

# Creating the Healthy Community

Using All Assets: Civic Institutions  
As Fulcrums of **Change**



## Examples of Best Practices

The enclosed document contains best practices from a range of conventional institutions that have expanded their activities to help improve health and wellness in their community. Each example listed emphasizes at least one of the following constituencies: distressed communities, at-risk youth, and the vulnerable elderly population.

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# Civic Institutions Can Help Create Healthy Communities

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# ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

## Education for a Lifetime

### Colorado Springs, Colorado

The mission of Education for a Lifetime is to bring whole-person health to all youth in Colorado Springs so that they may lead healthy and productive lives. Since 1983, programs like Education for a Lifetime have been offered at no cost to the community. As a 501(c)3 organization, we exist solely through donations, fundraising or grants. With your support we can ensure these programs will continue to serve Colorado Springs and surrounding communities in a comprehensive manner.

Encouraging whole-person health in all youth

Education for a Lifetime programs focus on a whole-person model of health. This model teaches that teen sexual activity affects students socially, emotionally, physically, ethically and mentally. Our programs are designed to encourage and inspire a lifestyle of healthy choices that will lead to behavior change. We seek to empower all teenagers in the Front Range to lead healthy and productive lives. We encourage students to abstain from all high-risk behavior with an emphasis on avoiding sexual risks so those students can stay in school, attain a quality education and begin to focus on their life goals and dreams.

EFL programs are based on Hawkins & Catalano's theory of Risk and Protective Factors and use the positive youth development framework for addressing adolescent risk behaviors. This theory states that health risk behaviors are interrelated and have similar root causes. Through collaboration with schools, parents and other community organizations, risk avoidance and risk reduction strategies are implemented thereby encouraging teens to engage in healthier behaviors and cause a downturn in the amount of high-risk behaviors that teenagers exhibit.

Sixty percent of the children from single-parent households live in poverty, as compared to only 11% of children from two-parent families (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2006). Our goal is to help students form healthy relationships that will eventually lead to stable marriages and less out-of-wedlock births.

The outcomes taught by EFL lead to poverty prevention, crime prevention, drugs and alcohol prevention, teen pregnancy rate reduction and an increased number of teens who graduate from high school and are able to reach their future goals. EFL programs also help teens who are currently sexually active to evaluate the health of their current relationships and encourage them to choose sexual risk avoidance until marriage for their future.

We speak to over 6,000 students each year and provide a wide range of programs in most school districts in and around Colorado Springs.

#### Program Focus

- Prepare teens for healthy relationships, healthy marriage, reaching goals, and achieving hopes and dreams
- Discuss the realities of teen pregnancy, STDs, HIV and AIDS
- Present the research regarding the protective factors of healthy marriage and family on a person's well



being in order to promote stable family formation and healthy marriages

- Use a directive teaching style (describing all the options and recommending and encouraging young people toward the healthiest choice) rather than a non-directive teaching style (giving young people all the choices and leaving it to them to decide what they feel is healthiest).
- Are positive youth development based and interactive, giving teens the opportunity to practice skills necessary to develop their character, leadership and to develop healthy relationships.

#### Target Population

EFL targets the adolescents of El Paso County between the ages of 12 and 19 years to avoid all high risk behaviors with an emphasis on delaying the onset of sexual activity as their healthiest choice. The entire community benefits because teen sexual risk avoidance has significant protective factors for other risks commonly exhibited.

The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), a national survey funded by more than 17 federal agencies, showed that teens who avoid sex during high school years are;

- substantially less likely to be expelled from school;
- less likely to drop out of high school; and
- more likely to attend and graduate from college.

When compared to sexually active teens, those who avoid sexual activity during high school years (e.g., at least until age 18) are:

- 60 percent less likely to be expelled from school;
- 50 percent less likely to drop out of high school;
- almost twice as likely to graduate from college

These skills increase academic performance, decrease drop-out rates, and help to prevent poverty. In short, teens that choose not to be sexually active are more likely to possess character traits that lead to success in life.

The community also benefits because teen sexual risk avoidance improves preparation for stable marriages. Healthy marriages are beneficial to children. Children who have parents with a healthy marriage are significantly less likely to experience physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect, welfare dependence, poverty, drug or alcohol abuse, emotional or behavioral problems, academic failure, and incarceration. They are equipped to become productive contributors to the overall health of the community.

**For more information: [www.educationforalifetime.com](http://www.educationforalifetime.com)**

# ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

## Missouri College Advising Corps

Columbia, Missouri

Modeled on the National College of Advising Corps, the Missouri College Advising Corps (MCAC) was formed in 2007 when the University of Missouri (MU) at Columbia won a \$1 million grant from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation. MCAC is a college-access advising system that works to increase the number of graduating seniors going to college.

Staffed by recent graduates of MU, MCAC helps high-schoolers understand that they can complete a college degree, find the best university for them, and successfully secure financial aid packages and scholarships. MCAC works in 26 public schools across Missouri that have high percentages of first generation potential college students, low-income families, and traditionally underrepresented minorities. By helping high school seniors with the college planning, preparation, application, and financial aid processes, MCAC has changed the futures of countless students who would not normally have considered college.



In 2010, Missouri Governor Jay Nixon set a goal of increasing the number of adults with some college education from 37% to 60% by 2025. The average college-going rate of all Missouri high schools in the last three years has increased less than 1%. On the other hand, high schools with Missouri corps advisors have seen an increase of more than 10%. Thanks to the work of MCAC, Missouri is on its way to making college a reachable goal for all high schoolers.

**For more information: [mcac.missouri.edu](http://mcac.missouri.edu)**

# ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

## University of New Mexico

### Interdisciplinary Health Architecture Program

The AIA's Decade of Design is a Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to tap the power of design to advance public health and the effective use of natural, economic, and human resources. In September 2012 the AIA extended \$40,000 in grants to three university architecture programs. Among them is a grant to the University of New Mexico (UNM) supporting the development of an inter-professional public health curriculum.

