

COMMUNITY & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
*Series*

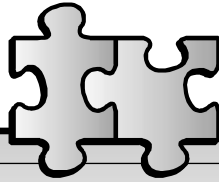
**Beacons**  
**A Union of**  
**Youth and Community**  
**Development**

*Case Study Review*

THE FORUM FOR YOUTH INVESTMENT

WITH THE SUPPORT OF  
THE FORD FOUNDATION





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*Case Study Review*

APRIL 1997  
WORKING MEETING



THE COMMUNITY & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SERIES, VOLUME 3  
PUBLISHED WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE FORD FOUNDATION



The Forum for Youth Investment was created to increase the quality and quantity of youth investments and youth involvement by promoting a “big picture” approach to planning, research, advocacy and policy development among the broad range of national organizations that help constituents and communities invest in children, youth and families. To do this, the Forum commits itself to building connections, increasing capacity and tackling persistent challenges across the allied youth fields.

The Forum offers its members tools, intelligence, training, international perspectives and individual supports. It creates opportunities for youth investors to come together in neutral forums to tackle persistent challenges such as shaping public perceptions of young people and strengthening the links between preventing youth problems and promoting youth preparation and development. It helps identify, facilitate and broker relationships among members, offering them new lenses for looking at old issues, supports to turn the ideas into action and vehicles to reflect on lessons learned. It works to ensure that the information, tools and insights generated by the Forum and its members are shaped by and useful to local communities and practitioners. It asks members to contribute commentary, products and time toward the creation of a shared information base. All this work is done in full partnership with Forum members, with the aim of increasing collective learning and action on “big picture” issues — issues that cross traditional sectors and lines, and which are beyond the capacity of any organization to tackle alone.

The Forum for Youth Investment is a U.S. initiative of the International Youth Foundation™

## ABOUT THE FORD FOUNDATION'S COMMUNITY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Using the positive youth development framework and guiding principles, the Human Development and Reproductive Health unit of the Ford Foundation launched the Community Youth Development Initiative. The term “community youth development” is used to define the process of young people and adults working in partnership to create the necessary conditions that will result in the successful development of young people, their peers, families and communities — the integration of youth development and community development. The Forum's work with the International Learning Group on Youth and Community Development is one of several projects funded by the Ford Foundation as part of its Community Youth Development Initiative.

The initiative's goal is to enhance the ability of young people from economically disadvantaged communities to successfully transition from adolescence into responsible adulthood, economic self-sufficiency and engaged citizenship by building the capacity of low-income communities to create supportive environments.

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## PREFACE

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# COMMUNITY AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

## *Exploring Common Ground*

Communities are dependent upon the minds, hearts and hands of their young people and youth are dependent upon the viability, vitality, protection and attention of their community. These would seem to be common-sense statements, but in many countries, including the United States, this vital interdependence of youth development and community development is too often ignored.

The past few years, however, have witnessed a major upswing in interest in the relationship between youth and community. Youth development researchers are looking for improved measures of community influence and indicators of healthy environments. Economists and demographers are measuring the impact of youth skills and behaviors on community viability. Youth advocates are looking for more powerful ways to show that young

people can be key catalysts for change in their communities. Youth service providers are increasingly recognizing the importance of involving youth in community development and community actors in youth development. (“Community youth development,” the term now used by the National Network for Youth, 4-H and other youth-serving organizations to refer to a blended set of youth and community commitments, reflects this shift.) And growing numbers of community development organizations are responding to the increased need for youth services and opportunities.

The overlap in the timing of these revelations is important. It has created a sense of excitement and possibility and sparked some innovative programs and initiatives. But the long-term implications of this overlap — the extent to which heightened concern about youth

and community development will translate into shifts in practice within the two broad sectors — are less clear.

The Ford Foundation and the International Youth Foundation both have deep commitments to improving the viability of youth and communities. Equally important, both strongly believe that 1) it is critical to engage young people and adults in partnerships to create the conditions necessary

for youth and community development and 2) this engagement needs to be a priority for both place-based organizations (e.g., community development corporations [CDCs]) and people-based organizations (e.g., youth-serving organizations). The two foundations, therefore, have made a commitment to explore this common ground together through joint meetings, publications and projects. We welcome others on this journey.

## INTRODUCTION

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# COMMUNITY AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

### *Complementary or Competing Priorities for Community Development Organizations?*

On April 16-18, 1997, the Ford Foundation and the International Youth Foundation (IYF) cosponsored a working meeting in Princeton, New Jersey, to encourage the emerging partnership between youth development organizations and community development organizations.

Representatives of 50 foundations, youth-serving community-based organizations, community development corporations (CDCs), policy research organizations, advocacy groups and youth leaders attended the two-day working meeting. The primary question: How can and do organizations that have community and economic development as their primary goal contribute to the protection, preparation and participation of young people?

The papers, case studies and panels prepared for the meeting provided participants with a deeper understanding of how, historically, young people and youth services have factored into the missions, strategies and services of these organizations that are currently shifting or expanding efforts to address and involve youth. We initiate the Community & Youth Development Series with three publications that were generated for or sparked by this meeting.

First in this workshop series is *Community Development and Youth Development: The Potential for Convergence* by P. Jefferson Armistead and Matthew B. Wexler of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). This thought-provoking paper, which builds on a presentation made at a December 1996 Wingspread confer-

ence, is accompanied by case studies of three community development corporations that have significant youth programming and involvement.

Second in the series is *Youth Development and Community Development: Promises and Challenges of Convergence*, a persuasive overview of theoretical and practical evidence of youth and community development as convergent goals or strategies prepared by Michele Cahill, Director of the Youth Development Institute of the Fund for the City of New York. Accompanying this piece is a case study of Youth Development, Inc., a youth-serving organization that has now established a CDC.

The third report, *Beacons: A Union of Youth and Community Development*, is a compilation of three case studies of New York City organizations that have started Beacons, school-based community centers that offer young people and families a wide array of opportunities to engage in youth development and community building. The case studies show how three organizations with different origins — a CDC, an immigrant family advocacy organization and a child and family services organization — approach a similar challenge. These case studies, as well as those in the other publications coming out of this meeting, were prepared by Judith Silber, with the assistance of Shawn Mooring and Annetta Seecharran.

Inca A. Mohamed  
Program Officer  
Ford Foundation

Karen J. Pittman  
Senior Vice President  
International Youth Foundation-USS

# BEACONS

## A UNION OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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In New York City — as in many U.S. cities — traditional family and neighborhood structures have weakened significantly. Children are much more likely to live in single parent households and to relate infrequently with caring adults. And they are likely to be exposed to perils scarcely known to their parents and grandparents, as neighborhoods have become more dangerous and less cohesive.

New York City — again like many U.S. cities — has generated numerous responses to these challenges. The city is home to the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, the first community development corporation (CDC) in the country and one of a family of strong, innovative CDCs working to address the city's

housing, economic and social issues. It is the home of dozens of well-known and well-respected youth and family serving organizations such as The Door. And, more recently, it is the place where one of the country's largest scale public-private partnerships, to ensure that young people have a healthy mix of people, places and opportunities not only in their lives but in their neighborhoods, has been implemented.

