



## Choice Neighborhoods e-Newsletter Issue 34 / January 2015

### CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

#### **2015 Appropriations for Choice Neighborhoods**

Choice Neighborhoods was awarded \$80 million under the 2015 CR Omnibus Bill passed in December 2014. This funding will allow for new grants and continuing technical assistance.

### FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

#### **National Award Program Focuses on Improving Community Health**

The BUILD Health Challenge will be awarding planning and implementation grants to improve the health of low-income neighborhoods. Up to \$8.5 million in grants, low-interest loans, and program-related investments will support up to 17 community-driven efforts that address health-shaping factors, such as establishing a grocery store. The deadline to apply is January 16, 2015. For eligibility criteria and more information, [click here](#).

#### **The Department of Labor Announces \$100 million Available to Expand Registered Apprenticeship Programs**

The Department of Labor announced it is making \$100 million available to expand registered apprenticeship programs in high-growth industries. Approximately twenty-five (25) grants ranging from \$2.5 million to \$25 million are expected to be awarded. The deadline to apply is April 30, 2015. For eligibility criteria and more information about this grant, [click here](#).

### EVENTS AND TOOLS

#### **Free Early Learning Curriculum for Children Ages 2-6+**

The ABCmouse.com Early Learning Academy offers online curriculum designed by early childhood experts for children ages 2-6+. Used in more than 45,000 classrooms, the site is free to schools, Head Start programs, public libraries, and other community organizations and is now being made free to housing authorities. To learn more about ABCmouse.com, [click here](#). To get free access, email [communitycenters@abcmouse.com](mailto:communitycenters@abcmouse.com).

### **Webinar: Exploring PHA's Integration of Employment Supports**

On January 22, 2015 the [Self-Sufficiency Research Clearinghouse \(SSRC\)](#) will be hosting a webinar exploring Public Housing Authorities' integration of employment supports, and its impacts on facilitating residents' job training and work placement. Speakers will describe their experiences implementing and evaluating economic and job development programs that focus on public housing residents. If you are interested in attending, [register here](#).

### **Webinar: Making Communities More Resilient to Withstand Disasters**

On January 9, 2015 HUD will be hosting a conference and webcast focused on community recovery and resilience. This event will spotlight communities around the country that are using smart planning to improve economic viability while also mitigating the risk of disaster. To register to attend this event, either in person or via the webcast, [click here](#).

## **RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS**

### **Do Investments in Poor Neighborhoods Really Make a Difference?**

When community development is approached in a comprehensive way, investments into poor communities create results. This report, presented by Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), shows how jobs and income in neighborhoods that LISC heavily invested in grew at a significantly faster pace than similar communities with little to no investment. To read this report, [click here](#).

### **Youth Incarceration: What are the Costs and the Alternatives?**

Thirty-three U.S. states and jurisdictions spend \$100,000 or more annually to incarcerate a young person, and continue to generate outcomes that result in even greater costs. A report released by the Justice Policy Institute examines the costs associated with the incarceration of juveniles, and presents ways to more effectively help youth transition out of the juvenile justice system. To read this report, [click here](#).

### **Reflections on Tackling Neighborhood Poverty**

A new article from Urban Institute looks at initiatives that focus on distressed neighborhoods and examines three themes in tackling neighborhood poverty. The piece also provides links to relevant research. To read the article, [click here](#).

### **Children Living in Renovated Public Housing have Fewer Repeat ER Visits**

A new study by The University of California, San Francisco examines data on emergency and urgent-care needs of children in San Francisco. The study reveals that kids living in renovated HOPE VI public housing were less likely to repeatedly have emergency room visits than those living in old public housing. To read more about the study, [click here](#).

## GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

### **Small, Southern Town Makes Big Strides Post Planning Grant**

Salisbury, a small town in a rural area of central North Carolina, is on the path to revitalizing the West End neighborhood. For a long time, the West End had been considered the town's most distressed neighborhood, with a poverty rate of 28 percent, a neighborhood vacancy rate nearly five times the County average, and a failing, 72-unit public housing complex. Committed to tackling these challenges, the Housing Authority and the City of Salisbury teamed up to win a 2010 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant. Through the Planning Grant process, they formed a strong collaboration among their partners and the community, and established a vision to turn the West End around.

Their efforts have begun to pay off. Even without a Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant, Salisbury has begun to realize the community's Transformation Plan. This small town secured Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and leveraged HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) to replace the deteriorating public housing complex with a mixed income community of 170 energy efficient, accessible apartments. The entire redevelopment is expected to be complete by April 2016 and will represent a \$21 million investment in the West End.

Salisbury is moving on other major pieces of the Transformation Plan as well. To ensure access to fresh foods, the Housing Authority has partnered with Mobile Farm Fresh to provide fresh fruits, vegetables, and cooking supplies to West End residents. Livingstone College also plans to open a new culinary school and farm that will provide mentoring for middle school students and sell surplus produce at discount prices. Additionally, to improve neighborhood safety, the Salisbury Police Department has restructured divisions and beats, assigned a community police liaison for the West End, and moved its Youth-Police Athletic League events to the neighborhood. The community has also rallied to transform their neighborhood – over 100 residents, city staff, and other stakeholders volunteered to revamp a block through landscaping, painting, and carpentry projects. This first annual event was recognized nationally by USA Magazine as a model for volunteer-driven community change.

**If you have suggestions for topics or content that you would like to see in upcoming newsletters, please submit those requests to [choicetnewsletter@bctpartners.com](mailto:choicetnewsletter@bctpartners.com). Content must be submitted by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month to be considered for the upcoming month's publication.**