

ICA INITIATIVES

SPRING 2012



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Dear Colleagues:

Happy 50th Anniversary! As 2012 begins, I am reminded once again that the ICA community extends far beyond the 4750 N. Sheridan Rd. building. No matter where you live, you are a colleague, united by memories, traditions and skills, and by a strong belief in the mission of the Institute to see and seize possibilities.



Dreamers Wanted

ICA, first and foremost, has been and continues to be about people. It's about people who dare to dream of ways to make the world a better place.

It's about people who are able to connect those dreamers together to turn something bravely imagined into something effectively realized.

We are people who dream of the future. The exciting plan to host 50 events around the world has turned into a reality. The focus of the events is your current passions and future hopes. The events and leadership are highlighted in this issue. Please read about them, go to the website for more information, and consider planning an event in your town.

Spencer 50th Anniversary Match

In many ways, 2012 will be a banner year for ICA. I believe that additional support to ICA will be one of them. I'm honored to announce that to commemorate this milestone, Raymond and Tina Spencer have pledged to match

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Some of the people attending the first of the 50th Anniversary events at the "Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream" Symposium on October 9, 2011, in Binghamton, NY.

Looking Ahead to the Future

In 1962, a group of young activists joined the staff of the Ecumenical Institute in Chicago. Fifty years later, the EI and the Institute of Cultural Affairs are celebrating a half century of history and work by looking forward to the next 50 years.

The Institute of Cultural Affairs in the U.S.A. (ICA) plans to host an event to commemorate each of the past 50 years. At each of the 50 events, people will discuss where the Institute will go in the next half century. At each event, guests will add their names and thoughts to strips of cloth which will be incorporated into an artwork to be created by Chicago artist



Gina Alicea. The finished artwork will be displayed in the ICA building in Chicago.

The first of the 50 events took place in Binghamton, NY with the "Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream" symposium at

Broome Community College. The symposium was a Pachamama Alliance program.

"I saw the event capture the interest and participation of both experienced activists and people new to thinking of themselves as having something important to give in creating the future," said colleague and event organizer Janice Ulangca. "Work in pairs and small groups alternated with

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dollar-for-dollar every new gift and additional gift to ICA up to \$50,000. We applaud and thank them. This matching gift campaign will build up and boost a series of 50th Anniversary strategic plans including aggressive goals for Service Learning, International Initiatives and Resilient Communities programs.

Dreaming for the Future

This issue of *Initiatives* tells about solid growth in ICA programs and renewed attention to our historic Uptown building. As we use this anniversary year to prepare for the future, we continue to believe people have the power to make good things happen. I know that you inspire people every day to invest in their dreams and you are helping organizations build capacity to make real and lasting results.

For 50 years, you and I have come together and accomplished more than we could on our own. During the 2012 anniversary year, a new or additional donation to the annual fund would maximize the Spencer match and point us in the right direction for the next 50 years. Please use the enclosed envelope or the Donate button on the ICA website at www.ica-usa.org.

Sincerely,



Terry D. Bergdall, PhD
President and CEO

P.S. If you haven't been to Chicago lately, I invite you to come and celebrate the 50th Anniversary at 4750 N. Sheridan Rd. on September 15, 2012. The "Sharing Approaches That Work" (SATW) conference that will document our year-long project to highlight successful sustainable projects in each of Chicago's 77 community areas.

Board Profile: Joyce Sloan

What first attracted you to EI/ICA? What first attracted me to EI/ICA was the understanding the organization embodied of what it means to live a life of service, which includes empowering those you serve to resolve their own issues and solve their own problems. The work EI/ICA was doing on the west side of Chicago was a strong draw for me, because it was a laboratory for demonstrating that understanding worked.



What social issues are you currently most passionate about? These days, I am most passionate about promoting successful inclusion of the diversity that exists within communities as a solution for many of the challenges we face in the world rather than a problem. In my role as superintendent of a school district, this means closing the gaps in achievement and leadership between different student groups.

What aspects of serving on ICA's board do you find most satisfying? The most satisfying part of serving on the ICA board for me is knowing this is a body that shares a deep conviction about what it means to be a global citizen, to promote reflective thinking and to be agents of humane social change.

How would you briefly describe ICA? ICA is part of a global network that works with all individuals and groups interested in strategies and programs that promote better communities, nurture compassionate humanness and sustain global co-existence.

