



# Choice Neighborhoods

e-news about transforming housing, people and neighborhoods

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Happy New Year

The Choice Neighborhoods team wishes you a happy and healthy 2019! Due to the recent government shutdown, we are kicking off newsletters for this year in February. We are happy to be back!

### Finalists Announced for FY2018 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants

HUD has [announced](#) four applicants as finalists to compete for FY2018 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants to transform public and/or other HUD-assisted housing, as well as the surrounding neighborhood. The finalists include applicants from the cities of: Baton Rouge, LA; Omaha, NE; Newport News, VA; and Norfolk, VA. The entities, selected from a pool of 32 applicants, will compete for individual grants of up to \$30 million. HUD anticipates announcing awards in March 2019.

### Upcoming Choice Neighborhoods Position

The HUD Choice Neighborhoods office is seeking qualified candidates to join our team. Candidates should have experience in large-scale neighborhood revitalization, affordable housing development, and/or supportive services. The eventual hire will be expected to conduct grant management and other activities in support of the program. The position will be listed as "Neighborhood and Community Investment Specialist" and is anticipated to be posted on [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov) in February 2019. Please feel free to share this announcement with potential candidates.

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### Department of Justice Webinars for Grant Applicants

Ready to prep for the U.S. Department of Justice's grant season? The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) recently hosted a webinar series designed to assist applicants. [Webinar recordings](#) will soon be available.

## EVENTS AND TOOLS

### **2019 Cleveland NeighborWorks Training Institute**

NeighborWorks America is hosting their next [Training Institute](#) in Cleveland, OH on February 18-22, 2019. The event offers courses on community and neighborhood revitalization, community economic development, and affordable housing. The course schedule and event details are now available online.

### **Nan McKay Training on Project-Based Vouchers**

Nan McKay is offering their [Developing and Managing Project-Based Vouchers](#) training in Chicago, IL on March 19-21, 2019. The course focuses on how Public Housing Authorities can select and manage project-based voucher properties following HUD regulations and guidance.

### **Rezility Community Engagement Mobile App)**

Enterprise Community Partners developed the free [Rezility App](#) to make it easy for housing providers to connect with residents and help them find services and opportunities. A translation feature helps connect with diverse populations. Housing providers can download the Rezility App and create an account using an iPhone or Android.

### **Field Guide for Parks and Creative Placemaking**

The Trust for Public Land and City Parks Alliance released [The Field Guide](#) in partnership with National Endowment for the Arts. The guide discusses how to advance the use of arts- and culturally-based approaches in the development of parks and open spaces.

## RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

### **How to Make Meetings Work for Collective Impact**

A recent [blog article](#) from the Collective Impact Forum discusses how to make meetings more effective. The article offers advice on how to build trust, identify dynamics in the room, diagnose the problem, and develop an effective agenda design.

### **The Transformative Effect of Porch-Sitting**

A recent [Shelterforce article](#) invites readers to consider the positive health benefits of a socially connected neighborhood. The article highlights efforts in Indianapolis, IN to use porch parties to combat isolation and build community.

### **The National Association of State Boards of Education**

The [January 2019 issue](#) of the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)'s journal *The Standard*, focuses this month on how state policymakers can advance student safety and wellness, including social-emotional learning, trauma-informed schools, health education standards, and more.

## GRANTEES IN THE NEWS

### **Shreveport, LA Awarded Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation Grant**

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation [announced](#) the award of a \$300,000 grant for Shreveport, LA's Milam Street Kitchen Incubator and Community Kitchen (MS KICK). [Watch a news video](#) about the award featuring Mayor Adrian Perkins. The construction of the kitchen incubator, located in the heart of Shreveport's Choice Neighborhood, was funded by a \$1

million FY2015 Choice Neighborhoods Planning and Action Grant along with significant leverage from the City of Shreveport. Expected to open this spring, the incubator will help grow local food businesses, create jobs, and offer culinary training and health education to the community.

