



Choice Neighborhoods

e-news about transforming housing, people and neighborhoods

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

HUD Awards \$144 Million in Choice Neighborhoods Grants

HUD Secretary Ben Carson recently [announced](#) the award of 5 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants from Flint, Michigan, one of the recipients. The five awards were made to communities in the cities of: Baltimore, MD; Flint, MI; Phoenix, AZ; Shreveport, LA; and Tulsa, OK. Over the next 5-6 years, these grantees will replace 1,788 units of distressed public or assisted housing with more than 3,800 new housing units, including replacement housing, workforce, and market rate housing. They will also leverage significant, new and refocused resources from private investors, banks, cities, universities, foundations, and a range of local partners. Summaries of each grantee and their plans can be [read here](#).

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Funding for Public Humanities Projects

The National Endowment for the Humanities is seeking applications to bring the humanities to the public through programming such as lecture series, after-school programs, exhibitions, or historic neighborhood tours. City governments and nonprofits are eligible to apply. Awards of up to \$1,000,000 are available. [Applications](#) are due August 29, 2018.

Funding for Intergenerational Programming or Centers

The Eisner Foundation supports organizations that offer intergenerational programs that connect seniors with children and youth. Grants typically range from \$100,000 to \$300,000, but pilot programs can apply for an Opportunity Grant up to \$25,000. [Letters of Inquiry](#) are accepted on a rolling basis.

EVENTS AND TOOLS

Tamarack Institute's 2018 Champions for Change Workshop

On October 16-18 in Los Angeles, CA, leaders of collective impact initiatives are invited to attend a three-day workshop hosted by the [Tamarack Institute](#). The workshop will offer panel discussions on ways leaders can clarify roles, foster community and momentum, build collaboration, develop measurements and evaluation tools, and increase equity. [Click here](#) to register.

National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations 2018 Summit

On September 12-14 in Philadelphia, PA, community and economic development practitioners are invited to connect, share strategies, and strengthen skills at the 2018 NACEDA Summit. Dr. Michael McAfee, president of PolicyLink, will be the keynote speaker. Sessions on community health, placemaking, community engagement, and fundraising will be offered. [Click here](#) to register.

New Tool Illuminates Career Opportunities

The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta's Center for Workforce and Economic Opportunity developed a [free tool](#) that displays the percent of "Opportunity Occupations," or living wage jobs that do not require a bachelor's degree, across state and metropolitan labor markets. The tool also lists specific job titles in each labor market across metro areas as well as their associated entry-level education requirements, employment numbers, annual median wage, and percent of monthly wage contributed to housing costs.

Bridging the Trust Gap between Law Enforcement and Communities of Color

The Institute for Community-Police Relations and DOJ's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services developed a [toolkit](#) for law enforcement agencies to institute policies to build and maintain community trust. Tools include examples of successful initiatives, sample surveys, links to related resources, and concrete steps for executive-level officers, frontline officers, and community stakeholders.

Recorded Webinar on Neighborhood Revitalization, One Block at a Time

The Community Builders posted a [webinar recording](#) about the Better Block approach, a 90-day process that focuses on rapidly transforming a block using low-cost materials and volunteer ingenuity and power. Andrew Howard, founder of Team Better Block, shares his experience with the project and how other communities can implement the model.

Project SOAR Convening Website Now Available

Videos, PowerPoints, and "TED talks" from the [Project SOAR convening](#) in June are now available online. [Project SOAR](#) funds public housing authorities to deploy education navigators to provide individualized assistance to public housing youth between the ages of 15-20 and their families. It assists with FAFSA completion, financial literacy and college readiness.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Effective Meeting Format for Integrating Mixed-Income Communities

An [article](#) from Shelterforce describes an expert community builder's method to facilitate authentic connection and community in diverse, mixed-income neighborhoods – "parties with a purpose." The 90-minute meeting begins with sharing something "new and good," table-talks on community concerns, and market-place – a way for neighbors to exchange favors and goods.

Research on Assessing Community Stress Levels and Health Impacts

The RAND Corporation, in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, developed a framework for practitioners to measure 'allostatic load,' or the physiological effects of constant or repeated exposure to stress, as it relates to four types of triggering events: 1) economic downturns, 2) public health crises, 3) police-community tensions, and 4) environmental exposure. Their [research](#) can support grant applications and help inform program design for public health and trauma-responsive community interventions.

GRANTEES IN THE NEWS

Coverage of the New Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Awards

HUD recently announced that five new communities were selected to be Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grantees. The selected communities and their awards have been covered in various news outlets. Click the links from each city to learn more about these communities and see some of the coverage: [Baltimore](#); [Flint](#); [Phoenix](#); [Shreveport](#); and [Tulsa](#).

Community Brainstorming Generates Ideas for Vacant Buildings in Memphis

[Commercial Appeal](#) reports the City of Memphis is considering purchasing and repurposing two vacant school buildings in the South City Choice Neighborhood to further support the revitalization of the neighborhood. The City has held a community meeting to brainstorm ideas. Residents have proposed a gym and community center, a small business incubator, a grocery store or farmers market, or temporary housing with services.