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excellent DVD presentations by people such as Desmond Tutu, Thomas Berry, Matthew Fox, Thich Nhat Hanh, Wangari Mathai, Paul Hawken (author of *Blessed Unrest*) and Rob Hopkins (*Transition Communities*)."

The ICA Board held a reception on November 7. President and CEO Terry Bergdall spoke to the gathered Board members and the Accelerate 77 Advisory Board to talk about the goals and hopes of the "Accelerating Green Initiatives in Chicago's 77 Community Areas" project. This project is a year-long effort to gather and highlight the sustainable development activities in each of Chicago's 77 community areas, ending with the SATW conference at the ICA's headquarters on September 15, 2012.

The event will involve community groups, businesses, and agencies of city, state, and national government. A report on the initiatives will document successful local undertakings and key lessons learned in their implementation. These will be shared electronically with organizations across Chicago.

More events are already planned, with the conference in September 2012 being the peak event. Already, events have been set up across the United States, Europe and Nepal. Events in December included a "surprise" birthday party for ICA colleague Richard Alton in Chicago and the *Courage to Lead* book study group in Oakland, CA. Events in January included the ICA-UK Annual Meeting and Conference in Manchester, the Grassroots Participation in Community Change in Greensboro, NC and the Technology of Participation (ToP)® Annual Conference in Sacramento, CA.

Colleagues are invited to host an event in support of the anniversary. Information and advice on how to host an event is available on the ICA website. If you would like to organize a 50th anniversary event in your area, please contact any of the colleagues below:

Judy Lindblad - nj.lindblad@gmail.com
Ellen Howie - rhowie3@verizon.net
Janice Ulangca - aulangca@stny.rr.com
Ester Mae Cox - missestermae@gmail.com

The next step with Technology of Participation

Nancy Jackson, a Technology of Participation (ToP)® trainer and a longtime leader in the network, says “the beauty of the ToP methods is that they can be used in such a wide variety of ways and settings. For instance, you can do large-scale community change or small-scale coalition building work. You find ways to work together and make change.”



Nancy Jackson

That’s what she does both as the returning treasurer of the ToP Network Board and as the operator of Gammy Bird Consulting. The business is named after the gammy bird, a sea duck that is known for sociable quacking behavior. Likewise, Nancy named the business since it “gathers flocks for quacking of

great importance – facilitation training, short and long term planning, transition planning, and problem solving retreats.”

Nancy said that the ToP Network has adjusted the leadership team structure to a more traditional board style with an executive committee and at-large members. The organization still has a number of standing committees and will continue those for various issues. The board itself is made of committed people who aren’t necessarily taking an active leadership role in committee-level work. “We have a whole other circle of people involved,” she continues. “Broadening our concentric circles of people taking an active role.”

She adds that the election of a board is a necessary change to match the lifecycle of the ToP organization as it continues in its process – from a brand new idea to a group finding its legs. “It’s the right thing to do to maintain a volunteer organization so that the workload isn’t concentrated in a small number of people,” Nancy stated. The step also allows for succession planning and providing more opportunities for new members to take a leadership role.



Technology of Participation trainers discuss the day’s activities during the ToP Annual Conference in Sacramento, CA, in January 2012.

ToP elects new board members at meeting

Trainers of ICA’s Technology of Participation (ToP)® met in Sacramento, CA for their annual conference. More than 90 people from across the country were in attendance with at least a third attending their first conference. Terry Bergdall, President and CEO of ICA, spoke to the gathered attendees telling them about the Institute’s activities of the past year. The conference was also one of the 50 Events for 50 Years in celebration of ICA’s 50th Anniversary.

The membership also elected a board for ToP. The new board members are Mary Flanagan as chair, Molly Shaw as clerk, Nancy Jackson as treasurer and at-large members Ann Epps, Heidi Wilson, Dennis Jennings and Suzanne Esber.

Building Trust

Nancy added that facilitative leadership and consensus building plays a prime role in managing an executive transition, which is a key aspect of her work. “The relationship building, organizational marketing and display of organizational culture that occurs throughout the candidate vetting steps is critical to a successful hire,” she states. “I thoroughly enjoy the pure facilitation of conversations, debriefings, debates, and decision-making in a way that quickly

guides them to their desired end without my critical analysis of candidates (although I certainly have strong opinions).”

Trust in the process is fundamentally important. “As you get closer and closer to the real function, they need to work fast,” Nancy explained. “It’s really comforting that we have a methodology that has that. It helps get to key decisions quickly without leaving anything out. It’s very modern even though the techniques were honed over a period of time.”

