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THE INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS
IN THE U.S.A.



2006 ANNUAL REPORT

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

ICA USA's programs, courses, and events empower thousands of people with new approaches to create a positive future. In 2006 more than 1,200 people received training in facilitation methods, at-risk families became strong by learning new parenting skills, and struggling communities gained confidence by residents working together.

Across the country sticky walls filled with creative ideas have replaced walls of prejudice and disagreements. Community murals have replaced angry walls of graffiti. Flowering gardens have replaced dirty alleys. Playful giggles and family activities have transformed sullen rooms.

The lobby of the ICA USA Building is alive with a kaleidoscope of languages and colors as thousands of people are welcomed by its brightly lit earthrise image. The walls of the historic terra cotta building serve a full spectrum of humanity with job training programs, health care clinics, and the life giving missions of 25 nonprofit organizations and service agencies.

Each of these endeavors is an aspect of the Board's four mission goals for ICA USA:

Inclusive participation and comprehensive approaches become the hallmark of civic, social, and community life.

All families become confident and effective first teachers for their children.

People of diverse perspectives, ages, and communities build common ground and understanding.

Innovative initiatives catalyze solutions for global challenges.

Your support during the past two years has helped make these programs possible and encouraged the Board and staff in a time of significant transition.

2006 was also a sobering year in the operations of ICA USA. Faced with continuing deficits the Board of Directors took action to revitalize the organization. A comprehensive assessment by the Dendros Group identified the critical need for foundational change. Tough changes were made to open opportunities for effectiveness and creativity.

Administrative offices have been consolidated to Chicago.

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



■ Carolyn Houghton Antenen
President of the Board of Directors
The Institute of Cultural Affairs and
Ecumenical Institute

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Priority is being given to partnering with social change networks.

Collaborative research is being utilized to keep programs and curriculum vibrant for the ICA learner.

Best practices will require both strong executive staff and visionary board leadership.

Our national marketing approach for the ToP Trainers Network will improve program delivery.

ICA USA is a committed, active member of ICA International.

Change is an ever-present reality of our world. ICA USA is embracing the challenges of these times with new models for sharing methods that work, gratitude for the legacy of our founders, and confidence that our work is making a difference in solving major human dilemmas.

The Board is eager to expand conversations in 2007 and gather further input with our many stakeholders and friends on how ICA USA addresses the critical points of current social challenges. I believe the power of meaningful discussion and exchange will shape the world's future. Think Tank events and the Living Legacy celebration in October 2007 will explore three arenas to help focus the conversations – 21st Century Spirituality, Sustainable Development, and Participation Edges.

For me the context of these dialogues is to renew not only our courage to care but our courage to see freshly.

It is a great privilege to serve as Board president of The Institute of Cultural Affairs USA during this 2007 Year of Discernment. Our commitment to invigorate the Institute's vitality and relevance is a humbling and ambitious undertaking. I am particularly appreciative of Pamela Wilcox, ICA USA Interim Executive Director and the present and former staff and board members who have served with agility, professionalism, and dedication.

The opportunity to share and learn with wonderful colleagues is simply a joy.

All my best,

Carolyn Hout Antenen

Carolyn Hout Antenen

President of the Board of Directors

The Institute of Cultural Affairs and Ecumenical Institute

The Learning for Success Program is a comprehensive family literacy program, initiated in 1999, that includes Learning Basket parent sessions, activities, tutoring, and library visits. It benefits teen mothers who reside in one of the state's largest child-care facilities. Because these teen mothers were also wards of the state, it is not possible for us to use their names in stories that are reported. However, it is possible to relate the unfolding miracle of the impact of the Learning for Success program in their lives. I will give this participant the "story name" of Imani (which in Kiswahili means Hope).

Imani came to the facility as an expectant mother who was 14 years old. She attended the parenting sessions very sporadically during her first and second years. She was angry and disinterested, and she frequently burst into shouting tantrums. Although she tried our patience, we continued to welcome her, and gradually she developed trust in the parenting group facilitators and the structure of the sessions.