In 1991, the Department of Youth Services (DYS)<sup>1</sup> took a step that still stands out in the recent history of

*... Beacons provide a safe environment where [youth] can attain the skills essential to healthy development and future life success...[and] Beacons serve as facilitators of positive relationships between youth and their neighborhoods.*

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<sup>1</sup> The Department of Youth Services merged in 1996 with the Community Development Agency of the City and is now the Department of Youth and Community Development.

youth services. A study group, chaired by former Attorney General de Katzenbach, recommended the development of a coordinated anti-drug strategy for New York City. In response to this call, DYS proposed creating Beacons — school-based community centers offering young people and families diverse opportunities to grow and participate actively in the spirit and life of their communities. The first ten Beacons were established in 1991. By 1996 there were 40 Beacons, with at least one operating in each New York City school district. Each Beacon receives approximately \$400,000 annually in core support from the Department of Youth and Community Development with the support of the New York City Council and the New York State Legislature.

## THE BEACONS APPROACH

At a time when many young people face the threat of drugs, crime, poverty and racial tensions, as well as the more ordinary challenges of young adulthood, Beacons provide a safe environment where they can attain the skills essential to healthy development and future life success. At the same time, Beacons serve as facilitators of positive relationships between youth and their neighborhoods. They encourage and provide the opportunities and means for youth participation in the commu-

nity as well as community involvement in the development of youth. Activities include neighborhood safety and improvement ventures, community service projects, theme-based education activities, GED classes, sports tournaments, family nights and youth councils, which plan and assist in Beacon activities.

The value of such attributes cannot be underestimated. Numerous findings on resiliency have cited common factors in the lives of youth who weather high-risk environments and become healthy, productive adults. These include high expectations, participation in engaging activities, continuity, caring relationships and opportunities to contribute to activities and others. Open after school, evenings and weekends for an average of 10 to 12 hours each day, as well as during the summer and other school vacations, Beacons provide such an environment. Young people can develop meaningful relationships with adults who they interact with daily — teachers, counselors and mentors. In addition, the education component of Beacons provides young people with services that can boost their skills markedly and prepare a springboard for further education. Among these are academic tutoring, homework assistance, and SAT/ACT and college prep courses.

Imparting these lessons and bonds requires imaginative approaches and teaching. Beacons staff use creative

strategies to develop participants' love of learning. Youth are challenged to expand their knowledge through video production and script writing, hands-on science classes, newspaper/newsletter writing and production, and music lessons. Theme-based literacy activities and career and employment assistance classes also teach resume writing and how to obtain employment. And young participants witness the value and possibilities of engaging in such

enriching activities. Indeed, many Beacons volunteers have actually become staff members. By employing these community residents and promoting post-secondary education, Beacons cultivate community leaders in their own neighborhoods.

In upholding the youth development framework, Beacons emphasize youth leadership and embrace it as an integral part of their programming. Youth are

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MOVEMENT: BEACONS DISTINCTION

Like the word's literal meaning – “light” – each Beacon shines uniquely. Yet despite their diversity, all Beacons include recreational, educational, career and community services. And all engage youth, families and communities in ways that suggest an unprecedented and valuable convergence between youth and community development. Beacons provide:

**Familiar Community Site.** Utilize the ubiquitousness of schools, capitalizing upon community sites that can provide secure, inviting surroundings during a variety of hours.

**High Quality Activities/Ongoing Supports.** Offer a palate of services and activities that meet the vital needs and interests of children, youth and their families, from improving educational achievement and health to learning computers and dance.

**Contribution and Expectations.** Advance youth participation and leadership in multiple areas – community activities, special events and volunteer service. Maintain high level of expectations for their participation, behavior and goals.

**Caring Relationships.** Concurrently, build on the strengths of community-based organizations to step up the participation of community residents in the development of children and youth through volunteer and staff opportunities. Let each group “see and be” with each other in many engaging and productive activities. Accent and foster caring relationships between youth and adult counselors, teachers and mentors.

**Parents On Board.** Nurture parent involvement in the development of their children and their communities through inviting and engaging activities, workshops and seminars.

engaged in a variety of leadership groups, including Robesons and youth councils that closely assist in planning Beacons' activities. In addition, they serve with community members and staff on the Beacon advisory boards and develop their own newsletters.

Linked to this are ongoing efforts to foster young people's social competencies and their commitment to the community's welfare. Beacons have reached out to community members and leaders, fostering a vital cohesiveness. For example, youth have met with community block associations to discuss safety issues; collaborated with community merchants to develop a survey assessing community needs; and assisted in launching anti-graffiti campaigns. Similarly, Beacons staff and youth have cooperated with families and other community members in voter registration drives, park beautification projects and immunization drives.

"The door is always open" is more than a common cliché for members of the Beacons family. For staff, it is an operational credo; they recognize that community and parental involvement are critical to providing youth with essential opportunities and supports. Consequently, a multitude of activities have been designed to attract and stimulate such involvement. Such activities engage parents in their children's lives and encourage them to develop their own interests and leadership skills. Parents may participate in GED, college

preparation and computer classes. Parent education workshops and counseling services are available to help them improve their parenting skills and cope with daily stresses. Creatively, Beacons also use such strategies as Family Nights, where children and families can enjoy good company and good food, and a Friday Morning Cafe, where parents can gather for conversation and socializing.

## RELEVANCE OF THE BEACONS MODEL

The Beacons Schools have become a national model attracting a steady stream of visitors from across the country. Beacons adaptations are planned or underway in several cities. The scale and durability of the Beacons is impressive (the program withstood a change in administration). Three other things make this effort an excellent example of what the intersection of youth and community development can look like.

First and foremost, the Beacons are built on the themes of youth development. While established with anti-drug funding, they were never billed as prevention and intervention programs. The theme, from the beginning, was development — giving young people safe and stimulating places to go, people to talk to and opportunities to explore.

Second, while housed in schools, the Beacons, from the beginning, were intended to be owned and shaped by their communities. Each Beacon is operated by a lead community-based organization in conjunction with a community advisory council comprised of parents, young people, the school's principal, teacher representatives, neighborhood service providers and other community residents. The troika of partners — the Department of Youth and Community Development, the New York City Public Schools and the nonprofit community organizations — effectively build on the strengths of each.

Third, even though the Beacons are run by different nonprofit organizations, ranging from CDCs to settlement houses to community colleges, there were intentional efforts — starting with, but not limited to, the universal name — to ensure that these centers were perceived as and functioned as a group. Training and networking ensure implementation of a

common philosophy and approach and a sense of shared mission.

Since their inception, Beacons have sought to create a vital and inviting place for families, youth and community. Indeed, the initiative has struggled to obtain approval from school boards and has faced challenges in communities where promises and programs have come and gone, leaving very persistent problems. Although rarely pursued in the past by deficit-oriented youth organizations, youth leadership and development are the threads holding the Beacons structure firmly in place. Over the years, Beacons have developed various strategies for merging youth leadership and community involvement and development. The following case studies profile three organizations — a CDC, a children and family services organization and a social services agency serving Dominican immigrants — that opted to organize and manage Beacons Schools programs. For each, the Beacon both builds on and enhances their ability to serve and mobilize the communities in which they operate.