77 Neighborhoods Project Roars Ahead

The Institute of Cultural Affairs' "Accelerating Green Initiatives in Chicago's 77 Community Areas" project is roaring ahead with seven area universities now participating in the research.

The ICA, with the cooperation of students and professors, is working to catalog the sustainability efforts in each of the city's 77 community areas. So far, Northeastern Illinois University, University of Illinois-Chicago, DePaul University, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago State University, Roosevelt University and St. Xavier University all have students participating in the research either for a formal class or college credit. Nina Winn, Resilient Communities program coordinator, said that the students are coming from a variety of disciplines including journalism, geography and service learning.

Karen Snyder, a volunteer in the project, mentioned that as of early March, there were an estimated 180 students who have been active in the research. At least 54 of the community areas are now cataloged.

The project is a contribution to the ICA's 50th Anniversary celebration, culminating in a "Sharing Approaches That Work" conference on September 15, 2012. The conference will show selected sustainability projects from each community area sharing resources with each other.

Nina and Karen are continuing to reach out to schools and organizations throughout the Chicago area, including Truman College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago in ICA's home neighborhood of Uptown. So far, 19 organizations have joined the advisory council for the SATW conference.

Karen said that they have actually been surprised at the number



DePaul students are among the many Chicago-area college students that are contributing to ICA's Accelerate 77 project.

and types of projects that have been found. "Some of the students came in and told us they found six LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified buildings just in the Near North neighborhood, both renovated and new construction," she explained.

Work is also continuing on a web community that will include information and links to both the organizations working toward sustainable development in the city and people doing the work. Nina explained the ICA is working with graduate students from DePaul's College of Computing and Digital Media and the social media company OhSoWe to build a platform that will allow for the sharing of resources and the cross-pollination of ideas.

Uptown Christian School aims to raise kids with social conscience

The newest tenant to come to 4750 N. Sheridan Rd., the Uptown Christian School (UCS), is currently renting two rooms on the first floor of the building.

Katherine Williams, principal of the K-12 school, described UCS as something along the lines of a co-op school for members of the Jesus People USA community based in the Uptown neighborhood. The school has a strong social conscience direction, with students required to spend a certain number of hours per month doing community service. Many of the students volunteer at a local community garden and help at a homeless shelter. There are a total of 61 students ranging from kindergarten through high school.

As for challenges, "It's pretty similar to any school – accommodating the aca-

demic needs of a wide range of abilities," said Katherine. She added that she and the other teachers constantly work to keep up on the latest educational techniques while trying not to follow short-lived trends.

UCS became a tenant because the building that will ultimately be its home was not ready for occupation. "It was such a god-sent miracle to be able to rent here," Katherine declared. The school has been in Uptown since 1974 when the children of the community needed a place for their education. The nature of the community, where many members share a living space, also allows the teachers to interact with many of the students outside of school. The availability of the space at 4750 N. Sheridan Rd. allowed the school

to keep operating while the new home is finished.

Many of the teachers are parents of the students themselves, backed up with other teachers who have professional teaching credentials. The school is also accredited by the State of Illinois. The set up allows for a very high teacher-student ratio of one teacher for every two students and the one-on-one attention that can help students. With the small number of students, there aren't organized sports, but they do have physical education time and "a rocking drama club," according to Katherine.

"I feel in many, many ways, because of the interweaving of school and community, we have raised really socially conscious kids," Katherine concluded.

International Initiatives builds on successes

It's been a long and busy year for the International Initiatives team at the ICA, and the work would not have been possible without support and insight of colleagues around the world.

In the past two years ICA-International went through major changes; ICA-USA was a part of the reorganization team, and played a pivotal role in making sure that ICAI is an entity that both promotes the growth of all global ICAs and encourages and facilitates a strong peer-to-peer network. ICA-USA's International Initiatives team member and volunteer Dick Alton has been serving on the board of ICAI since restructuring.

ICA-USA has worked with several different organizations, both within and outside of the ICA network, to strengthen ICA's global impact. Inside the ICA network, the Institute has facilitated relationships between U.S.-based Rotary Clubs and African partners in Zimbabwe and South Africa. ICA-USA also wrote a letter of support for the formation of ICA-Ukraine to USAID.

