



Communityworks

January 2015

Partnering for a Sustainable Community

UPDATE

SAY, PIG, How Is Your CLP?

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Two resources are required to create: people resources and financial resources.

Communityworks exists because of financial resources given to the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation to impact areas of interest for the benefit of our communities. As critical as financial resources are, the PEOPLE resources make Communityworks possible. Combining the two resources – in the model we have created – is simply brilliant. The Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation is not the only Community Foundation in Illinois bestowed with the financial resources for Communityworks. However, how we have structured the implementation of the financial resources is unique.

Collectively we created an Advisory Board. The Advisory Board consists of leaders within our community – representing government, school districts, universities, hospitals, community advocates, and faith-based organizations – focusing on the needs within our villages. Through the Advisory Board, the Foundation has its finger on the pulse of the community. Through the Advisory Board, the Foundation learns about issues or concerns facing each of the individual institutions or organizations represented by the Advisory Board. With the Advisory Board, the Foundation can allocate assets from the Communityworks Endowment, (the financial resources), to facilitate change to make our community stronger.

Currently, the Advisory Board has three priority areas: environmental sustainability with PlanItGreen, community leadership through the Community Leadership Program-, and a unique cradle to career continuum, Success of All Youth. The Advisory Board works with Foundation Committees, and staff, to generate where funding should be distributed, then recommends distributions to the Community Foundation Board for approval. The Community Foundation Board oversees all aspects of the Community Foundation – from working with individual donors on their philanthropic plans to educating area social impact organizations about becoming more effective in their work. The Foundation staff executes all details of the Community Foundation, including the initiatives funded by – and orchestrated through – the Communityworks Advisory Board.

So how does all of this explanation connect to the title of the article. Acronyms are fun. They help us communicate quickly – both in writing and in speech. The fact that two of our Communityworks initiatives spell actual words, make them even more fun! Success of All Youth (SAY) has been a major focus in 2014 – inside you will meet our two staff and learn what is happening within the initiative. PlanItGreen (PIG) held its Forum in November for area organizations to share their best contribution to environmental sustainability in 2014. Community Leadership Program (CLP) is in its 6th year of educating up-and-coming community leaders to work within and for the benefit of our communities.

Thank you for your role in the success of Communityworks. Community residents, donors, children, Advisory Board members, Community Foundation Board members, Community Foundation staff. Each of you plays a role. Thanks!

Kristin Carlson Vogen

President & CEO, Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation

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Community Caring from Cradle to Career

What we say when we talk about SAY...

Success of All Youth (SAY) is an Oak Park-River Forest collective that engages youth, families, and community partners to coordinate and align priorities, efforts and resources to empower every youth to reach his/her full potential. We bring individuals and organizations together to work on a common objective (outcome), using data to inform our decisions (evidence-based decision making), and working on it until we get it right (continuous improvement).

The health, safety, and ultimate success of our youth encompasses so many variables. Because it is complex and at times overwhelming, we must and will do it together, challenge by challenge; combining our skills and resources to be that much more supportive, effective and efficient. We have committed to work collectively to weave together the strengths of multiple individuals, families, and organizations into a comprehensive network of actions, services and supports to ensure that the needs of all of our youth are being met.

SAY is different...

Oak Park and River Forest are great communities with many organizations and institutions working to support youth. So how is SAY different than previous and on-going efforts to support our youth? Many of the challenges and opportunities we face today are fairly complex and we have been struggling with quite a few issues for some time now with no clear solutions. This is not due to lack of effort; rather that too many organizations are working in isolation in a time when many talents and resources are required to make positive change. Collective impact brings people together, in a structured way, to achieve social change.

Collective Impact...

Five principles are at work in this collective impact model:

1. It starts with a common agenda. As mentioned in the June 2014 update, community members and leaders have developed a vision and mission for the work that we will do to support the success of all youth.
2. Then the collective establishes shared measurements and agrees to track progress in the same way, which allows for continuous improvement. SAY's Data Team is currently working on the effort and will have a set of core outcomes and indicators selected around social/emotional, physical, and cognitive aspirations. These will be publicized in early 2015.
3. The collective fosters mutually reinforcing activities. The individuals, organizations, and institutions that have been working so tirelessly now begin to organize their efforts around these common outcomes and indicators with specific objectives.
4. This work encourages continuous communication which means building trust and relationships between all participants.
5. Lastly, this work requires a strong backbone – a team dedicated to orchestrating the work of the group.

The Backbone...

The Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation agreed to be this backbone and has hired Linda T. Francis as the SAY Director and Michelle Ptack as the SAY Communications Manager to work with the many other community members and partner organizations that committed to SAY and are contributing their time and talents to the effort.

Right Now...

We are in the process of setting up the methods and structure that will incorporate the voice and self-advocacy of our youth, support communication and participation of the community, and allow us to begin selecting specific challenges and opportunities to address.