The initiative "ABCs Design for Community Health", which stands for Albuquerque/Bernalillo County metro area, is supported by the University's interdisciplinary Urban Health Equity Task Force. "Its dual goal," explains principal investigator Leah Steimel, Director of the Office of Community Affairs at UNM Health Sciences Center, "is to improve the health of neighboring communities while creating opportunities for UNM students to practice inter-professional collaboration through related projects."

As part of the initiative, UNM had launched a noontime film and faculty-facilitated eight-session discussion series that ran from October to November 2012. The fall series built interest and enthusiasm among faculty and students across the campus, as well as solicited feedback on designing an inter-professional curriculum. The series featured through provoking episodes from the seminal documentary *Unnatural Causes: is Inequality Making Us Sick?* and the PBS series *Designing Healthy Communities* by Dr. Richard Jackson, Hon. AIA., MD, MPH from UCLA.

In follow-up to the film series, a two-credit pilot seminar "Designing Healthy Communities" began on February 4th, 2013. Four inter-disciplinary faculty are teaching nearly 50 students, about 20 in each module, as part of the spring seminar open to students in architecture and landscape architecture, medicine, public health, pharmacy, and business. Among the modules are case studies, community-based experiential learning, and facilitated conversations with national experts like Dr. Jackson.

In July 2013 students will also be able take the enhanced two-week graduate course "Health Equity: Introduction to Public Health" at the School of Medicine. Launched in 2011, this community-engaged class is now open to students in Architecture and Landscape Architecture; Medicine, Public Health, and Pharmacy; as well as Business and Law.

UNM's initiative is a key step toward breaking inter-disciplinary silos at a time when America's public health challenges require creative solutions. "We hope this initiative will be a transformational experience," explains principal investigator Michael Pride, AIA, NOMA, professor and associate dean at the UNM School of Architecture and Planning. "Students will leave with a better understanding of the built environment's impact on health. They will also learn and practice the principles of community engagement within and beyond their discipline."

# ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

## Project SHINE

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



In the early 1980s, Nancy Henkin, founder and director of the Intergenerational Center at Temple University, was shocked to learn that an elderly Asian woman had committed suicide. A high degree of social isolation was found to be a key factor in the tragedy.

This news challenged the perception that immigrant communities are always tight-knit and supportive of its members and that elders are honored and treated with particular respect. The reality is that when people move away from their homelands, issues such as linguistic isolation and disrupted social roles can complicate integration into the new culture.

SHINE aims to help integrate immigrants and refugees into American society by providing opportunities to learn English and contribute to society. When immigrants are connected to people and activities, they become less isolated in their new communities.

Project SHINE's Goals:

- Promote intercultural and intergenerational understanding within diverse communities
- Improve the ability of older immigrants to access healthcare, exercise their rights, and perform their responsibilities as family and community members
- Increase the academic knowledge, personal growth and civic engagement of college students
- Enhance the ability of faculty members to create stronger links between community service and academic coursework
- Build the capacity of community colleges and universities to develop sustainable, mutually beneficial partnerships with immigrant communities

Since 1997, SHINE has partnered with 31 colleges and universities and over 200 ethnic, community, and faith-based organizations in 16 cities across the country. Educators have incorporated service learning through SHINE into more than a thousand courses in various disciplines. Nearly 10,000 students have provided more than 150,000 hours of service to almost 40,000 older immigrants through Project SHINE, with support from Learn and Serve America. Project SHINE has been nominated as a model program by Philanthropy for Active Civic Engagement.

**For more information: [www.projectshine.org/history](http://www.projectshine.org/history)**



# ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

## Using the Arts to Create a Community of Caring

Laramie, Wyoming

Senior nursing students from the University of Wyoming were assigned psychiatric clinical experiences at different community mental health sites, including a consumer-run drop-in center. This social support center, a kind of clubhouse for people living with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI), is guided by an advisory board comprised of SPMI individuals, mental health center staff, and community representatives. The focus here is purely social, unlike other clubhouse agencies that offer treatment and vocational services. A regional mental health center oversees the center, but it is structured as a participatory program to promote social interaction and member self-determination, self-sufficiency, and independence. Members come to the center in the afternoon, after day treatment or work.

At the beginning of the clinical rotation, students shared their apprehensions about working with people with chronic mental illness, especially in such an informal setting. But it didn't take long for comfortable and then close relationships to develop between students and the club members. Students began looking for ways to better meet the social needs of the members, and they developed more social and creative/artistic events for them. In evaluating the clinical experience, many students acknowledged a shift in their own attitudes and perceptions. One wrote, "I was really afraid about coming to the center but now that I have been there, it seems pretty silly that I was so nervous." Other typical comments: "I really like being at the center. I like the work. It gives me a sense of purpose," and "This clinical experience has allowed me to realize the humanness of all people."

People with chronic mental illness often say they feel invisible and many live on the margins of society so club members seemed to especially enjoy cosponsoring activities with other institutions. A puppet show, jointly developed with the Laramie County Public Library, provided a welcome opportunity for club members to be engaged in planning and partnership. Members got the chance to practice skills in communicating, setting goals, planning, and adapting social behavior.

# ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

## Ballet Mobile

### Maryland

Ballet Mobile, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) performing arts company that brings ballet, beautiful music, and interactive programs to assisted living facilities and other unconventional venues in Maryland. The organization's website explains its mission and method succinctly: Just as a bookmobile brings books to people everywhere, Ballet Mobile brings beautiful ballet to unconventional locations. We combine movement, music, and mental imagery in ways that touch the heart and lift the spirits. We transform living rooms, hallways, atriums, and even kitchens into beautiful, interactive ballet experiences.



