-7044

JKRP Architects ● ●

www.jkrparchitects.com
215-928-9331

JPMorgan Chase & Co. ●

www.jpmorganchase.com
202-585-6303

Kairos Development Group ●

www.kairosdg.com
215-359-9140

Kramer+Marks Architects ● ●

www.kramer-marks.com
215-654-7722

Lamb Insurance Services ●

www.lambis.com
212-375-3000

LISC Philadelphia ● ●

www.lisc.org/philly
215-923-3801

M&T Bank ●

www.mtb.com
302-636-4085

Marcus Reinvestment Strategies ●

www.marcusreinvest.com
267-209-0450

McHugh Engineering and Associates ●

www.mchugheng.com
(215) 641-1158

National Equity Fund, Inc. ●

www.nefinc.org
312-360-0400

Nationalities Service Center ●

www.nscphila.org
(215) 893-8400

Neighborhood Gardens Trust ● ●

www.ngtrust.org
215-988-8798

NeighborWorks America ● ● ●

www.neighborworks.org
212-269-6571

Nonprofit Advantage Consulting ●

www.lauraschwingel.wixsite.com/nonprofit-advantage
215-205-1589

The Nonprofit Center at LaSalle University ● ●

www.lasallenonprofitcenter.org
215-951-1701

Outside Philadelphia ●

www.outsidephila.org
215-990-5320

OZ Collaborative ● ●

www.ozcollaborative.com
215-386-8191

Painted Bride Art Center ●

www.paintedbride.org
215-925-9914

PECO ●

www.peco.com
215-841-5640

Pennsylvania Horticultural Society ● ●

www.phsonline.org
215-988-8800

PetersonMangum LLC ●

www.petersonmangum.com
215-888-8615

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging ●

www.pcacares.org
215-765-9040

Philadelphia Housing Authority ● ●

www.pha.phila.gov
215-684-4000

The Philadelphia Inquirer ●

www.inquirer.com
800-222-2765

Philly Office Retail ● ●

www.phillyofficeretail.com
215-247-5555

PIDC ●

www.pidcphila.com
215-496-8125

PNC Bank ●

www.pnc.com
215-585-4606

Public Interest Law Center ●

www.publicintlaw.org
215-627-7100

Qnectus ●

www.qnectus.com
855-763-2887

Rebuilding Together Philadelphia ●

www.rebuildingphilly.org
215-568-5044

Regional Housing Legal Services ●

● ●
www.rhls.org
215-572-7300

Region Nine Housing Corporation ●

www.rnhousing.org
732-640-2088

Republic Bank ●

www.myrepublicbank.com
888-875-2265

REPSG, Inc. ●

www.repsg.com
215-729-3220

The Richman Group Affordable Housing Corporation ●

www.therichmangroup.com
(203) 413-0336

Santander ●

www.santanderbank.com
267-256-2860

Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr ●

www.saul.com
215-972-7777

Scenic Philadelphia ●

www.scenicphiladelphia.org
215-731-1775

Self-Determination Housing Project of Pennsylvania ● ●

www.sdhp.org
610-873-9595

Stone Sherick Consulting Group ● ●

www.sherickpm.com
215-627-8877

Sustainable Business Network ●

www.sbnphiladelphia.org
215-922-7400

TD Bank ●

www.tdbank.com
856-372-3889

Temple University Tyler School of Art, Planning and Community Development ●

www.tyler.temple.edu/programs/planning-community-development
215-204-1213

Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals ●

www.jefferson.edu
215-955-6340

TN Ward Company ●

www.TNWard.com
610-649-0400

Truth and Life Empowerment Community Ministries Inc. ●

www.tlecm.org
267-704-9164

Turner Law ●

www.turnerlawpc.com
267-207-3584

UPMC Health Plan ●

www.upmchealthplan.com
215-221-1478

Urban Affairs Coalition ● ● ●

www.uac.org
215-851-0110

Utility Emergency Services Fund ●

www.uesfacts.org
215-972-5170

Volunteers of America Delaware Valley ● ●

www.voadv.org
856-854-4660

Wells Fargo Bank ●

www.wellsfargo.com
215-670-4302

Wilson Associates ●

610-645-5392

WSFS Bank ●

www.wsfsbank.com
267-768-3220

ASSOCIATE MEMBER SERVICES

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