The program has worked hard on making materials and work more accessible both in the U.S. and around the globe. Volunteers and staff have been working with Louise Singleton on updating the HIV/AIDS Peer Educator Manual each year, along with other tools to be used in global community development initiatives.

The Institute has been working on creating formal partnerships with new organizations around the world. This year, it has



Mesha K. Murew (back row, third from left) and Bernard Mwanja (back row, second from right) of ICA-Kenya with members of a self-help group in Kenya's Mwala District in October 2011.

created a Memorandum of Understanding with collaborating organizations, and has worked with global ICAs in capacity building initiatives, evaluations, and fiscal sponsorship. ICA-USA's official partners include ICA-India, ICA-Kenya, ICA-Canada, UMUHUZA in Rwanda, and is currently working on formalizing relationships with ICA-Zimbabwe and Organization for the Promotion of meaningful Development through active Participation (OPAD). The International Initiatives team has also been busy visiting new and potential partners. Dick made it to Nepal and program coordinator Seva Ghandi visited Zimbabwe, Kenya, Zambia, and Uganda. ICA-Zimbabwe and ICA-USA partnered on an HIV/AIDS Peer Educator Training, and in Nepal, ICA-Nepal and ICA-USA

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have worked on planning the 2012 Global ICAI Conference scheduled for October.

ICA will continue to follow strategic directions in the coming year, and is working on scheduling a conference for African ICA Partners, creating a space on the web to share resources and tools, updating the HIV/AIDS Peer Educator Manual, and most importantly, preparing for and participating in the 2012 Nepal Global Conference!

October Think Tank describes strengths of Learning Basket

On October 22 and 23, a group of educators and practitioners gathered as part of a Think Tank to discuss the unique strengths of the Learning Basket approach. The group was composed of colleagues from Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and Illinois as well as Canada.

The gathering provided the opportunity to share perspectives gained after working for multiple years in 16 schools not only in Chicago and Phoenix area, but also with a variety of ethnic groups. Some

of the strengths of the approach included engaging parents as partners in nurturing the development of young children; acknowledging and affirming cultural differences; flexibility of approach to complement school outreach initiatives and home visiting requirements as well as multiple curricula. They also involve incorporating a variety of learning methods that embed critical thinking and problem solving and strengthens parents to be contributors to their children's learning experience.

Those gathered for the session blended their perspectives and experience to determine the critical strategic actions needed to position the Learning Basket approach as a resource in the concern for School Readiness. The group determined that the program approach that emphasizes the power of cultural differences and identity, and the importance of socio-emotional development for both children and parents provides a needed emphasis to programs concerned with children's learning success.

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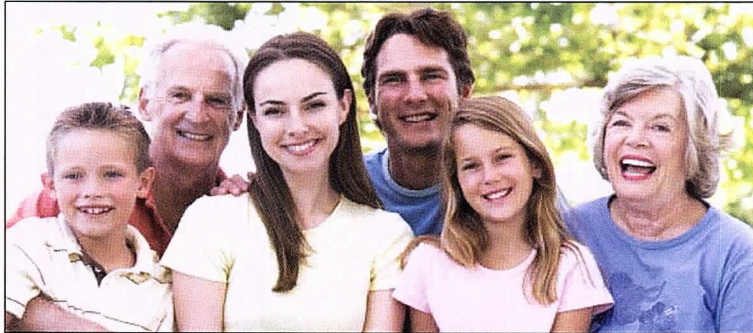
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The Archives: Rediscovering the Past to Inform the Future

The purpose of the Archives project is threefold:

- to move the 50 years of materials, recordings and photographs from the basement to the new Archives area on the sixth floor;
- to organize the vast collection in a way that allows future research; and
- to have the information available to the public.

Christina Wolf, an archivist at Oklahoma City University's Dulaney-Browne Library, has been instrumental in assisting the Archives staff and volunteers to move forward on these goals.

So far, a quarter of the file cabinets have been sorted and organized. A grant has been submitted for funds for digital scanning equipment to allow the material to be stored in a stable format. In December, a group of volunteers found files that held the Fifth City Preschool and Emerging Generation Curriculum.

They also discovered many ICA speeches made from 1970-1980 that were anonymous. The Archives Team is organizing the transcripts and hopes to identify the authors of each. If you are familiar with this period of history and would be willing to help identify the authors, Marge Philbrook will send you a list of the "unknown" documents for you to help identify.

As always, the Archives Team needs more hands in sorting and organizing. Contact Marge to find out how you can help at mphilbrook@gmail.com.