Renee Meyer, the teacher and choreographer who founded and now directs Ballet Mobile, says her vision is to take ballet out of a dark theatre and to share its healing and restorative powers with those who may benefit the most.

“Nobody sits still if they don't want to,” she says. “Even if people can't move physically, they can move in their minds and hearts. The mind is so powerful. It can take us to the same positive emotional place that our dancers feel when dancing. So in the end, we all are dancing together.”

The organization is made up of a volunteer corps of professional and pre-professional artists who go wherever they are invited – to community centers, hospitals, assisted living centers, schools, or just about anywhere. The dancers tailor each “house call” to the specific audience so everyone who watches the ballet can travel in their minds to happy, safe times and places.

**For more information: [www.balletmobile.org](http://www.balletmobile.org)**

# ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

## Brave Faces Portrait Gallery

### Shasta County, California

About one in four people struggle with a mental illness every year, and about 40 people in Shasta County, California die by suicide every year. Because of shame and discrimination associated with mental health problems, many people don't seek the help they need.

The Community Education Committee (CEC), part of the Shasta County's Health and Human Services Agency, works to promote mental wellness, increase community awareness of mental health, and end the stigma surrounding mental illness and substance abuse. The CEC has been a key force in developing and implementing the Stand Against Stigma campaign, an inspiring public education and outreach campaign that aims to improve the community's understanding of mental illness and suicide—and encourage people to get the mental health services they need. CEC collaborates extensively with Shasta Suicide Prevention.

The CEC, which meets monthly in the Redding public library, is open to all interested members of the public.

CEC's most visible work is the Brave Faces Portrait Gallery, an ongoing project in which real Shasta County residents who live with mental illness or have been affected by suicide tell their stories through photographs and oral histories. The website features 17 local residents and their stories of hope and recovery. Nine of these Brave Faces have been trained to make presentations to community groups, on topics ranging from PTSD to childhood abuse.

One Brave Face belongs to area resident Steve Kaiser, who explains that he discovered his bipolar diagnosis by accident, says, "I would like to counsel people who've struggled like I have. I would like to soothe and lightly guide people, using what I call the velvet intervention. We can't push people in the back. But we can put a hand on their shoulder."

**For more information: [www.standagainststigma.com](http://www.standagainststigma.com) and [www.facebook.com/StandAgainstStigma](https://www.facebook.com/StandAgainstStigma)**

# ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

## Fort Wayne Dance Collective

Fort Wayne, Indiana

The Fort Wayne Dance Collective (FWDC) is committed to helping others achieve health and wellness through movement and rhythm. It offers a variety of dance classes onsite and in the community that empower people of all ages and abilities to improve their health and well-being. FWDC offers classes for different groups and special needs. It works with people with cognitive and physical disabilities, helping them explore movement and music in ways that are stimulating and creative. The organization teaches Dance for Parkinson's disease classes for the local Parkinson's support group. They work with the elderly, giving them the tools to move more efficiently and with greater self confidence, helping reduce the likelihood of falling and injury.

The Collective goes out of its way to encourage at-risk children to participate in its programs. The school provides full scholarships to those who need it, and its work-study program not only allows students to take classes at significantly reduced rates but also teaches them about the organization so they can learn how it operates.

FWDC has a vibrant and ever-expanding community outreach program and works with funders to reach schools serving children who wouldn't otherwise be exposed to the arts. This Fort Wayne institution is particularly proud of its non-competitive approach to dance. It believes dance is for everyone.

**For more information: [wdc.org/FWDC/](http://wdc.org/FWDC/)**



# ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

## Kairos Dancing Heart

KAIROS dancing heart™ is an award winning, evidence-based arts program and a best practice model for working with frail elders. This intergenerational dance company, with ages ranging from 7 to 98, invites older adults and their family members and caregivers to help co-create a new vision of dance—one that works for all ages and all bodies.



KAIROS is part of the growing movement called creative aging, which invites frail elderly to become active participants rather than passive observers of the arts. It's clear that older adults with memory loss respond particularly well to the stimulation provided by interactive art, drama, dance and music activities.

There has been a shift from passive appreciation of the arts to hands-on participation by the old and frail, but the movement is still in its infancy. The belief that creative expression is vital to an older adult's quality of life is part of a movement called "creative aging," which has an enthusiastic and growing audience. Long-term care residents and their families and caregivers aren't the only fans. Federal and local governments, agencies on aging, nonprofits and foundations have begun to fund arts programs and are replicating them nationwide.

In a study completed in 2011 year, researchers at St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minnesota, looked at KAIROS Dance Theatre's Dancing Heart program, which offers creative dance and storytelling in long-term care facilities. They found the majority of residents' balance and memory either improved or remained the same — notable for this population — and social interaction increased.

Maria Genné, a professional dancer and educator, believed if she could get sixth-grade boys to dance, she could get older people moving. The Dancing Heart initiative, part of her Kairos Dance Theatre, has operated in nine retirement communities in Minnesota. Next year, she expects the model to be replicated in New York, Ohio, Wisconsin and Arizona. "Dance may be physical, but it's also cognitive and social," says Genné.

Two to three professional dancers, actors and musicians oversee 20 to 25 residents for 90 minutes every week. John and Jeanette Gorman, both using walkers, are regulars. "I've had chronic pain for years, and the program helps me forget about myself," says Jeanette, 85. John's family ran a ballroom, and the couple danced for decades.

The intergenerational performances, which are brought schools, nursing homes, museums, parks, and community centers, bring a vision of what community can be: all ages, all backgrounds, all abilities, all dancing together.

# ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

## Organization of American States Orchestra Program

The Organization of American States' (OAS) Orchestra Program targets at-risk youth in several Caribbean nations. It uses the power of music and community to engage youth, develop creative abilities, and lower risk factors related to school dropouts and youth violence. The program has created three orchestral and choral training centers that customize their instruction for at-risk youths in Haiti, Jamaica, and St. Lucia.