## SPOTLIGHT: Issuing a Community Report in Cincinnati, OH

The Community Builders, Inc. (TCB) was awarded a \$29.5 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant in FY2012 to redevelop five distressed Project-Based Section 8 developments along the Reading Road corridor of Cincinnati's Avondale neighborhood; develop the Avondale Town Center, a mixed-use center with neighborhood retail, amenities and housing; and implement an innovative, data-driven approach to improve health, employment, and education outcomes for residents in partnership with the Urban League, Cincinnati Children's Hospital, Cincinnati Public Schools, and other community organizations. As the Choice Neighborhoods grant period draws to a close, TCB recently released a [2018 Community Report](#) to share the grant's measurable progress and inspiring stories.



*Figure 1: Nikita Anderson, Health Champion, and her four children.*

The report features measurable progress in the areas of education, safety, economic self-sufficiency, housing, health, and community engagement. Throughout the grant period, TCB regularly met with partners to review progress and advise on needed changes if the data did not show positive results. TCB established an oversight steering committee with representatives from local clergy, business owners, city agencies, and stakeholders. This group convened regularly to revisit the latest data, discuss progress, and make data-driven decisions around strategy and resource allocation. In the interest of transparency and trust-building, TCB built a publicly available [online data dashboard](#) as a central hub for partners, funders, and the community to follow progress.

A focus on sharing and analyzing data has been important to the success of Cincinnati's Choice Neighborhood. For example, data from Cincinnati Children's Hospital indicated that many families were using the emergency room for non-urgent healthcare needs. TCB partnered with the hospital to investigate. They found that no direct bus routes went to the primary care center and its location on a large medical campus could feel intimidating to residents. Residents also pointed out that it was difficult to schedule appointments for more than one child for the same visit, which was a burden on larger families with multiple children. Cincinnati Children's Hospital, the Avondale Community Council, the Urban League, and TCB teamed up to knock on doors to inform families how to access and use a local school-based clinic. By 2017, 95 percent of children under the age of 18 in the targeted housing have visited a primary care physician within the past 12 months. This is nearly a 50 percent increase since the partnership began tracking these outcomes.



*Figure 2: Avondale Children Thrive Health Champions*

Avondale residents have made strides in other areas as well, and the report highlights these successes. In 2017, 73% of young children in Avondale were enrolled in early care and education, compared to just 18% in 2013 when TCB began their initiative in partnership with the Cincinnati Public Schools. The Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio's efforts to connect residents to training, childcare, transportation, and jobs resulted in a 30% increase in residents with earned income. Almost three quarters of residents (73%) reported that they feel they have a say in their community in 2017, up from 53% in 2013. And residents feel safer thanks to a partnership with the City of Cincinnati Police Department. Nearly 80% of residents reported feeling safe at home in 2017, a 21% increase since 2014.

The report also features stories of residents such as Nikita Anderson, a mother of four, who is employed as a Health Champion with the Avondale Children Thrive program. In this role, she provides in-home coaching to new and expectant mothers with the aim of improving the health of the neighborhood's youngest residents.



*Figure 1: This mural is a celebration of the Avondale neighborhood, its colorful history and represents hopes and aspirations of local youth. The overall image is a map of the neighborhood, showing the architecture, churches, houses, and family.*

As the Choice Neighborhoods grant comes to a close, the lead partners are collaborating with neighborhood groups, charitable foundations, elected officials, impact investors, corporate stakeholders, anchor institutions, and others to sustain progress in Avondale. Several initiatives, including Avondale Children Thrive, the new Avondale Town Center, and the Community Life Workforce Initiative, will continue to benefit the neighborhood long after the Choice Neighborhoods grant period. TCB will also continue to be involved in the community as convener and property manager. The 2018 Community Report for the Avondale Choice Neighborhood has been a great tool to share outcomes with partners, funders, and the community in order to inspire continued support for the community's long-term vision.

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