The consistent care that she was experiencing in the facility, which included mental health counseling and encouragement, enabled her to begin to regulate her emotions and to enter into the Learning for Success program when she was sixteen. She began to develop trust in her tutors, who, in spite of her behavior continued to demonstrate interest in helping her with math and reading. Soon Imani expressed that she loved to go to the library because books helped her to "live in another world." The Learning for Success program provided a way for her to regularly visit the library and choose the books that would feed her imagination about life outside the facility.

Imani was an official participant in the Learning for Success program for 3 years. In the Learning Basket parent sessions, she became a "teaching assistant" because she was familiar with the presentation material and gave examples of how she used the concepts in her own life over the years. Her young child was at "the head of her class" in preschool, because Imani played with her in ways that nurtured her development. This year Imani was unable to attend many of the parenting sessions in the Spring because she got a job, and staff reported that she has set up appointments with DCFS (the Department of Children and Family Services) to make arrangements to move into independent living.

THE LEARNING BASKET



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We named our Family Literacy program Learning for Success, and Imani and her young daughter are demonstrating what it means to step onto a path and to follow it over time with the patient support of all those involved in the program. Imani's determination and her hope for the future enable us to realize why we do this program.

Fifteen teen mothers graduated from the Learning for Success Program the summer of 2006. The following fall, sixteen new teen mothers registered for the Learning for Success Program.

Also during the fall of 2006, the ICA USA and the IL State Library permitted the expansion of a family literacy program at Waters Elementary. Previously only Learning Basket Parent Training sessions were provided at the school. The introduction of the family literacy program brought English as a second language classes, library visits, Parent and Child Activities, and Children's Education, in addition to the Learning Basket Parent Training sessions to families. Many of the twelve families enrolled spoke only Spanish.



The Learning Basket also launched its first parent training sessions at Goudy Elementary in Uptown. Uptown is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the nation and home to many immigrants from Central and South America, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. The program was a success and later graduated eleven mothers during the fall/winter 2006. Parenting sessions were done bilingually in Spanish and English and for the first time included mothers who also spoke Urdu.

The Learning Basket Program continues to evolve in 2007 and now incorporates home visits, field trips, and fatherhood activities.

Article by Elise Packard and May Domingo. ■

I am always excited when I have the opportunity to train others in using the facilitation methods taught in the Group Facilitation Methods (GFM) course. Participants walk away with a clear understanding of a facilitator's role, learn three methods (focused conversation, consensus workshop, and action planning) to facilitate group process and gain the confidence to use the methods immediately.

This course is not your typical training experience and participants are often surprised, albeit pleasantly, during the two days. The first surprise is the room set-up. The room is set up in a large u-shape. What difference does the room set-up make? A u-shape encourages participation because people can see each other and have face-to-face conversations with each other. It also shifts the focus of conversation from participant-to-trainer to participant-to-participant. An underlying value of the ToP methods is that everyone has a piece of the wisdom that needs to be tapped into.

The room set-up in the GFM is very important but not rigid. At our last GFM, the power was out for about 4 hours. Well, the course cannot be completed with a four-hour break, so we had to continue. First we tried candles but it was really hard to read in that low light. The facility we were at had a storage room; almost a big garage that had skylights which provided pretty good light. So we rolled our chairs out to the storage room and used the back of the garage doors as our wall while people gathered around in a semi-circle. It worked! We were able to keep the course on schedule and still maintain an environment that supported participation.

Early in the first day of the training, participants *experience* the methods before being instructed on how to use them. The value of participating first is two-fold. First, if you haven't seen it before, it provides a big picture of the feel and intent of the method. It also creates a model to refer back to as information is given about the "how to" and as you practice it later in the course. Second, it allows you to understand how participants are responding to the method, which is a valuable insight to a facilitator. This embodies another value of ToP, which is to highlight multiple perspectives so that the whole is understood.