The program captures youths' time, attention, and efforts with musical programs, instead of allowing them to set out on a path leading to violent behavior and dropping out of school. Training is offered five days a week for two hours each day. Courses integrate theoretical, instrumental, and orchestral practice from the beginning to maximally promote joint activity. Students are actively engaged in the instruction process as well, allowing for them to fully express their ideas and opinions. These programs provide early and continued exposure to great music works and connect the students to their communities.

A report of the effectiveness of the program showed immense benefits for youth who participated. Over the course of 18 months of the music program, students reported increased academic aspirations and the skills needed to reach those goals, less alcohol and marijuana use than students not participating in the program, improved relationships with parents, greater likelihood of involvement in sports, and less instances of becoming angry and of aggressive behavior.

**For more information: [www.museum.oas.org/en/oasis/index.html](http://www.museum.oas.org/en/oasis/index.html)**



# ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

## Project Row Houses

Houston, Texas

Several years ago, 22 shotgun-style homes in the heart of Houston's Third Ward were abandoned and at risk of being destroyed. In an effort to save these historic homes, Project Row Houses (PRH) formed a Community Development Corporation that purchased the land and engaged community residents in a revitalization plan that focused on art and African American history.

After all 22 historic homes were restored, PRH turned them into a center for arts and cultural education programs that celebrate the heritage of the community and provide social services. Eight of the houses are used for biannual art installations, five are used for afterschool and summer education programs for young people, two are used for offices, and seven are used for the Young Mothers Residency Program, where single moms learn skills that will help them become good parents and self-sufficient adults. PRH's conversion of these homes from abandoned buildings to dynamic spaces for arts and cultural engagement proves that art in the community can revitalize even the most depressed inner-city neighborhoods.

These programs are inspired by the work of world renowned artist Dr. John Biggers (1924 – 2001) and his principles, including the idea that art and creativity should be viewed as an integral part of life, exemplified in African traditions where art is woven into the very fabric of life through rituals and ceremonial activities. His paintings of the shotgun houses inspired PRH's commitment to the arts and cultural heritage as a means of community revitalization.

**For more information: [projectrowhouses.org](http://projectrowhouses.org)**

# ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

## Culture Bus: CJE SeniorLife

Chicago, Illinois

Culture Bus functions both as a transportation service to arts and cultural events for older adults and a unique treatment program for early-stage dementia patients. One of many adult-day programs offered by CJE SeniorLife, in Chicago, Culture Bus provides opportunities for socialization, creative expression, and intellectual stimulation that can improve the quality of life and slow the effects of degenerative conditions such as Alzheimer's disease for many older adults.



The Culture Bus emerged in 2002 from an Alzheimer's support group sponsored by Northwestern University's Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease Center. Participants were seeking more time together as well as opportunities for intellectual and social engagement. One member of the group suggested using a bus to enable everyone to go downtown together. The Northwestern staff liked the idea and reached out to CJE, a local leader in adult-day programming, to discuss a partnership.

The two organizations developed a program for early-stage Alzheimer's patients that combined cultural activities, artistic expression, and social interaction. Participants are 60 years of age and older and come from all ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. The program acknowledges the individuality, independence, and dignity of each participant. The Culture Bus program, now run solely by CJE, is offered once a week. Half of the sessions involve trips to cultural attractions in the Chicago area; the rest involved traveling to places where participants enjoy hands-on activities in creative arts. Each session is planned and led by a trained CJE staff member, who is supported by volunteers.

Programs last from four to six hours; the \$75 per-session cost covers all expenses, including entry fees, transportation, materials, and lunch. Past trips have included a visit to a glass blower's studio and to an African American heritage museum. Participants have practiced zumba, ballroom dancing, and yoga at local studios, and they have had opportunities to try out sculpting, poetry writing, painting, drumming circles, and improvisational drama. Programs also include a nutritious lunch, personal life-event celebrations, and opportunities for socialization throughout the day.

Participants can join an early-stage dementia support group led by a Northwestern University social worker; and caregivers can attend a support group catering to their needs run by a CJE SeniorLife social worker. Three years ago, CJE created a Culture Bus for Chicago's northwest-suburban area. It also helped create a similar program for seniors in Tucson, Arizona, where the Adventure Bus is running successfully.

The Culture Bus fills a critical gap for those with early stages of memory loss because there are few programs for this population. These individuals want to continue to live a normal and fulfilling life for as long as possible. The program's focus on arts and self-expression is particularly relevant to the challenges faced by dementia patients, as expressive art is based on experience and can be enjoyed despite the language, memory, and cognitive limitations that characterize these diseases.

**For more information: <http://bit.ly/ZTZISx>**





# BOTANICAL GARDENS

## Cleveland Botanical Garden

### Cleveland, Ohio

For the last quarter century, the Cleveland Botanical Garden went all out for its biennial Flower Show, the largest outdoor garden show in North America. With themed gardens harking back to the Roman Empire or an 18th century English estate, the event would draw 25,000 to 30,000 visitors.



But in 2009, the Flower Show was postponed and then abandoned when the botanical garden could not find sponsors. This year, the garden has different plans. From September 24th to 26th, it will inaugurate the “RIPE! Food & Garden Festival,” which celebrates the trend of locally grown food — and is supported in part by the Cleveland Clinic and Heinen’s, a supermarket chain.

Botanical gardens across the country have faced similar identity crises, Chrysanthemum contests and garden-club ladies have gone the way of manual push lawn mowers. Forced to rethink and rebrand, public gardens are appealing to visitors’ interests in nature, sustainability, cooking, health, family, and the arts. Some are emphasizing their social role, erecting model green buildings, promoting wellness, and staying open at night so people can mingle over cocktails like the Pollinator (green tea liqueur, soda water and Sprite). A few are even inviting in dogs (and their walkers) free or, as in Cleveland, with a canine admission charge (\$2).