## CASE STUDY NO. 1

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# ALIANZA DOMINICANA

FOUNDED IN 1982

*Alianza teaches us what we need to know, so we can run this community ourselves some day.*

— Youth Council Member

*We grow our own leadership.*

— Moises Perez, Executive Director

*Special thanks to Moises Perez, Executive Director; and to all of the staff and youth at Alianza for welcoming us to the site.*

## OVERVIEW

**A**lianza Dominicana, Inc., a comprehensive community and human development organization, is located in the heart of a large, vibrant neighborhood of Dominican immigrants. Its residents live in an impoverished but cohesive community in New York City's Upper West Side, an area that is home to the largest concentration of Latinos in New York State. The Dominicans, said to number 57,000 (not including at least 225,000 undocumented immigrants), comprise the youngest, neediest group within the Latino population. In the 1980s, the

already poor Alianza community witnessed a 400 percent increase in family poverty. Today, 46 percent of the area's children live in poverty. The birthrate of the Dominicans is 100 percent higher than the city's average. And a growing number of these births are to teen mothers.

The Alianza community, like many low-income and immigrant communities, is a tale of two extremes. On the one hand, the community exudes vibrancy. Bodegas bustle, sidewalk vendors sell their goods and playgrounds teem with children. Unfortunately, the images also deflect attention from problems that threaten the community's future. Overcrowded apartments house two or three families when there is scarcely enough room for one; such overcrowding escalates

incidences of domestic violence and child abuse. Unemployment ranks as the highest in the city. A drug trade thrives and has increased addiction and the occurrence of AIDS, and youth addiction persists, particularly among young mothers. Additionally, the Alianza community maintains the highest homicide rate in Manhattan. Its schools are overcrowded and underfunded and its health needs are so vast that they strain the resources of the area's only hospital.

Alianza Dominicana is dedicated to changing the odds for the community's children and families. Started in 1982 with the launching of a teenage pregnancy prevention program,

### ALIANZA:

#### COMMUNITY AT A GLANCE

Large Latino Population. Home to the largest concentration of Latinos in New York State.

Young Poor Immigrants. Approximately 57,000 Dominicans who comprise the youngest, neediest group within the Latino population.

Vast Family Poverty. In the 1980s, a 400 percent surge in family poverty; 46 percent of the area's children live in poverty.

High Birthrate. Birthrate of the Dominican population is twice as high as the city's average. A growing number of births to teens.

Alianza is now the largest social service agency in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan and the largest Dominican service agency in the country. Currently operating out of five sites, Alianza provides a holistic, comprehensive array of services and opportunities for over 15,000 children, youth and families ranging from family support services, immunization and lead screening, to aggressive economic development projects. A computerized management information system, partnerships between private and public agencies, case managers and a centralized intake process connect a network of programs designed to foster self-sufficiency and support integration into mainstream American society.

Alianza's staff of 160 (130 are full time) are virtually all Latinos and community residents. Many "grew up" in Alianza. First, they received family services. Subsequently, they participated in youth activities, then volunteered as adjunct staff and, finally, became staff members. "We grow our own leadership," Perez explained. Such staff definitively reflect the community's strengths and diversity. A seamless mixture of highly-trained professional managers, fiscal officers and administrators, parents, part-time college students, business leaders, senior citizens and dedicated young people work together as partners. Youth hold paid and volunteer positions at all five sites, often accomplishing their

most important work on street corners, where they steadily recruit other youth to join their ranks.

Perez and his ten-member board of directors, most of whom still live in the Alianza community, oversee an annual budget of \$4.75 million and a monthly payroll of over \$175,000. Alianza receives funds from a multitude of sources, including three New York State agencies, eight New York City agencies, federal grants, local financial institutions, private foundations and individual contributors. Due to recent budget cuts, however, Alianza has lost \$1.6 million in funding, forcing cuts in administrative staff.

## MISSION AND GOALS

### *A Commitment to Families and Youth — Beyond Services*

In 1982, with \$82,000 provided by a New York State pregnancy prevention grant, Executive Director Moises Perez launched Alianza Dominicana in a storefront on Amsterdam Avenue with a staff of two and 15 volunteers. The project's focus was narrow but Perez's vision was large. From the outset, Perez was convinced that "it was not possible to help youth, unless we also helped their families and to help their families, we also had to help the

community they lived in." Perez returned to his childhood community with the vision of creating "a revitalized neighborhood conducive to economic development and an enhanced quality of life." From its inception, Alianza has been passionately committed to a dual mission — preventing pain and alleviating poverty. From the first day of operation of the pregnancy prevention program, Perez was determined to use "problem-centered funding" to create youth development programs. The pregnancy prevention project offered classes in karate, gymnastics, painting and dance. Says Perez, "I knew that we had to provide young people with more than sex education. They need opportunities to develop ethically, physically and emotionally." Over the years, Perez has used this logic repeatedly to transform narrowly-focused funding objectives into mandates for community change and youth development

## HISTORY

### *Healthy Families Engender Thriving Communities*

In the early years, Alianza focused its efforts on the three populations that were "experiencing the most pain" — youth, families and women. Of particular concern were the issues of youth funding, family overcrowding and the economic vulnerability of

female-headed families. Alianza's commitment to strengthening youth and family remains central to its mission, but the strategies for meeting those commitments have expanded to include political action and economic development. In the early years, many board members opposed Alianza's expansion from a grassroots organization into a large nonprofit agency with immense financial obligations. "The

fear was we would lose touch with our people; we would become 'poverty pimps' dependent for money on the very agencies that fostered our helplessness," Perez said. But over time, Perez convinced skeptics that grassroots services needed to be coupled with broader strategies because the origins of some of the community's problems stemmed from political forces outside the neighborhood.

### ALIANZA: TARGET POPULATIONS

**Youth.** The Alianza area has the largest concentration of young people under 18 in New York City. Yet until Perez barged into the office of the youth commissioner and demanded equity, the Washington Heights community was receiving the lowest allocation of youth funding in the city.

**Families.** Overcrowding remains a serious issue in the community. Reuniting recent immigrants with their families, while attempting to solve the problem of overcrowding continues to challenge Alianza. A zero percent vacancy rate for affordable apartments pushes rents ever higher.

**Women.** Domestic violence, female-headed households, a high birth rate and a scarcity of jobs for women with limited skills leave Alianza's female population particularly vulnerable to the vicissitudes of poverty.

Alianza created an independent political action committee that continues to recruit youth to carry out successful voter registration campaigns and hold rallies in support of political candidates. Alianza has succeeded in creating a new political district in upper Manhattan by securing a Dominican seat on the city council. This victory, which mobilized both adults and youth, convinced the community of its potential political power.

In the late 1990s, Alianza's efforts expanded once more to include economic development. A strategy to alleviate the area's pervasive poverty was launched with a \$1 million grant from the New York Community Trust to underwrite the Neighborhood Strategies Project. This ambitious plan fosters small business enterprises and provides economic opportunities and business training for youth and adults, in order to increase the work force and link the Alianza community to the mainstream economy.