SPOTLIGHT: Building trust between police and the community in Sanford, FL

The Sanford Housing Authority (SHA) and the City of Sanford, FL were awarded a \$500,000 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant in FY 2015/2016 to support a 24-month planning process in the Goldsboro neighborhood. Once a prosperous and independently incorporated African-American township, Goldsboro has suffered decades of economic decline and disinvestment. As part of a community priority to improve public safety, the Choice Neighborhoods team has made significant progress in breaking through tensions between the community and police by facilitating a series of intensive conversations and developing a plan to build and strengthen relationships.

In 2013, the City made community-policing a strong focus of the Sanford Police Department (SPD) operations. The department has also been an enthusiastic partner and supporter of the Choice Neighborhoods project in Goldsboro, hosting their own community engagement efforts such as police-youth basketball tournaments and neighborhood barbeques. Additionally, police officers are required to spend a portion of their shift on foot patrols interacting with community members. They also offer their work cell phone number, so that residents who were previously intimidated to interact with the police, now have contact information for an officer they have met in person. SPD reported that they held 2,000 community engagement events across the city in the course of one year. However, the Choice Neighborhoods planning process



Figure 1: Officer Thomas with neighborhood children he met while out on foot patrol.

uncovered that many residents in the Goldsboro neighborhood continued to feel that the relationship between police officers and the community was strained.

In response to community concerns, SHA used \$8,700 of Choice Neighborhoods planning funds and \$15,000 in leverage from the City of Orlando to hire a facilitator, Bill Johnson of Strategic Community Intervention, to bridge this gap. After almost 50 one-on-one meetings with community members, Mr. Johnson facilitated a community engagement process for residents to discuss police-community relations and brainstorm solutions and strategies. This platform provided a safe opportunity for residents, many of whom had experienced decades of distrust, to finally feel heard. A core group of 27 residents emerged through the process, including officers, emerging leaders, and community representatives. Between January and June 2018, the group held four project meetings, hosted one strategic planning workshop, and planned three community programs.

The first community program, “The Law and Your Community,” was presented by SPD members of NOBLE (the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives), to an audience of 60 teenagers and young adults. It focused on key elements of policing and the responsibilities of both the police and community when they encounter each other. The session was interactive and the presenters proactively engaged reticent young people in the discussion. A second session was held with youth from an alternative school with 10 at-risk youth. Each student was paired with an officer dressed in civilian clothing, several of whom shared their own criminal backgrounds to help the students relate to them. The students and officers participated in a 90-minute roundtable dialogue about their experiences interacting with police and the actions that led them to be youth offenders. The third session, “A Day in My Shoes,” allowed the community and police to reverse-role-play three situations – a domestic dispute, a traffic stop, and disorderly conduct in a public park. At the conclusion of each episode, there was discussion and Q&A about how and why police take actions in these situations. Choice Neighborhoods staff observed that youth and adults who were formerly wary of the police began to open up about their concerns and experiences as a result of these events.

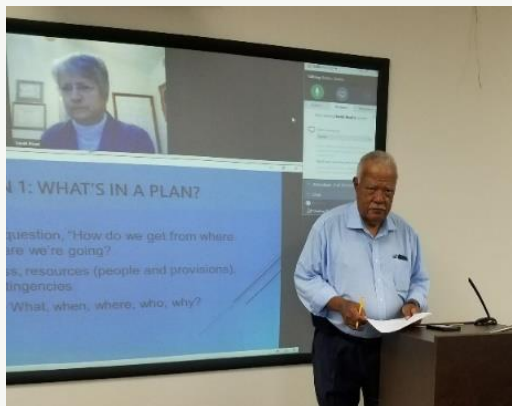


Figure 2 and 3: (left) Bill Johnson facilitates a meeting to brainstorm ways to improve relationships between police and the community; (right) Police Chief Smith presents to a community group.

A final report on the Sanford Police-Community Engagement Facilitation Project identified several recommendations, which have since informed the Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan: 1) Establish a Police Community Engagement Program, overseen by an Advisory Board of citizens and officers, and hire a full-time

community engagement staff person; 2) Involve partnering judicial institutions, faith groups and officers in continuing conversations; 3) Create a Leadership Development Program for young leaders in Goldsboro; and 4) Create a video documentary about the project to tell the story of Sanford's progress.

Police Chief Smith described the importance of these facilitated interactions and the resulting plans. The Chief stated, "the facilitator helped open up the lines of communication in both directions and allowed both sides, the community and the police department, to see each-others' perspectives. Having the facilitator helped us all work toward a common goal and a common cause." He suggested that this programming is critical to build trust and partnership and is also relatively inexpensive. Vivian Bryant, President & CEO of the Orlando Housing Authority, and Ayub Fleming, Acting Executive Director of the Sanford Housing Authority, reinforced that the facilitated meetings were effective: "We were openly challenged in meetings but some of the same people who were the most vocal, ended up leading the conversation and afterwards gave the sincerest thanks for the effort. Continuing the same way with keeping our word, making it an open process, and communicating the challenges and progress is the key to gaining trust and momentum as we implement the plan."

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