Public gardens across the country receive about 70 million visits a year, according to the American Public Gardens Association. But experts say that because of social trends and changing demographics, attendance is at risk if gardens do not change.

“We’re not just looking for gardeners anymore,” says Mary Pat Matheson, the executive director of the Atlanta Botanical Garden. “We’re looking for people who go to art museums and zoos.”

**For more information: [www.cb garden.org](http://www.cb garden.org)**

# BOTANICAL GARDENS

## Cheyenne Botanic Gardens

Cheyenne, Wyoming

Begun as a solar greenhouse built by a nonprofit human services agency, Cheyenne Botanic Gardens has bloomed into a conservatory that grows food for food banks, provides plants for city parks, and creates meaningful volunteer opportunities for at-risk youth, the disabled, and the elderly. The Gardens also offers traditional services like demonstration and community gardens, classes, and educational displays. All of this is done at extremely low cost because volunteers do 95 percent of the physical labor and the use of solar energy keeps electric bills low.



Gardening is a natural tool the Gardens uses to address social needs. People with poor motor coordination or mental disabilities are able to care for the plants, self esteem is boosted because the positive results of work are evident, and physical labor can help calm anger. Those who have been tucked away from the mainstream in nursing homes, sheltered workshops, and detention centers suddenly find themselves vitally involved in and with the community, and grounded in an extensive support network.

In 1986, the Gardens became part of the Parks and Recreation Department and expanded its role in the community. State block grants were used to build a larger facility with meeting space and a library. The Gardens created a weekly radio program, a monthly call-in show, and a weekly newspaper column. In recent years, the Gardens has also established a nonprofit foundation to support its programmatic efforts. Through all these avenues, the Gardens has found new ways to serve the community, and thus planted itself firmly as a fulcrum of change in Cheyenne.

**For more information: [www.botanic.org](http://www.botanic.org)**



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS

## Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)

### Nationwide

The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) is dedicated to helping community residents transform distressed neighborhoods into healthy and sustainable communities of choice and opportunity — good places to work, do business and raise children. LISC mobilizes corporate, government and philanthropic support to provide local community development organizations with:

- loans, grants and equity investments
- local, statewide and national policy support
- technical and management assistance

LISC is a national organization with a community focus. Our program staff are based in every city and many of the rural areas where LISC-supported community development takes shape. In collaboration with local community development groups, LISC staff help identify priorities and challenges, delivering the most appropriate support to meet local needs.

LISC is Building Sustainable Communities by achieving five goals:

- Expanding Investment in Housing and Other Real Estate
- Increasing Family Income and Wealth
- Stimulating Economic Development
- Improving Access to Quality Education
- Supporting Healthy Environments and Lifestyles

### Community Investment Collaborative for Kids

Early childhood education is an essential part of every community – it prepares young children for success in school and life; supports working parents; and improves family well-being:

- High quality early childhood education is widely regarded as the single most effective intervention to close the academic achievement gap for low-income, at-risk children.
- For parents with young children, access to stable, affordable child care is critical to their ability to get and hold a job.
- In distressed communities early childhood centers serve as an important neighborhood-based hub for young families, providing access to a range of social and human services and supports.



LISC's Community Investment Collaborative for Kids (CICK) increases access to early childhood education in low-income communities by investing in the physical settings where these services are delivered, and where many young children spend a majority of their daytime hours. Through its 15-year track record, CICK has become an influential national source of expertise on early childhood facilities design, development and financing, as well as state and federal facilities policy. Building on LISC's core capabilities in capital finance, community-based real estate development, public-private partnerships, and public policy development, CICK has adopted a comprehensive strategy to help finance, design, build and improve early childhood facilities through specialized technical assistance; innovative financing mechanisms; public policy initiatives; and the dissemination of best practices.

With CICK's support, LISC has invested \$25 million in planning and developing 165 new facilities serving 18,000 children in more than 65 low-income urban and rural neighborhoods across the country. That investment has generated an additional \$210 million in public and private resources for these centers.

**For more information: [www.lisc.org](http://www.lisc.org)**



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS

## The Unity Council

Oakland, California

The Unity Council is a nonprofit community development corporation founded in 1964 that is dedicated to improving the quality of life for families and individuals in the Fruitvale District of Oakland, California. It helps families build financial security and assets by promoting sustainable economic, social, and neighborhood development.

The Unity Council works on a large number of projects ranging from local beautification projects to Head Start programs for local youth to senior services. It has cleaned up hundreds of graffiti sites, removed illegal flyers, repaired potholes, and organized community clean-ups. The Unity Council also offers Latino men and boys the academic support, access to health services, and interview and job preparation they need to take full advantage of the opportunities in the area.



The Council operates thriving Head Start and Early Head Start programs at five sites. Early childhood development services are offered to 600 low-income families, beginning with pregnancy and continuing until a child attends preschool or kindergarten. All of the programs are multilingual and multicultural.

**For more information: [www.unitycouncil.org](http://www.unitycouncil.org)**

# COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

## Northpenn Community Foundation

### Northern Pennsylvania

Partnerships represent opportunities to leverage intellectual and financial resources to nurture strong and lasting businesses that contribute to the health and well-being of the North Penn community.