To clearly delineate when you are *experiencing* the method versus *learning* the method, there are two facilitators leading the course, one to facilitate (thereby demonstrating the method) and the other to take you step-by-step through the process. These two course-leaders help to highlight how training and facilitation are different. Throughout the two days they may change roles but which role they're playing is very clear. I'm an introvert and when I tell people how nervous I am but that I'm still able to facilitate, because it's about the group and not me, they gain confidence in their ability to facilitate as well. Many participants have

TECHNOLOGY OF PARTICIPATION®

NOT YOUR TYPICAL TRAINING EXPERIENCE

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come up to me after a course and say how helpful it was to have two leaders demonstrating the course, especially a leader who was also quiet and uncomfortable in the spotlight.

One thing that really tickles me and I think surprises people is how the method really engages people. This is best seen on the second day during the action planning demonstration, which typically takes 3 to 4 hours in a real-life setting, but is shortened to 1 ½ hours due to time constraints of the course. The fun part is that people don't want to stop planning. They are so engaged in the project that they have created it's hard to get them to move to the next step. I ask them, if we get this much engagement in the process during a simulation just think of what happens on a project that the group is excited about? The ToP® methods encourage and support active participation by everyone in the group.

I could go on and on about how this course is different from most others - how it engages people on many different levels, taps into different thinking and learning styles, and follows the adult learning cycle – but better yet, come to a course and experience it for yourself.

Article by Debra Grimes. ■



The ICA USA building, located at 4750 N. Sheridan road in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, is quite unique. The 8-floor, 166,000 square foot building is home to over twenty five social service providers. It is the largest one-stop social service center in the United States, serving over 1,000 clients per week through an array of services that include: daycare, community health, HIV/AIDS prevention, mental health support, job training, workforce development, aid to the homeless, senior programs and refugee aid.

The building is emblematic of ICA USA's commitment to human development and also serves as a source of revenue from tenant rents. This is the story of one of those tenants:

Sarah's Circle

At 10:00am each day Monday thru Friday, the buzzer at Sarah's Circle rings and women start coming in. Some are looking for a safe, quiet place to rest after spending a night on the streets. Others are coming to meet with their case managers to work on resumes, locate housing or apply for benefits. Art classes draw other women to the space. Still others are here to get a hot meal. Many are coming to Sarah's Circle for the community it provides to them.

Sarah's Circle provides daytime drop-in supportive services to women who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. We are the only agency in the Uptown area solely dedicated to serving women who are homeless. Each day we serve, on average, 40 women and throughout the year, we serve over six hundred women total. Our staff and volunteers have built trusting relationships with the women over the years, and as a result, these women view Sarah's as more of a home than an agency. Sarah's Circle is a point of entry for women looking to turn their life around and a point of prevention for women who are on the brink of homelessness. We take women where they are in their lives, and when they are ready, we provide resources, referrals, and support for them.

