

# Communityworks

July 2015

Partnering for a Sustainable Community

UPDATE

## Community Leadership Program Graduates the Sixth Cohort of Leaders!

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Working with Dominican University's Brennan School of Business facilitators emerging leaders enhance their skills in areas such as creative problem solving, developing and managing talent, negotiation and conflict resolution, project management and strategic planning. In addition to building a network of contacts within the communities, the participants also create team-based projects that can benefit the community. This program provides locally focused skill development that serves as a unique toolkit for those emerging and developing leaders in our community who are in business, commerce, government, and the social impact (nonprofit) sector.

At its graduation ceremony on June 12, the sixth class of emerging community leaders presented:

- **Open House OPRF** – a day which has been modeled after Open House Chicago, in which residents will be given the opportunity to visit OPRF landmarks and museums for free. The day, September 12, 2015, is focused on educating residents about the volunteer opportunities associated with these organizations. The group has submitted a grant application to the Village of Oak Park and has also gained support from the OPRF Chamber of Commerce. Team Members: Sarah Corbin (Member Services Specialist, OPRF Chamber of Commerce), Tom Gull (Director of Development, Frank Lloyd Wright Trust), and Heidi Ruehle-May (Executive Director).

- **The Surplus Project** – collaboration between local organizations, including Rush Oak Park Hospital, OPRF High School, and the OPRF Food Pantry. Members of this group jointly created a partnership which will focus on transferring unused food at the hospital or high school to the food pantry for distribution. Team Members: Tod Altenburg (CFO, OPRF High School), Jennifer Gawlik (Therapist, Thrive Counseling),



continued inside

Jennifer Grenier (RN & Unit Director, Rush Oak Park Hospital), Beth Klein (Bookkeeper, OPRF Food Pantry), and Joy Wright (Director of Development, OPRF Day Nursery)

• **Getting “On Board”** – a proposal for a local training program on board and civic involvement (specifically aimed at getting young adults interested in such leadership roles). Denise Brown (Program Administrator, Daniel J. Nellum Youth Services), Omar Diaz (Systems Engineer, Dominican University), Mayra Ortiz (Marketing Associate, Nicor Gas), Fernando Rivera (Branch Manager, Forest Park National Bank)

• **Framework for Readiness** – collaboration between group members’ respective organizations (Nineteenth Century Club, West Suburban YMCA, District 97 and Hephzibah Home) to provide middle-school age youth with the opportunity to take culinary preparation classes, which will help to develop skills for future employment. Team Members: Danielle Condon (Catering & Events Manager, 19th Century Club), Alison Corsino (Training Coordinator, Hephzibah Children’s Association), Kim Polk (Aquatics Director, West Cook YMCA), Chemaine Carr (Asst. Principal, Percy Julian Middle School)

• **Our Community: Social Services Resource Fair** – held on June 17 this project aimed at improving the flow of ideas and information among and between service providers and community advocacy organizations in Austin, Berwyn, Forest Park, Maywood and OPRF. The aim is to expand the circles of power, resources, and human capital between these neighborhoods. Team Members: Douglas Dixon (Principal, Sales Performance Solutions), Paul Simpson (Executive Director, Academic Enrichment Center – Dominican University), Emily Sjostrom (Marketing Manager, Visit Oak Park)

Conducting one of the breakout sessions, OPRFCF Program Officer Elizabeth Chadri (above, right) discussed Developing Alliances and Partnerships at the Our Community Social Services Impact Fair on June 17. Representatives from Oak Park and neighboring communities participated in this unique opportunity designed by a Project Team of the Community Leadership Program.



Community Foundation President & CEO Kristin Carlson Vogen (at left) congratulates CLP graduate Heidi Ruhle-May, Executive Director of the Pleasant Home Foundation, upon receiving her certificate of program completion at the Program’s ceremony June 12.



Making the Community Leadership Program work are (from left to right): Outgoing Dean of the Brennan School of Business Molly Burke, Professor Ron Bacci, The Community Foundation’s Kristin Carlson Vogen and Professor Dave Aron.

# COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

## REGISTRATION FOR THE SEVENTH COHORT IS OPEN!

We seek a mixture of representation from both the for-profit business sector and the social impact (nonprofit) sector. Requirements for the 2015-2016 Community Leadership Program participants should:

- ✓ Have lived and/or worked in the Oak Park or River Forest area for at least one year; Intend to remain in the area for at least three years;
- ✓ Be able to attend all nine program sessions (running September through June) – no more than two sessions may be missed; and
- ✓ Be willing and able to spend 4-6 hours per month outside of the sessions on the team project.

The program cost is \$2,000. If you have questions about the program or about partial scholarships that may be available, please contact the Brennan School of Business at 708-524-6810 or [clp@dom.edu](mailto:clp@dom.edu). The deadline for 2015-16 applications is Friday, July 17th. For more information and an application form, please visit: <http://business.dom.edu/academics/community-leadership-program>.

# Success of ALL Youth (SAY) has been very busy this spring!



Our steering committee has selected SAY's first focus. Centered around forming strong connections, this focus for SAY will find us working to better connect all youth to the community, to connect all youth to necessary services, and to build better agency and organization connections on behalf of our youth. Indicators for each of these initiatives will be prioritized by the SAY data team.