- 211 Southeastern PA is an online directory of health and human service programs supporting the regional 211 system. 211 helps individuals find resources such as food pantries, emergency shelters, transportation, health clinics, rent or utilities assistance, legal help and more.
- Community Partners Center for Health & Human Services supports the foundation's efforts to convene and support the local nonprofit community. The Center encourages collaboration and the exploration of ideas and strategies to better address evolving community needs.
- Greater North Penn Collaborative for Health and Human Services works to foster information sharing, dialogue and collaborative action around health and wellness issues in the greater North Penn community. The collaborative also helps to strengthen area nonprofit organizations through regular convenings and leadership training and development.
- Montgomery County Health Alliance aims to increase awareness of health and wellness related issues in Montgomery County while facilitating access to resources through community partnerships and collaboration.
- Montgomery County Housing and Homeless Providers' Network created The Homeless Prevention Center, a ground-breaking public-nonprofit partnership seeking to change the way that families and individuals who are homeless or at risk for homelessness access social and human services in Montgomery County. The network is a key strategy driving system transformational efforts to enhance access and cost-effective use of housing resources.
- Montgomery County Housing Roadmap is a partnership with six Montgomery County departments that use housing funds to coordinate the use and allocation of these resources.
- Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board, a group of executives from businesses, unions, schools, universities and social services who oversee Montgomery County's job training and placement programs.
- The Nutrition Coalition, a partnership among emergency food pantries in the North Penn/ Indian Valley region, the coalition works to increase client access to fresh and high quality foods, to enhance consumer's access to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and to design a sustainable infrastructure for the collection, storage, transport and distribution of healthy foods among Coalition members.



- Pennsylvania Coalition for Oral Health is comprised of a diverse group of funders and public and private sector leaders from across the state whose goal is to advance practices and policies that increase access to oral health services and prevention education especially for our most vulnerable Pennsylvanians.

- WISE SNAC®, using the Centers for Disease Control and Institute for Medicine evidence-based, coordinated school health model, WISE SNAC® aims to foster collaboration among schools and community partners, reinforce messages and create opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity and provide professional development and capacity building opportunities for school personnel, families and organizations serving the greater North Penn community.



**For more information: [www.npchf.org/how-we-work/collaborative-projects/partnerships-our-community](http://www.npchf.org/how-we-work/collaborative-projects/partnerships-our-community)**

# COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

## Fostering the Future Program: Silicon Valley Community Foundation

Mountain View, California

In 2006, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation (SVCF) was created out of a merger between the Peninsula Community Foundation and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. Today, as an even larger philanthropic entity, the Foundation funds programs and initiatives to benefit young people in the San Francisco Peninsula.

SVCF is perhaps best known for its innovative financing strategy. The Foundation uses a venture capital model in which investors base their funding decisions on “results-oriented business plans focused on specific causes.” These social venture funds allow investors to engage in multi-year, venture capital funding plans that demonstrate results in tackling community issues.

SVCF’s main focus is on underprivileged and at-risk youth. Its “Fostering the Future” venture fund aims to bring about systemic change in the region’s child welfare and foster care system. Working with several partners and a staff that includes asset coaches, the program helps children in the system improve academic performance, living skills, self-advocacy, the ability to build long-lasting relationships, and parenting skills. It also helps youth locate and secure housing; legal advice and support are provided when needed.

There are significant challenges facing child welfare and foster care systems in California and the nation. Through its venture fund philanthropy programs, however, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation is addressing problems from the ground up. With this program and others, SVCF is dynamically addressing community issues, rather than simply providing foundation grants.

**For more information: [www.siliconvalleycf.org](http://www.siliconvalleycf.org)**





# COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

## York County Community Foundation

York County, Pennsylvania

The York County Community Foundation (YCCF) was created in 1961 as a way to unite philanthropies, community leaders, and local nonprofits to more effectively invest in community improvement initiatives and build an endowment. The results have been impressive. At its beginning, YCCF awarded 7 grants of \$100 to local nonprofits. Today, it funds nearly \$3 million in community development.

The York County Community Foundation supports a variety of local nonprofits with the overarching goal of enhancing community opportunities and development. One huge and noteworthy success: YorkCounts. Originally founded a decade ago to address issues facing the community, in 2011 YorkCounts joined forces with YCCF to establish a stronger, more cohesive force for community improvement.

YorkCounts has two priorities: to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for children through sustainable efforts and to expand municipal cooperation in delivering police services to municipalities and surrounding areas of York County. Together, the team identifies the most pressing needs of the community, confronts critical issues underlying these problems, and develops solutions.

In 2012, YorkCounts released another edition of the Indicator's Report - which includes more than a decade's worth of tracked data and fact-based information on York County - to guide the work of community organizations towards more targeted goals and strategies.

**For more information: [www.yccf.org](http://www.yccf.org)**

# COMMUNITY GARDENS

## Ample Harvest

Ample Harvest is a website that makes it easy for backyard gardeners to donate their excess harvest directly to the closest food pantry. Nation-wide anti-hunger effort created by Master Gardener (also CNN Hero) Gary Oppenheimer.

Launched in 2009, AmpleHarvest.org connects millions of home gardeners with an excess of crops to thousands of soup kitchens and food pantries.

The AmpleHarvest.org Campaign is a national effort utilizing the Internet that enables 40+ million Americans who grow food in home gardens to easily donate their excess harvest to registered local food pantries spread across all 50 states.

Gardeners, farmers and other donors can share their fresh produce and, garden-by-garden, help diminish hunger in America.

### Why Do It?

One out of six Americans needs food assistance, but can't get fresh produce from the local food pantry, while, millions of American homeowners grow more food in their backyard gardens than they can possibly use.

It solves a huge problem – hunger – while also making certain that an estimated 100 billion pounds of food, enough to totally eliminate hunger, is thrown away annually in the United States. It does not have to be this way - and you can help.

Your support of the AmpleHarvest.org Campaign helps many more food pantries receive fresh produce - improving community health while also helping the environment.

Because the gardener never quite knows how good (or bad) the growing season will be, they usually grow more plants than they need

Food Pantries are local walk-in facilities where families in need go to get food. (Note: In some parts of the country, what we are calling a "food pantry" is instead referred to as a "food shelf", "food closet", "food cupboard", "food share" or even "food bank". For the sake of simplicity, AmpleHarvest.org uses only the terms "Food Bank" and "Food Pantry"). The typical food pantry operates out of a local house of worship or other civic building. Most of the foods distributed by the pantries are packaged, canned or dry goods. Refrigeration is usually limited to dairy items such as milk and cheese. Produce is rarely available.



