



Choice Neighborhoods e-Newsletter

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Implementation Grantee Convening in Chicago

Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grantees will convene at the University of Chicago in Chicago, IL on May 22nd and 23rd for a series of workshops and peer exchanges. The curriculum has been developed specifically to address the unique challenges facing Implementation grantees and will focus on the fundamentals of neighborhood revitalization. Attendees will visit the Chicago Implementation grant target area and learn about the Choice Neighborhoods activities currently underway in the city.

Local Government as a Partner in Choice Neighborhoods Webinar Recap

The second webinar in the Choice Neighborhoods Technical Assistance Webinar Series was held on April 9 and focused on strategies for engaging local government as a partner in Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plans. Representatives from the 2010 planning grant team in Shreveport, LA, discussed the evolution of their Transformation Plan and how the Northwest Louisiana Council of Governments (NLCOG) and City of Shreveport established a successful partnership. Grantees were encouraged to:

- 1) Do their research — What are the City's priorities and needs? Can the CNI planning process or resources assist?
- 2) Make contact with the City early and often — Engage and update the City on a regular basis on the progress of your process, even when there is little to report
- 3) Make concrete requests from the City — Make requests that are small and specific so a pattern of success can be built.

To view the webinar and download materials, including a list of questions and answers that were not addressed during the webinar due to time constraints, [click here](#).

Family Self-Sufficiency Program and Roanoke Success Story

The Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program was created in 1990 to help residents of public housing and participants of the Housing Choice Voucher program become more self-sufficient through education, trainings, and other supportive resources. FSS participants are able to take courses in areas such as budgeting, credit and home maintenance, and job training in an effort to increase their potential for gainful employment and getting off of public assistance. The success of one participant in the FSS program at the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority was recently highlighted in the local

newspaper, The Roanoke Times. To read the article [click here](#). To learn more about the FSS program [click here](#).



RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

Let's Move Faith and Communities Webinar on Youth Health

Let's Move Faith and Communities (LMFC), one of the components of First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move Initiative, is offering a special online training on how to implement part of the National Institute of Health's *We Can!* program. On Wednesday, May 22 from 12-2 pm EDT, LMFC will be hosting a webinar designed to equip health leaders to administer "Media Smart Youth®: Eat, Think and Be Active," an after-school program for youth ages 11-13. The Media Smart Youth program uses nutrition and physical activity examples to help young people understand how media can influence the decisions they make that impact their health. LMFC's We Can! Program and Let's Move aligns with the People component of a Choice Neighborhoods transformation plan. [Click here](#) to learn more about LMFC's Media Smart Youth program and [here](#) to register for the webinar.

Nashville Community Survey Webinar

Where's the COMMUNITY in your community survey? In [Nashville's Promise Neighborhood](#), the community has been knocking on doors and talking with neighbors, and the results have been noteworthy! Please join staff from the Nashville Promise Neighborhood and their data partner, Vanderbilt University, for a webinar presentation on how they developed and implemented their community data collection process in a way that engaged residents. The webinar is scheduled for Thursday, May 16, 2013, at 4:00 pm EDT. Please register for the webinar [here](#). Questions about the webinar can be sent to Jane.Hodgdon@ed.gov.

USDA Summer Food Services Program

This year HUD has teamed up with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to help promote the Summer Food Services Program (SFSP), and provide all young people living in low-income households access to nutritional meals while school is out. SFSP operates through partnerships between the USDA, state agencies and local organizations. Approved sponsors are reimbursed by the USDA for serving meals that meet Federal nutritional guidelines and all meals are served free to eligible children. To learn more about SFSP and how to become a sponsoring organization, [click here](#).

FY2014 Budget and Promise Zones

President Obama released his FY 2014 [Budget](#) on April 10 with \$400 million requested for Choice Neighborhoods. Included in the President's budget is a proposal for Promise Zones. President Obama's Promise Zones initiative, which is a key strategy in the Administration's new Ladders of Opportunity initiative, will revitalize up to 20 of America's highest-poverty communities by creating jobs, attracting private investment, increasing economic activity, expanding educational opportunity, and reducing violent crime. Key rungs on the Ladders of Opportunity include raising the minimum wage, increasing access to

high-quality preschools, promoting fatherhood and marriage, and revitalizing America's high schools.

Communities will compete to earn a Promise Zone designation by identifying a set of positive outcomes, developing a strategy, encouraging private investment and realigning Federal, State, and local resources to support achievement of those outcomes. Promise Zones will receive tax incentives, if approved, to stimulate hiring and business investment along with intensive Federal support and technical assistance aimed at breaking down regulatory barriers and using Federal funds available to them at the local level more effectively. Applicants from Promise Zones will receive points for competitive federal grants that will increase the odds of qualifying for support and assistance to help them achieve their goals. Promise Zones will align the work of multiple federal programs in communities that have both substantial needs and a strong plan to address them.