Contact us to discuss how you can engage with us in this collective. Call 708-848-1560 or contact Linda at: lfrancis@oprfcf.org or Michelle at: mptack@oprfcf.org.



Linda Francis, Director,
Success of All Youth

Linda Francis comes to the Foundation as an accomplished industrial engineer and a program leader with extensive experience developing and implementing solutions. She has substantial analytical, technical and communication skills with a background in continuous improvement. Locally, she has worked with diverse individual and organizational cultures toward common goals. She currently serves on the Board of the Oak Park Education Foundation.



Michelle Ptack, Communications
Manager, Success of All Youth

Michelle Ptack comes to the Foundation with extensive experience in the social impact sector. Her range of knowledge includes marketing and social media, fundraising, event planning and management, volunteer management, community outreach, database...and whatever other project the next meeting might bring. Michelle prides herself on being a creative problem solver, and strives to work across departments or organizations to find the most efficient way to achieve goals

Developing Community Leadership

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Community leadership development is supported by the Communityworks endowment and the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation through the Community Leadership Program (CLP) offered at the Brennan School of Business of Dominican University. This program targets the professional and personal development of emerging and existing leaders in the Oak Park and River Forest area. Over a nine-month period, program participants work with Brennan facilitators and dozens of experts in various venues to discuss and enhance their skills in areas including 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 form teams to work on developing projects that will benefit the communities.

In order to develop these community focused leaders, the Program seeks participants who are:

- Most likely to use their leadership skills for the long-term benefit of the communities;
- Sincerely committed to and interested in serving the communities in key leadership roles; and
- Representative of the diversity of the communities.

Don Offerman, Senior Vice-President of Business Development of Forest Park National Bank explains the bank's commitment to having staff participate in the program:

Since Forest Park National Bank is a community bank, it is logical for the bank to encourage its employees to be actively involved in the communities it serves.

When we first heard about the Community Leadership Program, it impressed us immediately as a way to help our employees become involved in community service and leadership we encourage. Oak Park, River Forest, and Forest Park are communities rich with opportunities for community service. Having a formal program to train employees to position themselves for meaningful community service is a very special opportunity. We have our fourth participant in the CLP program this year and we have selected our fifth employee to participate for the 2015-2016 program.

And Dr. Patricia Granados, President of Triton College, says this about CLP:

We have appreciated the opportunity for Triton staff participation in the Community Leadership Program at Dominican University. Comments have been extremely positive,

acknowledging the value of their experience both professionally and personally. As we seek to foster leadership at the various levels of the college, the CLP provides a well-integrated program that 1) facilitates active community engagement and collaboration among emerging leaders; 2) broadens leadership capacity at our institution; and 3) provides an enriched and purposeful experience for the professional development of our staff. Triton's mission reflects an emphasis on 'community' and this program helps our employees bring it to life. Our commitment to developing leaders and transforming our community aligns particularly well with the goals of CLP and we look forward to continued involvement in the future.

For more information about the Community Leadership Program, visit the Brennan School's page at: <http://business.dom.edu/academics/community-leadership-program>. For a list of past participants and information about some of the community projects that were developed, visit:

<http://www.oprfcf.org/index.php/community-leadership>

Here is a list of those currently participating:

Tod Altenburg

Oak Park River Forest High School - Chief School Business Official

Denise Brown

Program Administrator, Daniel J. Nellum Youth Services

Chemaine Carr

Percy Julian Middle School - Assistant Principal

Danielle Condon

Nineteenth Century Club, Catering and Event Manager

Sarah Corbin

OPRF Chamber of Commerce, Member Services Specialist

Alison Corsino

Hephzibah Children's Assoc., Training and Professional Standards Coordinator

Omar Diaz

Dominican University, Systems Engineer

Douglas Dixon

Principal, Sales Performance Solutions

Jennifer Gawlik

Thrive Counseling Center, Therapist & Crisis Worker

Jennifer Grenier

Rush OP Hospital, Unit Director Telemetry / Innovation Unit & Resource Team

Tom Gull

Frank Lloyd Wright Trust, Director of Development

Beth Klein

OPRF Food Pantry, Bookkeeper

Mayra Ortiz

Nicor Gas, Sr. EEP Marketing & Outreach Rep / Energy Efficiency

Kimberly Polk

West Cook YMCA , Aquatics Director

Fernando Rivera

Forest Park National Bank & Trust, Branch Manager

Heidi Ruehle-May

Pleasant Home Foundation, Executive Director

Emily Sjostrom

Visit Oak Park, Marketing Mgr.