AmpleHarvest.org enables gardeners to find food pantries within a specified distance of their home and then view the pantries desired day/time for receiving donations. AmpleHarvest.org also displays



personalized driving instructions to the pantry as well as (if provided) a photograph of the pantry - making it easier to find. For the benefit of gardeners during a non-growing season or anyone else interested in making a donation (using our web site, smart phone apps, AmpleHarvest.org also provides pantries the opportunity to list store bought items they are in particular need of.

Backyard gardeners however can harvest their produce and deliver it to the pantry on the same day. Furthermore, if clients pick-up the produce that same day, they will benefit from eating food that is even fresher than what can be purchased at a food store.

**For more information: [www.AmpleHarvest.org](http://www.AmpleHarvest.org)**

# COMMUNITY GARDENS

## Mennonite Community Church

Fresno, California

Mennonite Community Church began a community garden project in the 1980s in which local Asian families farmed the land and paid for water used for irrigation. More than two decades and several administrators later, when the church no longer had access the users list and water-use payments were a thing of the past, the church decided to look for a more equitable and responsible way to serve the Asian gardeners in the community.

After learning that several Mennonite Hmong families were very interested in having access to garden space, the church looked for the best way to make that happen.

After much discussion, the church decided to partner with FIRM (Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries), a nonprofit with experience in developing and administering community gardens. After a year of planning—and deciding to expand the size of the plot—the community garden at Mennonite Community Church opened in late 2010.

The near acre of land now serves 13-15 families. FIRM has full administrative control of the garden and pays for all the irrigation water used (the garden has its own water meter). The gardens are surrounded by a chain-linked fence with a locking gate, and FIRM provides portable restroom facilities for the gardeners.

Several of the families are within walking distance of the garden. The garden helps provide food security for these church neighbors.

In the spring of 2013, FIRM welcomed a film crew from KVIE, the PBS station in Sacramento, whose reporters came to learn about the Community Gardens and how they help people deal with their mental health issues.

KVIE journalists spoke to several gardeners about how participating in the garden services—and other linked mental health supports—has helped them deal with their depression, PTSD, and anxiety as a result of the refugee experience.

**For more information: [mennocom.org/garden.htm](http://mennocom.org/garden.htm)**



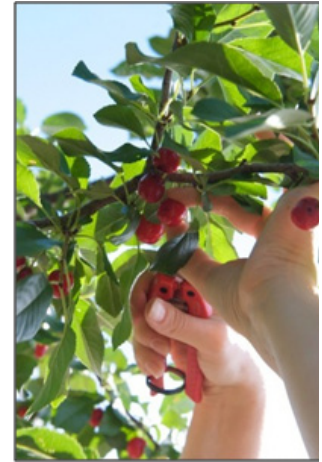
# COMMUNITY GARDENS

## Garden of Eatin’

Fort Collins, Colorado

One of the most popular attractions at the Gardens on Spring Creek, a botanical garden in Fort Collins, Colorado, is a huge Garden of Eatin’, three-quarters of an acre filled with edible delights. This area, which was created to demonstrate the range of foods that can be grown in northern Colorado, includes:

- Lots of vegetables, herbs, and fruits that thrive along the Front Range
- An international garden to introduce visitors to new and intriguing vegetables
- A pollinator garden to welcome pollinating insects
- A potager garden to show that a vegetable garden can be beautiful as well as utilitarian
- Lots of container gardens and fruit trees



The Gardens uses an adjacent outdoor kitchen for its seed-to-table experience, demonstrating how to raise, prepare, and preserve home-grown food. Late in the summer, in conjunction with the University of Colorado Health, it hosts a garden-to-fork healthy cooking series.

The Garden of Eatin’ is also the source of thousands of pounds of produce that is donated to the Food Bank for Larimer County to provide fresh, locally grown food for the Food Share and Kids’ Cafe programs.

**For more information: [www.fcgov.com/gardens/our-gardens/garden-of-eatin](http://www.fcgov.com/gardens/our-gardens/garden-of-eatin)**

# COMMUNITY GARDENS

## Plant It Forward

Fort Collins, Colorado

Home gardeners in Fort Collins, Colorado, are fighting hunger from the ground up. Each spring, local residents are asked to plant extra fruits and vegetables that can be harvested later and donated to the local food bank. This “Plant It Forward” program is the result of an innovative partnership between the Gardens on Spring Creek and the Food Bank for Larimer County.



“Our goal is to have 50 percent of the food that we provide to our clients be fresh fruits and vegetables,” said Karen McManus, food resources manager for the food bank. “We are very close, but we need the community’s help in getting there. With the help of our local gardeners, we are able to distribute the most nutritious foods to those in need throughout the growing season.”

Since 2010, community residents have delivered 10,000 pounds of fresh food to the food bank. “Each member of the community can make a difference; no donation is too small,” says Michelle Provaznik, director of the Gardens.

**For more information: [www.fcgov.com/gardens/get-involved/plant-it-forward](http://www.fcgov.com/gardens/get-involved/plant-it-forward)**

# COMMUNITY GARDENS

## Nuestras Raíces

### Holyoke, Massachusetts

Holyoke, a city of 40,000 located in Western Massachusetts, has a 40 percent Puerto Rican population. Although they live in an urban setting now, many of the older immigrants grew up on the farms of Puerto Rico. Nuestras Raíces created a network of community gardens throughout the city to preserve cultural heritage, create a sense of pride and place, and produce nutritious and healthy food for the community. The older generation educates the younger one while also improving the community's well-being.