ICA USA COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER

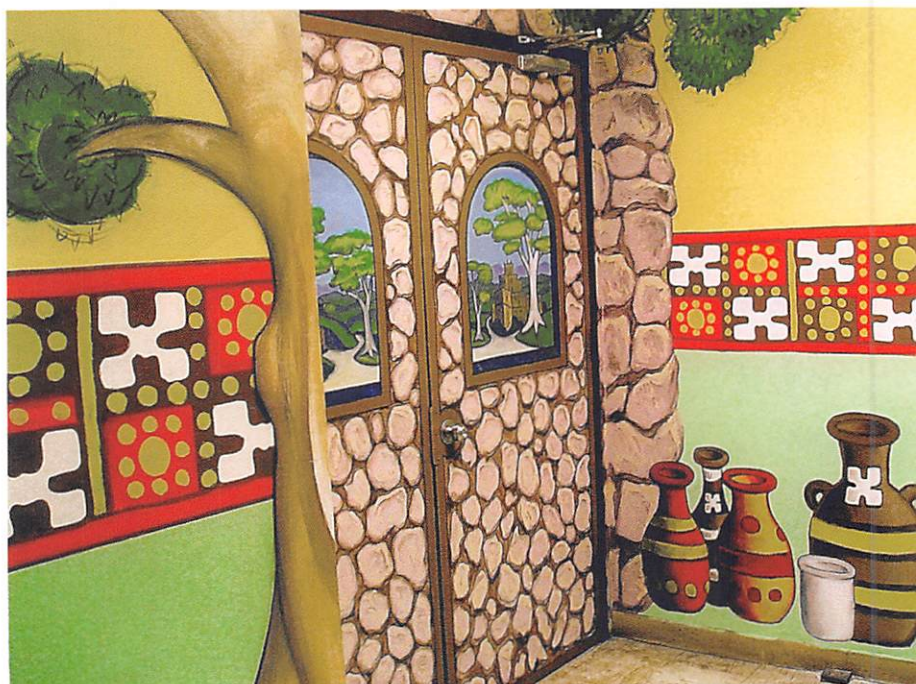


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Each woman has the opportunity to participate in a variety of services. At the most basic level Sarah's Circle provides physical needs including a safe space, food, clothing, and toiletries. Additionally, Sarah's Circle offers women the opportunity to participate in case management services. This individualized assistance helps a woman with her concerns in whatever way possible to increase her residential stability, to assist her in increasing her skills and income, and to help her reach greater self-determination. The Health and Empowerment programs of Sarah's are presented to all the women utilizing Sarah's Circle. We provide a variety of educational programs on topics pertinent to women who are homeless. Program topics include domestic violence, all aspects of health (physical, emotional and mental), and advocacy.

In 2006 Sarah's Circle was able to serve a growing number of women. We saw clients coming to us from not only the Uptown community, but from many different areas of the city and even suburbs. Sarah's Circle has responded to the challenge of providing broader case management services by adding licensed clinical staff. We were able to add a staff position to work exclusively with developing housing resources and opportunities, which is just another way we continue to improve our quality services and programming for the women we serve. Sarah's has been able to help women not only obtain housing, but providing them with the continual assistance needed to maintain that housing. As an agency we continue to grow and explore new avenues of how to best serve the women utilizing Sarah's Circle.

Article by Sarah's Circle. ■



In 2006, ICA USA had a significant contract with the First 5 LA Partnership for Families (PFF) Initiative in Los Angeles, California. The purpose of the PFF Initiative is to create a network of resources that provide opportunities for families, communities, and county systems to meaningfully participate in the prevention of child maltreatment. Through the Initiative, First 5 LA has funded a collaborative of agencies in each of the eight Service Planning Areas in Los Angeles County; the role of ICA USA is to provide facilitation support for capacity building in each of the collaboratives.

FIRST 5 LA

The contract with ICA USA, which has been renewed for a second year, is being serviced by a team of ToP Trainers in Southern California, including Aja Howell, Christy Vines, and Linda Hamilton. The team's primary focus in the past year has been on facilitating a comprehensive needs assessment for each collaborative. This has provided the agencies involved with the opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, their current strengths and weaknesses, the additional support and resources needed to be successful, and best practices they have developed. Some of the collaboratives also requested help from the ICA USA team with action planning for the coming year.

Another emphasis of the contract is on training members of each collaborative in ToP methods. During the past year, one Group Facilitation Methods course was held with twenty participants and was followed by a one-day refresher course. Several of the collaboratives are now enthusiastically putting the methods to work in their geographic regions.

Almost all of the feedback from course participants was positive, and most were excited to go out and start using GFM methods immediately. Many indicated they would be interested in taking the next level course (Participatory Strategic Planning):



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"[I'm] very excited about the methods... [I] bought a sticky wall first thing."

"The course was just great. I use it all the time. Every single week. The sticky wall is a permanent fixture in our office."

"This is awesome. Inclusive, organic and helpful. I was so impressed with this."