## THE ALIANZA EVOLUTION

### PRIORITIES AND PRACTICES: FROM YOUTH SERVICES TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**The Early Years.** Early philosophy emphasizes economic and individual welfare – coining the phrase and mission, “preventing pain and alleviating poverty.” Organization focuses on basic youth development services supported largely with problem-centered funding (i.e., teen pregnancy prevention monies).

**The Middle Years.** Recognition of the limitations of direct youth services emerges. Program and services are expanded to identify and address families' needs more comprehensively and holistically. Youth participation and leadership opportunities are increasingly advanced.

**Current Years.** A commitment to raising the educational attainment of the community's children and concurrently ensuring greater economic well-being leads to a fundamental shift in programming.

## ALIANZA'S YOUTH: BEACONS AND BEYOND

In many ways, Alianza's commitment to youth development came to fruition in 1991 with its decision to forge a collaborative alliance outside the boundaries of its primary community with Intermediate School (I.S) 143 to create La Plaza Beacon School-Based Community Center. With that commitment, an ordinary elementary school was transformed into a vital force for community change. Open seven days a week, after school and evenings (and all day during the summer), the center serves more than 500 youth and adults daily. La Plaza was planned by the youth council and is run by a youth coordinating committee whose members act as consultants

to the two directors. Youth fill a variety of pivotal positions, acting as tutors, teacher's aides, peer counselors and security guards.

Like New York's other 39 Beacon Centers, La Plaza exudes activity. Rooms are filled with young people and adults engaged in culturally and linguistically relevant art programs, talent show rehearsals, pregnancy and drug prevention groups, a health screening clinic, drop-out and violence prevention programs, job training, AIDS education groups, English classes, and even a film production company staffed by youth, ages 16 to 20. Not coincidentally, it also provides the only safe place in the community for youngsters and adults to gather after dark. La Plaza Beacon Center is a focal point for Alianza's

commitment to prepare, engage and employ youth.

### ***Improving Educational Attainment: Expanding the Beacons' Reach to Elementary School Students***

Alianza's commitment to alleviating poverty is seen in La Plaza's focus on raising the educational attainment of the community's children. Over the last 15 years, District 6 students have ranked among the lowest academic achievement levels in New York City. Expanding the La Plaza Beacon School program to accommodate more students, especially those in grades one through four, will help children master critical basic courses and prevent them from falling behind and later dropping out of school.

### ***Promoting Disease Prevention: The Immunization Project***

Youth from La Plaza Beacon organized an extensive awareness campaign, sending teams of senior citizens and youth door-to-door registering neighborhood children for immunization appointments. On immunization day, over 1,000 children were vaccinated.

### ***Reducing Violence and Drug Use: The Youth Leadership Core Group***

La Plaza youth formed a "positive gang" to organize workshops, conferences, sporting events and other activities to communicate with their peers about the dangers of the drug trade and how to engage in non-violent confrontation.

### ***Building Social Networks: Youth Partners in Brokering a Sound Community***

"Alianza teaches us what we need to know, so we can run this community ourselves someday," a youth council member explained. Indeed, the relationship Alianza has forged between the local police precinct and area youth is a compelling example of its efforts to help the next generation learn to interact effectively with an important power broker. When disputes with police arise, Alianza invites officers from the local precinct to participate in a community forum, giving both sides an opportunity to air their views. Prior to such a meeting, youth role-play positive and negative ways of talking to police officers; and they practice ways to resolve disputes, ana-

lyze problems, make decisions and assess consequences. In addition, a group called the Explorers (much like the Boy Scouts) offers Alianza teens an opportunity to become auxiliary police. Many Explorers have gone on to become full-fledged members of the police force, forging an important bridge between the local community and local precincts.

### ***Partnering for Economic Development: The Youth Mall***

In 1995, convinced that Latino youth require greater opportunities to earn money, Alianza Dominicana, in collaboration with the Institute for Youth Entrepreneurship, graduated its first class of would-be teenage entrepreneurs. Frustrated at having learned skills that they could not put into practice, a youth focus group developed ideas for youth-run businesses. With technical assistance from corporate sponsors, the focus group's ideas were translated into a business plan for an indoor youth mall that will offer Latino youth hands-on exposure to business development and management. Equally important, the youth mall will help preserve the spending power of Latino youth in the Latino community.

Although still in the planning stage, the youth mall has received a pre-development grant from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Currently, Alianza is working with a group of youth and community leaders to identify a site and secure private sector funding before applying to HHS for development funding.

### **VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

Transforming the youth mall from dream to reality will vastly enlarge opportunities for youth in the economic development of the Alianza community. In addition, it is hoped that the mall will generate new revenue which will provide funds for additional Alianza projects.

Having made enormous progress in community and economic development, Moises Perez can still enumerate new challenges for the next decade. For Alianza Dominicana, Inc., these include program evaluation, an annual strategic planning process and an endowment fund. For the Alianza community, 99 percent of whom are renters, home ownership is the greatest need — still not met.

TABLE 1					
ALIANZA DOMINICANA FOUNDED IN 1982					
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OFFERED	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	CIVIC ACTION	YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	FAMILY SERVICE
Center for Training and Employment	■			■	
Women's Empowerment Job Training	■				■
Neighborhood Strategies Project	■				
Youth Mall: Youth Entrepreneur Program	■			■	
Technical Assistance to Small Businesses	■		■		
Case Managers Testify in Family Court			■		■
Voter Registration, Political Campaigns			■	■	
Advocate for a Dominican City Council Representative			■	■	
Improve Relations with Local Police Department			■		
Institute for Youth Entrepreneurship	■			■	
Attendance Improvement and Drop-out Prevention				■	
Youth Council			■	■	
Northern Manhattan Collaborates! and Agenda for Children Tomorrow					■
Immunization and Lead Screening Project			■	■	■
The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Clinic					■
AIDS Education/Services			■	■	
The Center for Rehabilitation, Education and Orientation					■
La Plaza School-Based Community Center (Beacon)				■	■
La Familia Unida Day Care Center					■
Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Consortium				■	■

## CASE STUDY NO. 2

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# PHIPPS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

FOUNDED IN 1972

*First and foremost, I think it's essential for my staff to listen to youth and their families, so that we can bring the resources to the community that they truly need and want.*

— Andrew Hyde, Associate Director

*Special thanks to Andrew Hyde, Associate Director of Phipps CDC, for coordinating a rich and informative site visit.*

three, with a staff of over 100; Cratona Park West has a staff of about 25; and the Plazas, which is the smallest, has a staff of five.

## OVERVIEW

From the beginning, the Phipps Community Development Corporation (Phipps CDC) has had a single resounding message: “To promote enduring communities.” Founded in 1972 at the Bronx’s Lambert Houses, Phipps CDC is a nonprofit family support and educational affiliate of Phipps Houses. Its services are primarily available in the three communities in which Phipps Houses have built housing: West Farms and Cratona Park West — both in the Bronx, and the Plazas in Manhattan. Phipps CDC’s West Farms is the largest of the

The main site, West Farms, reflects a community of young immigrants. Serving a population of about 14,000 residents, it covers 27 city blocks, and is bounded by the Bronx Zoo, the Bronx River, the Cross Bronx Expressway and Southern Boulevard. Once predominately African American, the community has been dramatically altered. As a result of immigration, West Farms is now about 70 percent Hispanic and 25 percent African American. Almost half of the population was born outside the continental United States. And as of 1990, more than a third of the population was under 18 years old.