The Promise Zones initiative builds on the lessons learned from existing place-based programs like the Department of Education's Promise Neighborhoods, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Choice Neighborhoods program, and the Department of Justice's Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation program. Other Federal agencies that will be aligning their work with that of local Promise Zone partners include the Departments of Commerce, Health and Human Services, and Agriculture. The Promise Zone designation process will ensure rural and Native American representation.

Updated Choice Neighborhoods Grantees Website List

An updated list of grantee websites has been posted to the Choice Neighborhoods website at http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/cn/grantees.

Do you have a Technical Assistance (TA) Question, Request, or Suggestion?

Grantees with TA questions or requests, or a suggestion for an upcoming TA activity, are invited to submit them to BCT and HUD at hud.gov/choiceta.



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Nonprofit Organizations Supporting Secondary Education

The Key Transitions in Postsecondary Education Initiative will award three grants of between \$400,000 to \$800,000 to nonprofit organizations that support recent high school graduates, adult learners transitioning into postsecondary education, and students transitioning between the first and second year of college, especially at the community college level. Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations offering education support services for students and adult learners to complete college. Awards must primarily serve students from low-income households, those who are the first in their family to attend college, and students of color. Applications are due May 24th. For more information on the grant opportunity and links to the RFP and supporting materials, [click here](#).

Transportation Tiger Discretionary Grants

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) recently announced the availability of \$474 million in TIGER grants for infrastructure investment projects that improve the condition of existing transportation systems, increase energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse emissions, and enhance the quality of living and working environments of communities through increased transportation choices and connections. This year DOT will focus on projects that are anticipated to quickly create and preserve jobs and lead to rapid increases in economic activity. Eligible projects include highways and bridges; public transit; passenger and freight rail; intermodal facilities; and marine and port investments. State, local and tribal governments, transit agencies, port authorities, and metropolitan planning organizations are eligible to apply. Applications are due through grants.gov by June 3, 2013. For more information, including helpful webinars and a list of Frequently Asked Questions, [click here](#). To read the funding announcement [click here](#).

Please give us your feedback!

We work diligently to make this e-newsletter relevant to your work. Please submit Grantee feature articles, constructive feedback, story ideas, and funding announcements to: choicetaenewsletter@bctpartners.com.



NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

CORNER

Strong Cities, Strong Communities Annual Report released

The [White House Council on Strong Cities, Strong Communities \(SC2\)](#) established an innovative model of federal-local collaboration with the goal of helping communities leverage federal resources and form partnerships to implement economic visions. The [Strong Cities, Strong Communities Annual Report](#) describes the impact of the SC2 Initiative and identifies emerging innovations that have the potential to be applied to many other communities working to strengthen their economies and job creation at the local level.

Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative Honored by Harvard's Innovations In American Government Awards

The Ash Center at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government recently recognized the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI) as one of the Top 25 finalists for its [Innovations in American Government Award](#). NRI, an interagency partnership between the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Treasury, brings together the federal government's investments in health, public safety, education, housing, and community development to help the nation's most distressed communities. The Innovations in American Government Awards highlight exemplary models of government innovation and advance efforts to address the nation's most

pressing public concerns. The Awards serve as a catalyst for bringing creative and effective solutions to some of government's most urgent and seemingly intractable challenges. The [Partnership for Sustainable Communities](#), another federal interagency effort, was also recognized as a Top 25 finalist.



RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Participation, Decision-Making, and Stigma in Mixed-Income Developments

The University of Chicago and Case Western Reserve University have collaborated on a six year research study of mixed-income housing developments. Their research recently informed two briefs on mixed-income developments. In [Participation and Decision-Making in Mixed-Income Developments: Who Has a Say?](#), interviews with residents and other stakeholders at three housing developments in Chicago are the basis of a discussion of the dynamics of low-income residents' participation in community decision-making processes. The experiences of public housing residents who relocated to mixed-income developments are detailed in the [New Public Housing Stigma in Mixed-Income Developments](#).

Using Data to Improve the Performance of Workforce Training

The Brookings Institution has published research on strategies to improve the efficacy of workforce training programs for low-income individuals. In *Using Data to Improve the Performance of Workforce Training*, authors Louis Jacobson and Robert J. LaLonde discuss how information systems can improve training outcomes for prospective job trainees. Their research proposes a state-by-state solution that allows trainees to make more informed decisions about which training programs they attend and are more likely to complete. [Click here](#) to access the article.

Community Development Financial Institutions

The Congressional Research Service has published a comprehensive analysis of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) and the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (Fund), including an historical overview, current appropriations, and an outline of the certification process. Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) provide financial products and services to low-income distressed communities typically underserved by traditional banks. The Fund was created within the Department of the Treasury to provide financial and technical assistance to meet the needs of businesses, homebuyers, community developers, and investors in distressed communities. [Click here](#) to access the article.