Overall, ICA USA facilitated events and trainings have been well received by participants and the PFF leadership. During year two of the contract, the team hopes to continue to support the collaboratives in building internal and external capacity, further train leadership in ToP facilitation methods, and facilitate learning exchanges among the eight collaboratives.

Article by Linda Hamilton ■

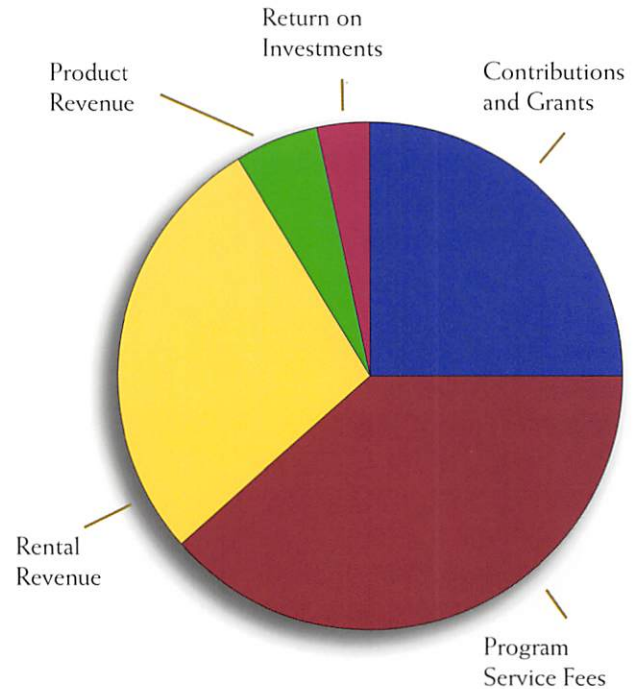


COMBINED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year Ended December 31, 2006

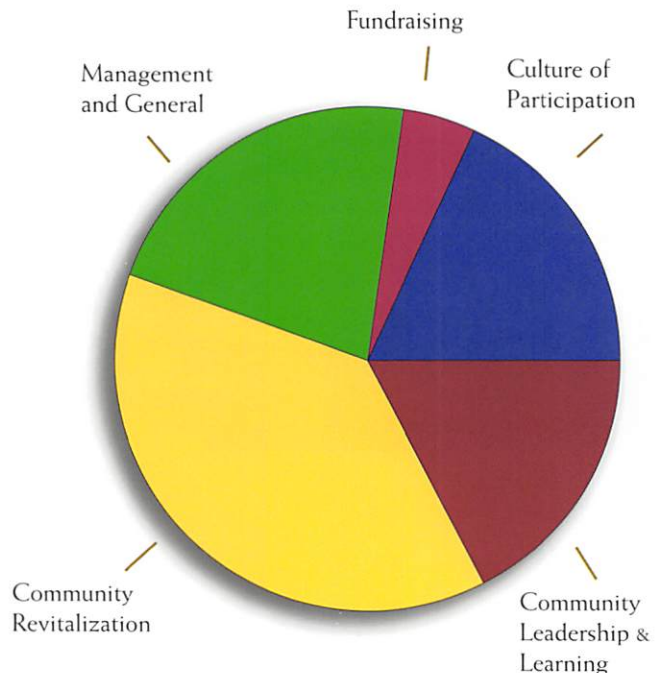
Revenues and Support

Contributions and Grants	\$964,877
Program Service Fees	1,484,663
Rental Revenue	1,074,171
Product Revenue	207,267
Return on Investments	129,638
Net Assets released from Restrictions	0
Total Revenue and Support	\$3,860,616



Expenses

Program Services	
Culture of Participation	681,807
Community Leadership & Learning	658,203
Community Revitalization	1,441,100
Total Program Services	\$2,781,110
Management and General	824,566
Fundraising	176,790
Total Supporting Services	\$1,001,356
Total Expenses	\$3,782,466
Change in Net Assets	\$78,150
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$490,173
Net Assets, End of Year	\$568,323





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