The resulting community is dynamic but troubled. Indeed, West Farms suffers from many of the same conditions that afflict most low-income, urban communities. The large number of immigrants has created a language barrier, with 20 percent of residents over the age of five speaking little or no English. This issue is compounded by the residents' lack of education; only 43 percent of the adults in the community have high school diplomas and only eight percent have completed college.

These factors create a domino effect, resulting in extremely limited employment opportunities. According to the 1990 census, only 38 percent of the residents aged 16 or older had jobs. In addition, 60 percent of these adults are women who traditionally have lower

wages and economic security than do men. At West Farms, barely 30 percent of the women are employed. As a result, almost half of the residents live in households below the poverty line. In the 1990 census, the majority of households reported annual incomes of less than \$10,000; 25 percent of households earned less than \$5,000 a year.

Despite the poverty, however, the community boasts a rich history. West Farms is bordered on the north by the world famous Bronx Zoo. A cemetery in the community maintains graves dating back to the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish American War and World War I. Also located in the community is Beck Memorial Church, a 180-year-old stone church, and a newly renovated public library, providing a wealth of information and supports.

### WEST FARMS: COMMUNITY AT A GLANCE

**A Changed Community.** Once 75 percent African American, today the West Farms community is 70 percent Hispanic; 25 percent African American; and 5 percent white.

**Vast Immigrant Population.** Almost 50 percent of current population born outside the continental U.S. — 15 percent foreign born and 30 percent from territories outside of the 50 states — usually Puerto Rico.

**Looming Illiteracy.** Large number of immigrants has created a persistent language barrier. Twenty percent of residents over the age of 5 speak little or no English. Only 43 percent of adults have high school degrees.

**Economic Despair.** The lack of education and language difficulties has created a domino effect, resulting in sparse employment. Forty-nine percent of residents live in households below the poverty line. In the 1990 census, majority of households reported annual incomes of less than \$10,000; 25 percent of households earned less than \$5,000 a year.

Phipps CDC has had a major impact in turning this community around. Housing and social conditions have improved dramatically. About one quarter of the residents in the neighborhood now reside in housing constructed by Phipps Houses. Lambert Houses, built in the early 1970s, is Phipps Houses' major housing property in the West Farms community. Lambert is a mid-rise, six-story building with over 700 units. In the last five years, the rate of new home construction in the neighborhood has risen, resulting in about 120 additional units built, with another 35 units currently under construction. Equally important, Phipps CDC has offered community residents a web of supports that help residents as they strive to build sustained community.

## MISSION AND GOALS

### *Enduring Communities: Supports and Services for Family and Children*

In 1972, the Phipps Houses added the Phipps Community Development Corporation to its corporate structure. Its mission: to promote enduring communities by providing family, social and educational support services on-site to Phipps Houses residents. From the beginning, Phipps CDC had a clear focus on youth. "Our major drive is to bring to this community the resources

it deserves," says Drew Hyde, Associate Executive Director of Phipps CDC. "When the housing was built in the early 1970s, there were no resources for children in the Bronx, and that is how Phipps CDC got started. Phipps CDC provided an after-school program, summer camp and recreational activities."

Given the particular needs of the community, as with many community-based organizations, the original mission of the organization has evolved and developed over time. The evolution of Phipps CDC's interpretation of its mission can be witnessed in the progression of its youth programming. The original goal was to provide resources for the young children living in Phipps Houses and the surrounding community. Over time, the community and Phipps CDC's staff realized that recreation opportunities and services for young children (ages 5 to 12) were inadequate. The 1980 murders of two young people in the community, however, became the true rallying point for intensifying Phipps CDC's dedication to young people, especially older youth. Today, Phipps CDC's goals address the full range of youth development needs — from education to employment training to leadership and service.

## HISTORY

In 1861, Henry Phipps, a life-long friend of Andrew Carnegie, invested wisely in his friend's business. In 1901,

the Carnegie Corporation was purchased by J.P. Morgan and became U.S. Steel. Mr. Phipps retired, affluent beyond his expectations, and devoted his life to philanthropy. In 1905, with a donation of \$1 million, Mr. Phipps founded Phipps Houses, which has become one of the oldest and largest nonprofit housing entities for low-and moderate-income people in New York City.

## *Bringing Human Services to an Ignored Community*

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Phipps Houses was asked to undertake large-scale urban renewal initiatives in the Bellevue South area of Manhattan and the West Farms area of the Bronx. Through these efforts, the Henry Phipps Plazas, located in Manhattan, and Lambert Houses, located in the

### THE PHIPPS CDC EVOLUTION

#### PRIORITIES AND PRACTICES: FROM FAMILY SUPPORTS TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**The Early Years.** Early philosophy emphasizes the provision of family, social and educational support services on site to Phipps Houses residents as an innate part of its mission, “to promote enduring communities.” Priority services include youth programming (then virtually non-existent in the housing complex and the Bronx) for young children, ages 5 to 12. An after-school program, summer camp and recreational activities headline the list of offerings.

**The Middle Years.** The 1980 murders of two community youth kindles discussions about the inadequacy of recreational activities in developing and protecting the community’s children, especially older youth. A youth-initiated organization, Youth Hope, is formed, reflecting concern about the neighborhood and growing violence. These youth focus on addressing the needs of young people in the community; ultimately, they write the scenario for the West Farms Beacon.

**Current Years.** A commitment to improving the overall community and lives of West Farms residents propels a shift in programming and activities. Phipps CDC becomes a part of the Comprehensive Community Revitalization Program (CCRP) involving five South Bronx community development corporations in implementing strategies to transform their neighborhoods. Linked to this effort, Phipps is designated as one of New York State’s Neighborhood-Based Alliance (NBA) sites and develops a five-year strategic plan for the community’s development. These two commitments now determine the organization’s future direction.

Bronx, were built. In 1972, Phipps Community Development Corporation, the human services affiliate, was added to the Phipps Houses corporate structure. The Phipps CDC was created to provide family, social and educational support services on site to Phipps Houses residents in keeping with the organization's mission of promoting enduring communities.

### ***Fashioning a Continuum of Youth Services***

Around 1979-80, according to Mr. Hyde, the community and the staff of Phipps CDC realized the need for a continuum of care for the young people in the community. "We needed to start to deal with the older kids in the neighborhood as well, because the after-school programs only targeted kids aged 5 to 12." After the 1980 murders of two youths, an organization called Young Hope was formed. A youth-initiated organization, the group was made up of community youth that were concerned about the neighborhood and the growing violence and crime. This group worked with Phipps CDC's staff, acquired a meeting space at Phipps CDC, painted a mural commemorating the two youths that were murdered, and began working to address the needs of young people in the community. In 1993, it was these young people who wrote the scenario for the West Farms Beacon that opened its doors in 1994.