Paul Simpson

Dominican University, Executive Director, Academic Enrichment Center

Joy Wright

The Day Nursery, Development Director

PlanItGreen Celebrates Successes, Plans Next Steps



PlanItGreen's Institutional Leadership Forum provided an opportunity for sustainability leaders to celebrate their 2014 accomplishments and plan next year's goals. Held November 12 at Marion Street Cheese Market, more than 50 representatives from key Oak Park and River Forest taxing bodies and institutions participated. Village presidents Anan Abu-Taleb and Cathy Adduci gave engaging opening addresses that apprised the group of progress on the Villages' joint sustainability plan. OPRF Community Foundation CEO and President Kristin Carlson Vogen underscored the foundation's continued commitment to PlanItGreen and the importance of this project to the values of the Oak Park and River Forest communities. Seven Generations Ahead's Gary Cuneen briefed the group on funding sources to support implementation and presented an update on the development of the 2014 PlanItGreen Report Card that will be published next year. Community leaders gave 17 success snapshots from recent community projects. Highlights included:

- Concordia University, Dominican University and Triton Community College's PACE Transit Project;
- River Forest Elementary School District 90's successful funding application and installation of Solar Panels on all three schools;
- The Village of Oak Park's Tree Survey and Designation as an "Arboretum" through The Morton Arboretum's accreditation program;
- The Village of River Forest's establishment of a new Sustainability Commission that will shepherd new projects;
- The Village of Oak Park Residential Food Scrap Composting Program has been enjoying increased participation;
- West Cook Wild Ones is gathering pledges from residents to create a Native Habitat Corridor by linking backyard native gardens from Thatcher Woods to Columbus Park;
- Oak Park District 97's progress on expanding their Zero Waste lunchrooms;
- Energy Efficiency Upgrades at Oak Park Apartments, the Village's largest property management company;
- Village of River Forest and Village of Oak Park Green Alley Projects that installs permeable pavement when alleys are rebuilt;
- The Village of Oak Park "No Pesticides" Yard Signs Distribution Program.

Learn more by reading this Oak Leaves article:

<http://www.oakpark.com/News/Articles/11-18-2014Green-summit-features-snapshots-ofsustainability/>



As in all the great social movements of the past century, the faith community is taking a leading role in the environmental movement. On Oct. 22, nearly 40 congregation leaders of the Interfaith Green Network (IGN) met to strategize efforts to combat climate change in our community. Over the years, this network of more than 20 Oak Park & River Forest area congregations has come together toward building a vision and role for congregations in caring for Planet Earth.

This recent meeting was hosted by Rabbi Robin Damsky of West Suburban Temple Har Zion in River Forest. Her congregation provided a healthy whole food breakfast for the meeting participants which included her very own homegrown cucumbers. Reverend Sally Iberg and Len Grossman, the present and past presidents of the Community of Congregations, and Jude Huntz, Director of the Office for Peace and Justice for the Archdiocese of Chicago, also participated.

Gary Cuneen of Seven Generations Ahead reviewed PlanItGreen with the group. PlanItGreen is the local sustainability plan developed by the community as a whole and funded by the Oak Park & River Forest Community Foundation. Gary recommended that the measurements and goals used in PlanItGreen be a model for congregations. He presented a congregational checklist, created in collaboration with Interfaith Green Network that uses the topic areas from PlanItGreen. Richard Alton from Euclid

Walking the Talk: The Interfaith Green Network

Reported by Ginger Brown Vanderveer

Avenue United Methodist Church showed how his church adapted the checklist as a working plan for his congregation.

Cindy Klein-Banai, of West Suburban Temple Har Zion and Associate Chancellor for Sustainability at UIC outlined priority strategies that congregations can use, including messages from the pulpit, promoting good sustainability practices among families in the congregation, using the PlanItGreen checklist to guide their actions, and organizing house parties to acquaint more people with sustainable programs and choices.

The open forum for suggestions brought forward other important ideas from the group:

- Divest from fossil fuel companies;
- Work together on advocacy (especially for a carbon tax);
- Create programs for youth;
- Publicize the climate change issue;
- Develop a speakers bureau.

To learn more or to join the Interfaith Green Network, contact Jim Babcock, jlbabck@sbcglobal.net, or Richard Alton, richard.alton@gmail.com.

One Earth Film Festival

Returning for its 4th year on March 6-8, 2015

One Earth Film Festival is the Midwest's premier environmental film festival, creating opportunities for understanding climate change, sustainability and the power of human involvement. We showcase top-issue, thought-provoking environmental films and lead audiences in interactive post-film discussions focused on solutions. One Earth Film Festival is a production of Green Community Connections.

<http://www.greencommunityconnections.org/one-earth-film-fest/about-one-earth-film-festival/>





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Celebrating *Philanthropic Excellence*

The Board of Directors & Staff of the
Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation
cordially invites you to be our guest at this year's

CELEBRATION OF PHILANTHROPIC EXCELLENCE

Tuesday, February 17, 2015

5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

in the Carleton Hotel's Grand Ballroom
1110 Pleasant Street, Oak Park

We'll review the Foundation's accomplishments in 2014
& present Excellence in Philanthropy Awards

R.S.V.P. by February 13th to Cathy Craddock

708-848-1560

or to: ccraddock@oprfcf.org