



# Choice Neighborhoods e-Newsletter

## Issue 31 / October 2014

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### **Seattle's Choice Neighborhood Webinar Review**

On September 24th, The Center of the Study of Social Policy, in partnership with HUD, hosted a webinar entitled “Seattle’s Choice Neighborhood: Placing School Improvement and Student Performance at the Center of Neighborhood Revitalization.”

The webinar focused on how the Seattle Choice Neighborhoods grantee team prioritized school improvement in the Yesler neighborhood as part of their vision for wider neighborhood revitalization. Presenters John Forsyth from the Seattle Housing Authority and Kent Koth from Seattle University explained to participants how they partnered together to build out an Education Collaborative with multiple local partners, including the local elementary school, to begin to create a cradle-to-career pipeline to support students in the Yesler neighborhood. They also shared how the partnership has successfully used tools such as routine collaborative meetings, data sharing agreements, and securing funding for key staff to ensure the pipeline of supports functions for Yesler’s youth and their families. They outlined the positive educational outcomes that are already emerging for students in Yesler’s local elementary school and answered a number of questions from webinar participants looking to do similar work in their neighborhoods.

To view the recording of the webinar, download the related slides, and access the recent Promising Practice Guide published on this topic, [click here](#).

### NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE CORNER

#### **Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Awards Announced**

The Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs’ Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) announced more than \$7 million in awards to 17 communities impacted by persistent violent and serious crime. The awards, administered through the BJA’s Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) Program, will employ data-driven strategies, across the government and private sector, to reduce crime and violence in neighborhoods where a significant proportion of crime occurs as compared to the overall jurisdiction. BJA awarded 11 planning and 6 implementation grants. The planning grants, new for FY14, provide resources focused on supporting jurisdictions with the critical step of first convening a broad, cross sector partnership to design a strategic,

collaborative, and community-oriented plan to reduce crime in a target neighborhood. [Click here to read more about the recent award announcement.](#)

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### **HUD Launches \$1 Billion National Disaster Resilience Competition**

HUD, in collaboration with the Rockefeller Foundation (Rockefeller), is providing significant resources and support to communities to help them become more resilient. The National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC) is a two-phase process that will competitively award nearly \$1 billion in HUD Disaster Recovery funds to eligible communities. The competition will help communities recover from prior disasters and improve their ability to withstand and recover more quickly from future disasters, hazards, and shocks. To complement these funds, Rockefeller will provide technical assistance and training workshops to every eligible state and local government. While distinct, these two programs will work together to help communities better understand their risks and identify ways in which they can protect the long-term well-being and safety of their residents.

All states with counties that experienced a Presidentially Declared Major Disaster in 2011, 2012 or 2013 are eligible to submit applications that address unmet needs as well as vulnerabilities to future extreme events, stresses, threats, hazards, or other shocks in areas that were most impacted and distressed as a result of the effects of the Qualified Disaster. This includes 48 of 50 states plus Puerto Rico and Washington, DC. In addition, 17 local governments that have received funding under PL 113-2 are also eligible. Total estimated funding for NDRC is \$999,108,000. HUD is setting aside \$181,000,000 for applications serving Hurricane Sandy Qualified Disasters in the States of New York and New Jersey and in New York City due to the catastrophic level of damage caused by Hurricane Sandy and the 2011 tropical storms. For more information, [click here](#).

### **Technical Assistance Scholarship Opportunities to Address Neighborhood Vacancy and Abandonment**

The Center for Community Progress launched the Technical Assistance Scholarship Program (TASP) to bring significant technical assistance within reach of communities working to reclaim neighborhoods from vacancy and abandonment, while piloting new solutions to advance the field as a whole. Applications are now being accepted for the next round of technical assistance scholarships. TASP recipients each receive up to 200 hours of direct technical assistance. A team of experts will work with recipients to assess, reform, develop, and/or implement systems to address large-scale vacancy and abandonment in their respective communities. The Technical Assistance Scholarship Program is focused on the following key issue areas of Data and Information Systems, Tax Collection and Enforcement Reform, Strategic Code Enforcement, Land Bank and Land Banking Program Evaluation, and Vacant Land Maintenance and Reuse Strategies. Potential applicants can submit questions until October 17. Applications are due on November 5 at 4pm. [Click here for more information and to download the RFA.](#)

### **Webinar: Applying to the ArtPlace National Grants Program**

Join this webinar to learn more about how the arts contribute to community planning and development, as well as how to craft a successful proposal to ArtPlace America's National Grants Program. ArtPlace is currently accepting applications for the next round of its [National Grants Program](#). The National Grants Program is designed to invest in creative place-making projects that involve cross-sector partners committed to improving the social, physical, and economic fabric of their communities through arts-based strategies.

This webinar will take place on October 20 at 5:30pm EDT. It will include an overview of how ArtPlace understands creative place-making and the criteria for receiving a grant, inspiration from former grantee projects, tips and suggestions for crafting a strong application, and an opportunity to ask questions. To register for this webinar, [click here](#).