### ***Shepherding a Neighborhood Transformation Process***

In 1992, Phipps CDC became a part of the Comprehensive Community Revitalization Program (CCRP). A major effort aimed at South Bronx communities, CCRP is a national demonstration project involving five well-established South Bronx community development corporations that facilitate and implement integrated strategies aimed at transforming their neighborhoods. In 1993, Phipps was also designated as one of New York State's Neighborhood-Based Alliance (NBA) sites. As a requirement of CCRP, the community developed a five-year strategic plan. In the developmental process, Phipps held a series of town meetings, conferring with 200 to 300 residents to verify and approve plans for the community's development. These two commitments and affiliations are now determining the organization's future direction.

### **PHIPPS' YOUTH COMMITMENT: BEACONS AND BEYOND**

In 1994, Phipps CDC opened an office in the West Farms Beacon School at I.S. 200. An influential move, the Beacon School now serves as a cornerstone to the community. It offers a safe haven for both adults and

children after school, during evenings and on weekends and provides an array of services. These include youth leadership training, family counseling, recreation and cultural enrichment. In addition, preventive services focus on family preservation and “action teams” of young people and adults working out of the Beacon lead intergenerational projects ranging from neighborhood cleanups to health screenings.

True to its designers’ vision, the Beacon School’s after-school program is staffed entirely by young people, both college and high school students, ages 14 to 25. The program effectively functions as two programs in one since the Beacon’s young staff benefit as much from the program as the younger participants. Eddie Calderon-Mendez, director of the Beacon, declared, “They really run the Beacon. We do really, really extensive staff training and development.” The Beacon’s youth staff do everything from leading recreation, sports and gym programs to teaching literacy activities. “They are like camp counselors year-round,” according to Calderon-Mendez. Reflecting the most urgent needs of the community, however, literacy and education are emphasized in all Beacon programming.

### *Employment Training*

Phipps CDC has played a pivotal role in convincing the Center for Employ-

ment Training (CET), San Jose, California, one of the most respected training entities in the country, to locate a facility in the community. Currently, they have training curricula available for building maintenance, medical assistants and shipping and handling. Phipps CDC has secured 20 slots with CET through their School-to-Work Program.

### *Literacy Peers*

The Beacon School currently employs 15 young people, ages 16 to 22, to provide literacy and educational activities. These young staff receive extensive, ongoing training in literacy models, classroom management, whole language approaches, project-based learning and a variety of other instructional tools. Afterward, they are able to impart educational and literacy services to younger students, ages 5 to 12, who attend the after-school programs. Through their participation in the Literacy Peers’ employment and training program at the Beacon, the teenaged staff have improved their own literacy skills, including reading, writing and oral skills, and enhanced their employability.

### *Summer Camp*

The Phipps Beacon School annually offers a thematic-driven, literacy-based summer day camp program. Offered for children ages 5 to 12, the

children are sub-divided into groups by age. The camp follows a theme for the entire six-week program. The camp employs numerous young people — many who are staff of the Beacon After-School Program — to work as counselors.

## *Social Networks*

Phipps CDC's dedication to building social networks in the community is evident in its programming. By addressing the problems of the community on a holistic basis, Phipps CDC is enhancing the capability of the community to become empowered and self-sufficient. The young people in the community are learning to develop essential interpersonal skills through intensive on-the-job training, while providing a much needed service for the younger children in the community.

Phipps has also provided an avenue for the young people in the community to advocate for their neighborhood. In the summer of 1995, a group of young people took back a local park from the drug dealers. Drew Hyde recounted that, "Young people were

given the challenge to set the tone for the neighborhood. They responded by taking back the park. One youth, who is now working in the Beacon, organized a team, secured funding and put together programs there for young people and the elderly."

## VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Through Phipps CDC's participation in the CCRP and NBA initiatives, the community has detailed a map and vision for the future. Phipps CDC, in conjunction with the community, has mapped out their physical and economic agenda for years to come through the quality-of-life physical plan and their five-year strategic plan. The quality-of-life plan articulates specific long-range and short-term goals for the community and its development, touching on many areas that the community identified. This includes housing to replace numerous vacant lots; inviting places for the community's children to play; more jobs and economic opportunity; safer streets; and, in general, the creation of a more attractive and healthy place to live.

TABLE 2					
PHIPPS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOUNDED 1972					
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OFFERED	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	CIVIC ACTION	YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	FAMILY SERVICE
Zooway	■			■	
Literacy Peers	■			■	
Youth Outreach			■	■	
Youth Inc.			■	■	
Saturday Reading Institute				■	
Family Services					■
Phipps Beacon School	■			■	■
Family Literacy					■
Home Instruction Program for Pre-School Youngsters	■			■	■
After-School Education	■			■	
Elementary Day School Collaboration				■	■
Peer Leadership and Conflict Resolution Program				■	
Hansbery Environmental Education Park			■	■	
Youth Fair Chance			■	■	
Youth Fair Project			■	■	
Classroom Inc. Banking Program				■	
Quality-of-Life Physical Plan	■	■	■	■	■

## CASE STUDY NO. 3

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# RHEEDLEN CENTERS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

FOUNDED IN 1970

*We must be careful to make sure we build ladders so children and their families can climb out of poverty. It's not an easy climb. You can climb all your life and never make it out.*

— Geoffrey Canada, President/CEO

*Special thanks to Geoffrey Canada, President and CEO, and the staff for supporting our efforts to learn about the program.*

## OVERVIEW

Rheedlen Centers for Children and Families touches the lives of children and youth in some of New York City's most devastated neighborhoods. Operating a network of 12 program sites in Manhattan's Upper Westside, Central Harlem and Hell's Kitchen — a combined area that is home to over 400,000 children — Rheedlen provides services that keep young people in school, lift neighborhoods out of poverty, help adults nurture their chil-

dren and protect the elderly from isolation and neglect. This broad mandate to “build ladders” out of poverty involves the agency in housing, public schools, community parks and playgrounds, feeding programs for the young and elderly, child welfare and public safety.

Rheedlen was one of the first non-profit agencies to base its social service efforts in public schools. Despite the dilapidated state of most Harlem schools, many of which are over 100 years old, Rheedlen has, from its earliest days, used the schools as a resource for helping children and families prevent child abuse, truancy, violence and teen pregnancy. Rheedlen's programs are safe havens in communities where

poverty, drugs and violence threaten children's lives. In addition, in almost every instance, the presence of a Rheedlen program has dramatically transformed the immediate surroundings from desolation to regeneration.

A staff of 220, 85 who are full-time, runs Rheedlen. A majority of these individuals are community residents. Of the 135 part-time staff, many are former participants of Rheedlen programs who are attending high schools or colleges nearby. Over the years, Rheedlen's senior management staff has been remarkably stable; all have been at Rheedlen for at least seven years.

Rheedlen has an annual budget of \$6.5 million. As recently as four years ago, 90 percent of its funding came from federal, state or city grants. Anticipating a reduction in public monies for social programs, Geoffrey Canada, who became Rheedlen's president and chief executive officer in 1990, reduced the dependence on public funding to 60 percent. To increase donations from private foundations, individuals and corporate contributors, Canada restructured the 12-member board of directors. The current board, which has assumed major fundraising responsibilities, includes corporate and business leaders among its members.