The SAY structure relies on change networks, which are working groups that come together with a common goal, in order to achieve our collective goals. This spring, SAY has developed a social emotional/life skills change network. This new group will develop a common language for a holistic set of social and emotional core competencies and perform a scan of current assessments and interventions across Oak Park-River Forest organizations and institutions. The change network includes participation from Thrive, Smart Love, Collaboration for Early Childhood, School Districts D200, D97 and D90, Riveredge Hospital, and community practitioners.

Another change network, focusing on workforce, to explore the need for increased support for post-secondary social and life skills is also in the process of being convened.

SAY and the Oak Park Public Library have collaborated as part of the library's summer volunteer program to present a workshop called Community Builders, which will help SAY create an ongoing youth council. More on this follows.

To help us stay coordinated and on task, SAY has been fortunate to engage two interns: Ahmad Qadafi, a University of Chicago doctoral candidate in human development, who works directly with the social emotional/life skills change network, and Justin Maxwell, a local high school student, hired through Oak Park Youth Services, who works with SAY on youth engagement efforts and community scans.

And to top it all off, the SAY website is now live! Please visit [www.SAYopr.org](http://www.SAYopr.org) for the latest SAY updates.

## Community Builders...

## SAY, that's a great idea!

To engage the youth voice in the ongoing initiatives of Success of ALL Youth (SAY), we were pleased to utilize a proven collaboration with the Oak Park Public Library this summer. The annual library volunteer program offered a 7-week session called Community Builders. The session was facilitated by the Success of ALL Youth and provided its teen participants with the building blocks of the SAY mission. The workshops gave insight to local teens on the long term work of SAY, gathered their insights on youth within the community, and asked them to create the structure for an ongoing youth council that will become a valuable resource to SAY as it begins its work within the community.

The curriculum for the 7 week workshop was a balance of informational presentations, brainstorming sessions, conversations, and of course, food and fun! Presentations were given by a variety of community members on topics such as community challenges, teen advocacy, representing an organization in the media and philanthropy. The teen participants shared fresh ideas and valuable feedback on the topics. We were genuinely excited to have a chance to work with each of them.

The concepts and information that SAY gathered will be organized to create the process that will be used to select candidates for a SAY youth council in the fall.

High school students in the Community Builders program try their hand at Jenga as a visualization exercise demonstrating the strength and support foundations provide.



EXCEEDED GOALS

MET GOALS

See a quick glance of the Trends & Metrics from the Report Card on back page

## A Progress Snapshot for Oak Park and River Forest

PlanItGreen is a sustainability planning and implementation project that grew out of Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation's *Communityworks*, designed to enhance the vibrancy and quality of life of Oak Park and River Forest.

PlanItGreen is guided by the OPRF Community Foundation's *Communityworks* Advisory Board and the PlanItGreen Core Team, and is facilitated by Seven Generations Ahead. The project is the collective work of many community organizations, partners, residents, businesses, and institutions. The plan supports the interests of leaders in engaging all levels of our community to reduce their environmental footprint and advance common sustainability objectives.

The Oak Park River Forest Community Sustainability Report Card provides a snapshot in time of progress against sustainability goals. Baseline metrics – dating back to 2007 – were created and used as a basis of comparison. Over time, the sustainability report cards illuminate trends, highlight successes and shortcomings, and ultimately help support decisions on future policies, strategies, and resource allocation.



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# Community *impact*



Here is a summary of PlantGreen's second Report Card. For a complete version of the report, please visit: <http://www.oprfcf.org/index.php/downloads> and click on the link to PlantGreen's 2014 Report Card.

## Plant Green Report Card: Trends & Metrics

**Thumbs Up: Exceeded Goals**

**Thumbs Sideways: Met Goals**

	<b>Energy</b>	Oak Park and River Forest had energy use decreases of 7.4% and 7.8% respectively.
	<b>Transportation</b>	Trends are moving in the right directions for Vehicle Miles Traveled (decreasing) and Public Transit Ridership (increasing).
	<b>Education</b>	Gardens and food scrap composting in most schools/universities, solar panel installations, and community education are making sustainability hard to miss.
	<b>Waste</b>	Total residential material generated decreased by 17.5% and 15.7% respectively for Oak Park and River Forest, while residential diversion from landfill rates regressed.
	<b>Water</b>	River Forest's decreasing potable water consumption trend line since 2009 reflects attention to pipe leakages, residential purchases of water-efficient appliances, and increased water costs.
	<b>Food</b>	Sugar Beet Co-op met its \$1.8 million capital goal, and is expected to significantly complement existing local food procurement activity.
	<b>Community Development</b>	A \$1,247,496 grant from the Illinois Green Infrastructure Grants program enabled construction of permeably-paved green alleys; the OP Comp Plan solidified commitment to PlantGreen strategies.
	<b>Green Economy</b>	Strong participation in green business forums, 10 new certified green business, and increased attention to shopping local all highlight green business activity.
	<b>Open Space &amp; Ecosystems</b>	58% of taxing bodies/large institutions report using green cleaning & non-toxic pest/weed control practices, while 31% have policies in place.