These grants target creative placemaking projects, in which art and culture help strengthen the social, physical, and economic fabric of communities. Any individual or organization within the United States or U.S. Territories is eligible to apply. For more information or to submit an application, [click here](#). The submission deadline is November 3rd at 3:59pm EST.

### **New NEA Resources for Arts-Based Community Development**

The National Endowment for the Arts is launching new resources to assist practitioners who are working on arts-based community development projects. These resources will assist those practitioners to develop projects that are authentic, equitable, and that augment existing local assets. New Our Town guidelines are available to support creative placemaking projects that contribute towards the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful, and resilient places with the arts at their core. Our Town grants will support arts engagement, cultural planning, and design projects. New in 2015, the NEA is offering funding for up to five projects for membership organizations to build out technical assistance to those doing arts-based community development work. For more information, [click here](#).

### **U.S. Department of Commerce Announces \$15 Million Grant Competition to Spur Regional Innovation**

The U.S. Department of Commerce has released a solicitation for Regional Innovation Grants under the 2014 Regional Innovation Strategies program. Up to \$15 million is available to support multiple grants across the three separate grant types intended to help develop regional innovation, prosperity and job creation. There is no requirement for applicants to submit proposals for more than one of the funding opportunities under this program. Funding for all three programs is available to all communities regardless of level of distress. Applications must be submitted by November 3. Read the [press release](#). For more information about the grant, [click here](#).

### **Continuum of Care Program Competition**

HUD has announced the Continuum of Care Program Competition. This program is designed to promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness and to provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, States, and local governments to quickly re-house the homeless while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness. The program

also aims to promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by the homeless and to optimize self-sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness.

Approximately \$1.83 billion is available in FY 2014 and HUD may add to this amount any available funds that have been carried over or recaptured from previous fiscal years. HUD will also set aside approximately \$40 million for a Permanent Supportive Housing Bonus (PSH Bonus) to create new dedicated permanent supportive housing to serve the chronically homeless. Currently, the closing date for applications is October 30, 2014. If you would like more information about this program, [click here](#).

## RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

### **Free Books for Kids and Adults**

Earlier in the year, HUD introduced you to FirstBook, an international nonprofit agency that provides free books to low income children. For the first time, FirstBook will also be offering books for adult readers. Any interested party can [sign up here](#) to access free books that are \$.45 - \$.65 cents each to ship. These book distributions have extremely limited engagement times, as they usually move quickly.

### **From What River? To River Vision: River that Runs through Denver's Choice Neighborhood Getting \$25 Million Upgrade**

On the South Platte River in Denver, numerous projects known collectively as River Vision are underway, aiming to improve both recreation and ecology. While the river remains a work in progress, it is unrecognizable compared to the mess it was 50 years ago. With \$24.5 million worth of improvement projects underway in Denver, the once-forgotten waterway is blazing a trail for urban river restoration. The restoration will be important to the Sun Valley neighborhood, the focus of a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant, as the river runs through and is an important feature of the community. The South Platte also represents one of the biggest economic opportunities for the city with the riverfront poised for a boom on both the north and south sides of town. To read more about the restoration and the partnerships that made it happen, [click here](#).

## RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

### **Many Renters Could Afford Mortgages, but Can't Afford Homes**

By one measure, renters in most of the nation's metro areas could afford to own a home. Not just the mortgage, but the suite of financial responsibilities involved with homeownership, from property taxes to home insurance. There are a host of reasons why more young renters aren't first time homebuyers right now, but the ones that are cited the most, like crushing student debt loads, may not be the best explanations. Given the fact that plenty of young renters with bills wouldn't be crushed under a mortgage, most metro areas would expect to see more of them

buying homes. Either renters are opting out of the American dream, or it remains out of reach for reasons beyond affordability. To read this article, [click here](#).

### **Real Estate Boom and Bust Hit Minorities the Hardest**

A new visualization tool by the Urban Institute provides a vivid portrait of an unfortunate truth: the foreclosure crisis and other effects of the Great Recession real estate market were worse for minority groups. This news comes from a series of interactive maps created by the Urban Institute that show the distribution of 100 million mortgages originated from 2001 through 2012, broken down by race and ethnicity. The maps chronicle what many researchers have already said about how loans to Hispanics and African Americans shot up dramatically when the housing market was red hot and credit came easy, in part because minorities were targeted by predatory lenders. Now, African Americans and Hispanics have a tougher time qualifying for loans in a tight lending environment, even if they have their finances in order, the institute's analysis concluded. To read the full story, [click here](#).

**Do you have a Technical Assistance (TA) Question, Request, or Suggestion?**

**Grantees with TA questions or requests, or a suggestion for an upcoming TA activity, are invited to submit them to BCT and HUD at [hud.gov/choiceta](http://hud.gov/choiceta).**