## MISSION AND GOALS

### *From Truancy Prevention to Community Development*

From the beginning, Rheedlen has been committed to keeping children and teenagers in school, while enhancing their intellectual, social and emotional development. The opportunity to pay careful attention to the needs and problems of each family using the organization's services revealed the shortcomings of piecemeal, partial solutions to complex problems. Out of these observations grew a commitment to holistic, community-wide interventions that evolved over time and now pervades Rheedlen's mission and policies. "Clients come from some place and go home to another place," Geoffrey Canada explained. "These places are not merely abstract concepts, such as home and school, but environments that shape and mold our families. These places are forces that cannot be ignored." And Rheedlen is devoting increasing attention to them. Its current Community Rebuilding initiative is an inevitable extension of its original commitment to help high-risk children stay in school and out of trouble.

## THE RHEEDLEN EVOLUTION

### PRIORITIES AND PRACTICES: FROM EDUCATION ATTAINMENT AND TRUANCY PREVENTION TO FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**The Early Years.** Early mission dedicated to sending African-American students to private prep schools. Soon becomes apparent that those who could benefit from better schools far exceeds ability to find such placements. Attention and efforts turn to truancy prevention among high-risk elementary school children. Services include home visits.

**The Middle Years.** Recognition of the limitations of truancy prevention and the reality of its roots, including hunger and child abuse, evolves. Philosophy emanates that the problems and solutions include not only children, but their families. City child welfare agency convinced to underwrite social workers at school-based sites. Program and services are additionally expanded through use of drop-out prevention funds at Jr. H.S. 54 to include after-school and evening programs. Model of school as comprehensive neighborhood center clearly emerges.

**Current Years.** Growing rate of poverty in Harlem sparks discussions of families' needs beyond counseling. Community concern about violence, slum landlords and drug dealing rises. An ambitious community revitalization project to transform Central Harlem is launched. Community development is decidedly introduced with Rheedlen acting as the intermediary between tenants, landlords and the city government.

## HISTORY

Rheedlen was founded in 1970 as a program dedicated to sending African-American students to private preparatory schools. It quickly became apparent to Rheedlen's founders that the number of students who could benefit from better schools far exceeded their ability to find alternative placements. Rheedlen shifted its focus to reducing truancy among high-risk grade school students. By tracking truants on a daily basis, making home visits and providing after-school activities for at-risk youngsters, children were per-

suaded to attend school regularly, but as Geoffrey Canada explained, "You could save a few children, but it was no general answer to their problems."

### ***Beyond School Retention to Family Supports***

Although keeping young people in school remained the cornerstone of Rheedlen's efforts in its second decade, lessons learned in the 1970s convinced founder Richard Murphy that children were truant because of illness, hunger, rat bites, child abuse and a host of other crises outside the child's control.

In short, the problems — and the solutions — included not only the child, but the family, too.

Rheedlen persuaded the city's child welfare agency to underwrite the cost of placing Rheedlen social workers at school-based sites. In this way, both the child and the family could receive holistic services through Rheedlen.

In the mid 1980s, when drop-out prevention funds became available, Rheedlen was able to expand its after-school and evening programs to serve not just "identified high-risk" youngsters, but all children. As Rheedlen expanded these after-school enrichment and youth development programs, particularly at Center 54 at Junior High School 54, the prototype for using a neighborhood school as a full-service community center was born.

### ***Community Development: One Block at a Time***

In the 1990s, as Harlem's poverty increased, it became apparent that families needed far more than counseling to solve their problems. They needed help dealing with vermin, drug dealing in their buildings, children gunned down on city playgrounds, landlords who refused to make repairs and uncollected garbage. To meet this new challenge, Rheedlen launched

Community Pride, an ambitious community revitalization project for transforming Central Harlem into a stable and livable community.

Community Pride is a grassroots effort to prevent homelessness, support family stability, reduce violence and rebuild communities one block at a time. Community Pride utilizes a three-pronged approach: family-centered crisis intervention for families at risk of homelessness; tenant organizing to improve building conditions; and resident involvement activities, such as street cleanups, to develop neighborhood pride and a sense of ownership.

With Rheedlen acting as the intermediary between tenants, landlords and the city government (which now owns over 65 percent of buildings in Central Harlem), the arduous process of human and community redevelopment has begun. To date, rehabilitation of one block of West 119th Street is nearly complete; tenant organizing has begun to expand this beachhead to a 25-square block area that has been named the Harlem Children's Zone.

## **RHEEDLEN'S YOUTH COMMITMENT: BEACONS AND BEYOND**

Rheedlen was able to put all of its accumulated learning about addressing

youth problems and promoting youth development into its Beacon School. On West 144th Street, where the Countee Cullen Community Center sits adjacent to boarded-up brownstones, trees have been planted in front of the school. Members of Countee Cullen's youth council regularly sweep the sidewalk around the school, an activity that caused the corner drug trade to move to another location. The youth council also circulated a neighborhood petition that succeeded in having the block closed to traffic so it could become a play street during the summer. "Countee Cullen [Center] is a mother to this community," explained youth worker Marian Miller. "It just embraces those kids."

Across the street from the Countee Cullen Beacon Community Center are the storefront offices of Rheedlen's Family Development Center and *Harlem Overheard*, a youth-run newspaper. Looking through the windows of these two programs provides a view of young people working at computers and busy adults intensely engaged in purposeful work. This stands in stark contrast to the devastation encompassing the rest of the neighborhood.

### ***Reporting on the Community: Harlem Overheard***

Students at the Countee Cullen Beacon Community Center launched

their own quarterly newspaper in 1996. *Harlem Overheard* has a circulation of over 15,000. It is distributed to every high school and public library in Manhattan, every school in Harlem, and to 30 other churches, community centers and businesses. Written and edited by 50 Countee Cullen youth, each issue is developed during a structured ten-week production cycle. The young staff receives training in every aspect of journalism: research, writing, interviewing, photography, layout, design, advertising, art and distribution. The result is a highly professional newspaper that features stories about people and events that are important to the paper's young staff.

### ***Expanding Educational Horizons: The Saturday Academy***

The Saturday Academy at Countee Cullen enrolls 100 youth in an intensive five-year college preparatory program. Recruiting youth between the ages of 12 and 19 to spend their Saturdays on rigorous academic work has not been easy. The presence of many African-American college students on the Academy staff, as well as trips to visit traditional black colleges and support from parents and neighborhood churches, persuaded the Saturday scholars to stay in the program. As a result, the Academy's first graduate will become a college freshman this coming September.

## ***Building Social and Networking Skills***

“Of course I know how to talk in public,” asserted one 16-year-old member of Countee Cullen’s New Generation Video Club. “I am used to speaking ‘on camera.’” Rheedlen’s student-run newspaper, cable station and video production crews provide youth with opportunities, skills, confidence, leadership ability and contact with outside experts, all of which raise youthful ambitions for the future.

