



Choice Neighborhoods

e-news about transforming housing, people and neighborhoods

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grantees Announced

On September 5, 2018, HUD [awarded](#) \$4.85 million in Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant funds to six communities in: Baltimore, MD; Camden, NJ; East St Louis, IL; Milwaukee, WI; Phenix City, AL; and Tucson, AZ. These grants will help local leaders craft comprehensive, homegrown plans to redevelop severely distressed HUD assisted housing and transform their neighborhoods. Three of the awardees will receive an additional \$950,000 for Action Activities. Communities in Baltimore, Milwaukee, and Tucson will use these Action Activities funds to build momentum and attract additional investment through activities such as homeowner façade improvements, fresh food initiatives, and economic development projects. Read the grantee project summaries [here](#).

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

2019 Culture of Health Prize Applications Now Open

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's *Culture of Health Prize* recognizes communities that have come together around a commitment to health, opportunity, and equity through collaboration and inclusion, especially with historically marginalized populations and those facing the greatest barriers to good health. Collaborations between two or more organizations, including government entities and non-profit organizations, are eligible to apply. Up to ten communities will receive \$25,000, professional communications materials and counsel, and national promotion. [Applications](#) due November 1, 2018.

Advancing Cities Competition from JPMorgan

JPMorgan's [Advancing Cities Challenge](#) will make investments of up to \$3 million in cities to support creative, collaborative and sustainable solutions that address cross-cutting challenges that help more people benefit from a growing economy. Successful proposals will support existing local coalitions of elected, business and nonprofit leaders working together to address major social and economic challenges such as employment barriers, financial insecurity, and neighborhood disinvestment. Nonprofits are eligible to apply. [Applications](#) due November 30, 2018.

EVENTS AND TOOLS

Webinar: Partnering with Hospitals around Housing and Health

LISC Institute will host representatives from Nationwide Children's Hospital and Community Development for All People to provide an overview of their Healthy Neighborhood Healthy Families Initiative, which encourages hospitals to treat neighborhoods as "patients" and invest in housing to support local public health efforts. The [webinar](#) on October 31, 2018 at 2:00pm EST will share how one hospital in Columbus staffed their initiative, incorporated the community's needs, and managed several interventions – including programs focused on home repair, rehabilitation and home ownership, construction, career development, and rental housing.

Resources to Close the Digital Divide

BroadbandUSA, an initiative of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), offers resources to support practitioners in expanding broadband access and meaningful use across America. The [Broadband Planning Toolkit](#) provides guidance on the six steps to plan a community broadband roadmap, a plan that "describes the community's vision for the broadband initiative, the anticipated benefits and the strategy and action plan necessary to carry out that vision." BroadbandUSA also offers free [technical assistance](#) for planning, implementation, operations and assessment.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

New Report on Opportunities for Community Controlled Land and Housing

The Democracy Collaborative produced a [report](#) for practitioners that explores five tools to increase community control of land and housing – limited equity cooperatives, resident owned communities, community land trusts, community benefits agreements, and land banks. The report also examines the role that anchor institutions can play to support these efforts.

Report on Co-locating Early Learning Centers with Affordable Housing

Enterprise Community Partners released a new [report](#) to share recommendations based on its Home & Hope Initiative in Washington, which accelerates the development of affordable housing with early learning centers on underutilized public and tax-exempt land. Early learning centers co-located with affordable housing benefits the children as well as the parents, in particular working mothers. Recommendations include the importance of selecting the right site, partners, curriculum and legal structure, building design and more.

GRANTEES IN THE NEWS

Officials Break Ground on Phase III of Norris Apartments in Philadelphia

The Philadelphia Tribute [posted](#) a photo from the ground-breaking ceremony for a new 50-unit affordable mixed-use development that will include two and three-story townhomes and six apartment-style buildings, as well as a community building which will host an after-school program, computer lab, and offices for resident leaders and management staff.

SPOTLIGHT: Resident Leadership Training in Newport News, VA

The City of Newport News and the Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NRRHA) were awarded a \$500,000 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant in 2016 to help revitalize and transform a portion of the Southeast Community that contains Ridley Place, a deteriorating public housing development. To strengthen resident leadership during the Choice Neighborhood Planning Process, the City introduced an intensive leadership course, called the Neighborhood Leadership Series. The series focused on providing an overview of how local government works and the essential skill sets necessary to become effective neighborhood advocates and community leaders.

The Neighborhood Leadership Series (NLS) launched in the Spring of 2017 and featured seven sessions. Thirty individuals participated in the first series, six of whom lived in the target housing. All participants lived within the neighborhood and most learned about the program by participating in the Choice Neighborhoods community meetings and task force meetings. The NLS programming was held at the Ridley Place Family Investment Center, and childcare was provided. Each session started with dinner and networking to help build relationships, followed by up to two hours of training content. The curriculum included local history and government, community organizing, asset-mapping, consensus building and community resiliency.



Figure 1: NLS2 visits WTKR News Station to learn about media relations, such as how to design a press release.

Informed by feedback from the 23 graduates of NLS, a second Neighborhood Leadership Series (NLS2) started in the Spring of 2018 to enhance the cohort's ability to support and act on important neighborhood issues. Ten sessions were held with topics ranging from media relations to public speaking to leveraging existing community

partners. Additional literature was provided to further enhance participant knowledge including: *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, *Careering*, and *Public Speaking 101: Public Speaking Guide for Beginners*. Eleven individuals from the first series participated in the second series, and of those, 9 graduated.

As part of the second series, the participants were randomly assigned to groups and asked to develop a proposal for a nonprofit organization based on community needs. One of the groups re-established a dormant nonprofit, the East End Neighborhood Association (EENA), and secured 501(c)3 status. Four other organizations were envisioned, and are now in various stages of development, including a women's shelter, a neighborhood history and planning organization, an outpatient therapy and job training center for youth, and an entrepreneurship program.



Figure 2: NLS2 Graduation held at Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center.

The Choice Neighborhoods team is planning to begin the series again with a new group of leaders in the fall of 2018. The new series will incorporate lessons learned from the first cohort, including lessons from exit-surveys that participants completed at the end of each session and at the end of the series. Lessons include marketing the second part of the

series earlier in the process to increase participation, using school buses for transportation instead of chartered buses to save funds, allowing participants to select their own groups based on shared interests, providing audio book copies of all materials, and making time during the session to discuss any assigned reading.

One NLS participant, Yugonda Sample-Jones, became the president of the Parent, Teacher, Student Association, and has since led several peace walks in her community. She shared that the leadership series helped her learn how to be a catalyst for transformation in the community. Sample-Jones has since been hired as the



Figure 3: Yugonda Sample-Jones, graduate of NLS1 & NLS2.

Neighborhood Programs Coordinator for Hampton Roads Community Action Program.

The leadership series has been impactful in expanding the local leadership capacity in the community, which has helped to bolster community engagement in general. For example, graduates of NLS2 helped coordinate the creation of a [new mural](#) at the Boys and Girls Club. NLS2 facilitated the community's selection of citizen luminaries of the past and present, treasured institutions, and landmarks that have helped to shape and mold the cultural identity of the southeast community. Bold, enthusiastic colors and patterns inspired by the Africobra movement were also chosen for the mural. Many of the NLS2 graduates participated throughout the process, organizing opportunities for the community to meet with the artist, reaching out to neighbors to be involved, and inviting the family members of the figures painted on the wall to participate with the celebration upon completion.

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