## ***Defusing Conflict: The Peacemakers***

Every summer, 50 youth, ages 8 to 18, leave Harlem and travel north to Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. They spend one week at Geoff Canada’s tranquil alma mater learning negotiation and conflict resolution skills. The goal is to bring those skills back home to Harlem and to use them to defuse the conflicts that can lead to bloodshed. “We developed this program because we realized that making peace is difficult for children who have grown up fighting enemies real and imagined,” Canada explained in his book, *Fist, Stick, Knife, Gun*.

The Rheedlen Peacemakers, along with college students from AmeriCorps, teach their skills to other students, design safety plans for the schools and help school children map

corridors for safe passage to and from school. Through its Success in Schools program, Rheedlen also trained 80 AmeriCorps interns to work directly in New York City public schools, helping teachers to make classrooms safer places for learning.

## ***Increasing Intergenerational Understanding***

At Rheedlen’s Jackie Robinson Center, senior citizens and youth, two generations that typically fear or ignore each other, work side by side, sharing their talents in gospel singing, arts and crafts, and martial arts. As old and young share their stories and experiences, this cross-generational program brings a sense of continuity and mutual responsibility to neighborhoods that lack these cohesive forces.

Teams of youth workers, Friendly Visitors, also make home visits to elderly citizens, bringing fresh fruits and vegetables to seniors too frail to shop for themselves. This useful service is equally valuable to the young people who learn the importance of caring for and about others in their community.

## **VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

Rheedlen’s philosophy of comprehensive community redevelopment, which involves concentrating a large number

of high quality social, educational and recreational services in one neighborhood, is a long-range, labor-intensive strategy. These kinds of major initiatives tax the capacities of small agencies like Rheedlen that rarely have the luxury of planning more than one or two years into the future — “too short a time span to effect the type of community redevelopment necessary to change inner-city neighborhoods from unhealthy to healthy,” according to Development Director Ray Laszczych.

Rheedlen, however, has been able to complete plans for one major community redevelopment initiative, the

Harlem Children’s Zone. This venture will extend the work it has done on 119th Street to a 25-square-block area. To create a safe and healthy environment for children and families, the extensive seven-year community development effort will integrate Community Pride’s neighborhood revitalization strategy with school-based programs, such as foster care prevention and Peacemakers, that Rheedlen has successfully operated in other areas of Harlem. Ultimately, the goal is to bring together the best of what Rheedlen offers and make it available to all the children in one community.

TABLE 3					
RHEEDLEN CENTERS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FOUNDED 1970					
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OFFERED	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	CIVIC ACTION	YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	FAMILY SERVICE
I-Excel				■	
Neighborhood Gold					■
Jackie Robinson Senior Center				■	■
Rise & Shine Productions	■		■	■	
Peacemakers	■		■	■	
Community Pride		■	■		
Black Community Crusade for Children			■		■
<i>Harlem Overhead</i>	■			■	
Countee Cullen Community Center	■		■	■	■
Rheedlen Place				■	■
Center 54	■		■	■	■
Parents Help Center			■		■
Motivation Room				■	
Rheedlen Drop Out Prevention Centers				■	
The Gallery	■			■	
El Camino				■	■
Neighborhood Gold			■	■	
Project Class				■	

## APPENDIX

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# WORKING MEETING PARTICIPANTS

## *Ford Foundation and International Youth Foundation*

### COMMUNITY AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: COMPLEMENTARY OR COMPETING PRIORITIES FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS?

Mr. P. Jefferson Armistead  
Senior Vice President  
Local Initiatives Support  
Corporation

Mr. Salahadeen Betts  
Countee Cullen Beacon

Mr. David Brown  
Senior Policy Analyst  
National Governors' Association

Ms. Joyce Brown  
Kellogg Youth Initiative  
Partnership  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Ms. Julia Burgess  
Eastern Regional Director  
Center for Community Change

Mr. Benjamin Butler  
Principal  
Community Development  
Associates

Ms. Michele Cahill  
Director  
Youth Development Institute  
Fund for the City of New York

Ms. Maggie Cervantes  
Executive Director  
New Economics for Women

- Mr. Rudy Chavez  
Executive Director  
Youth Development, Inc.
- Mr. Emanuel Freeman  
President  
Germantown Settlement
- Mr. James Connell  
Director  
Institute for Research and Reform  
in Education
- Ms. Susan Curnan  
Brandeis University-Heller  
Graduate School
- Mr. E. Walter Coward, Jr.  
Senior Director, Asset Building  
and Community  
Development  
The Ford Foundation
- Ms. Talmira Hill  
Program Officer  
Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Mr. Victor Diaz  
Cypress Hills Local Development  
Corporation
- Ms. Della M. Hughes  
Executive Director  
National Network for Youth
- Mr. Shawn Dove  
Co-Director  
Countee Cullen Beacon
- Ms. Merita Irby  
Assistant Director of Programs  
International Youth Foundation
- Ms. Jules Dunham  
U.S. Program Associate  
International Youth Foundation
- Ms. Charisse Johnson  
Phipps CDC
- Mr. Martin Dunn  
Executive Director  
East New York Urban Youth  
Corporation
- Mr. Jerry Kitzi  
Vice President, Youth  
Development  
Ewing Marion Kauffman  
Foundation
- Ms. Marcia K. Festen  
Program Officer  
John D. and Catherine T.  
MacArthur Foundation
- Ms. Kate Gill Kressley  
Family, School and Community  
Partnership for Education  
Marion College
- Ms. Anne C. Kubisch  
Director, Roundtable on  
Comprehensive Community  
Initiatives  
The Aspen Institute

Ms. Irene Lee  
Senior Program Associate  
Annie E. Casey Foundation

Ms. Janine E. Lee  
Senior Program Director  
Ewing Marion Kauffman  
Foundation

Ms. Frances Lorenzi  
Senior Program Officer-Social  
Services  
The Enterprise Foundation

Mr. Manuel Mendez  
Executive Director  
Phipps CDC

Mr. David Milner  
President  
Funds for the Community's  
Future

Ms. Inca Mohamed  
Program Officer  
The Ford Foundation

Mr. Shawn Mooring  
The Ford Foundation

Mr. Richard Murphy  
Director, Center for Youth  
Development and Policy  
Research  
Vice President, Academy for  
Educational Development

Ms. Michelle Neugebauer  
Executive Director  
Cypress Hills Local Development  
Corporation

Ms. Emily Novick  
Division of Children and Youth  
Policy  
Department of Health and  
Human Services

Mr. Kenny Ortiz  
Youth Development, Inc.

Mr. John Peralta  
Alianza Dominicana

Mr. Moises Perez  
Executive Director  
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Ms. Karen J. Pittman  
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Mr. Ron Register  
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Cleveland Community Building

Ms. Ruth Roman  
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Ms. Annetta Seecharran  
YouthNet International  
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International Youth Foundation

Ms. Emily van Ingen  
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Corporation

Ms. Carey Shea  
Local Initiatives Support  
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Mr. Gary Walker  
President  
Public/Private Ventures

Ms. Judith Silber  
Human Services Collaborative

Ms. Wendy Wheeler  
Director  
Community Youth Development  
National 4-H Council

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