Nuestras Raíces, formed in the early 1990s as an urban garden and farm initiative, has expanded into a multi-service organization that offers youth development programs, workforce training, urban gardening and agriculture, GED programs, arts and cultural activities, and more. Members of Holyoke's first community garden, La Finquita, managed the garden and developed a greenhouse that was eventually expanded to include a bakery, an education center, and a restaurant. The Centro Agrícola includes an outdoor plaza, a restaurant space, a shared-use community kitchen, a bilingual library, and a meeting space. The plaza of the Centro Agrícola was modeled after the town centers of Puerto Rico and Latin America, featuring a fountain, demonstration gardens, tropical flowers, and café-style seating for the restaurant. The plaza hosts outdoor events such as flower shows, music events, and festivals.

Over the years, Nuestras Raíces purchased more land to create more gardens, and in the process, it helped strengthen the bonds between generations. The Nuestras Raíces Youth Program offers pay for work as well as leadership training. Youth who might have been considered troublemakers became active in community empowerment. The vacant lots of Holyoke, once filled with garbage, unsafe debris, and the remains of demolished buildings, were transformed into places of pride.

Nuestras Raíces is also a founding member of the Holyoke Food and Fitness Policy Council (HFFPC), which was selected for continued ten-year funding by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Holyoke Food and Fitness, which confronts conditions of poverty, blight, and social injustice, works collaboratively with residents and 60 partner agencies to give families and children access to healthy foods and fitness opportunities.

**For more information: [www.nuestras-raices.org](http://www.nuestras-raices.org)**



# COMMUNITY GARDENS

## Denver Urban Gardens (DUG)

### Denver, Colorado

Denver Urban Gardens (DUG) was established in 1985 to help Denver residents create sustainable, food-producing neighborhood community gardens. By 1993, DUG was coordinating 21 active gardens, and by 1997, 32 new gardens and DeLaney Community Farm were established. To draw the community in and ensure long-term garden sustainability, DUG has created a host of youth and community education programs.

In the Denver Urban Gardens philosophy, community is grown - one urban garden at a time. DUG offers neighborhoods the essential resources for community gardens, including technical expertise with:

- Securing sustainable land for gardens
- Designing and building gardens
- Supporting garden organization, leadership, outreach and maintenance
- Utilizing gardens as extraordinary places for learning and healthy living
- Linking gardens with related local food system projects and policy

DUG currently operates over 120 community gardens throughout Metro Denver, including 30 school-based community gardens. In addition to building and supporting community gardens, DUG operates DeLaney Community Farm, the Master Composter Training Program, the Master Community Gardener Training Program, the Free Seeds and Transplants Program, and provides extensive opportunities for youth education in nutrition and gardening.

Research done with the Colorado School of Public Health has demonstrated that DUG's efforts have led to tangible, positive change in community health and food security.



**For more information: [dug.org](http://dug.org)**





# DESIGN ORGANIZATIONS

## Interdisciplinary Health Architecture

### Curriculum – University of New Mexico

#### Albuquerque, New Mexico

The American Institute of Architects' (AIA) Decade of Design is a Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to tap the power of design to advance public health and make effective use of natural, economic, and human resources. In September 2012, the AIA extended \$40,000 in grants to three university architecture programs. Among them is a grant to the University of New Mexico (UNM), supporting the development of an inter-professional public health curriculum.

The initiative's "ABCs Design for Community Health," which stands for Albuquerque/Bernalillo County metro area, is supported by the University's interdisciplinary Urban Health Equity Task Force. "Its dual goal," explains principal investigator Leah Steimel, Director of the Office of Community Affairs at UNM Health Sciences Center, "is to improve the health of neighboring communities while creating opportunities for UNM students to practice inter-professional collaboration through related projects."

As part of the initiative, UNM launched a noontime film series and eight weeks of discussions led by faculty. The 2012 fall series was enthusiastically received by faculty and students who offered feedback on designing an inter-professional curriculum. The series featured thought-provoking titles, from the seminal documentary "Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?" to the PBS series "Designing Healthy Communities" by Dr. Richard Jackson, Hon. AIA, MD, MPH from UCLA.

In February, a two-credit pilot seminar "Designing Healthy Communities" was offered. Four interdisciplinary faculty members are teaching nearly 50 students, about 20 in each module, as part of the spring seminar open to students in architecture and landscape architecture, medicine, public health, pharmacy, and business. Among the modules are case studies, community-based experiential learning, and facilitated conversations with national experts like Dr. Jackson. In July 2013, a revised graduate course, "Health Equity: Introduction to Public Health," will be offered to students in Architecture and Landscape Architecture, Medicine, Public Health, and Pharmacy, as well as Business and Law.

UNM's innovations are coming exactly at the right time -- when America's public health challenges require creative solutions. "We hope this initiative will be a transformational experience," explains principal investigator Michaela Pride, AIA, NOMA, professor and associate dean at the UNM School of Architecture and Planning. "Students will leave with a better understanding for the built environment's impact on health. They will also learn and practice the principles of community engagement within and beyond their discipline."

**For more information: [saap.unm.edu](http://saap.unm.edu)**

# DESIGN ORGANIZATIONS

## University of Arkansas Community Design Center

Fayetteville, Arkansas

The AIA's Decade of Design is a Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to improve public health and promote the effective use of natural, economic, and human resources through the power of design. In 2012 the AIA awarded \$40,000 in university grants to three architecture programs. Among these, a \$15,000 grant to the University of Arkansas Community Design Center (UACDC) will support Fayetteville 2030: Food City Scenario, a novel agricultural urbanism model that will enable more robust decision-making about the future of our cities.

UACDC's research is positioning the next generation of architects for leadership at a time when environmental challenges require innovative and integrated solutions. By the year 2030, Fayetteville's population is expected to double, which echoes the increasing urbanization of many American communities. Conventional municipal planning that relies on consensus and charrette-based processes cannot anticipate unexpected events, so UACDC is engaged in scenario-based planning that begins with this question, "What if Fayetteville's new development enabled the city to sustain its food budget through an urban agricultural network?"

Stephen Luoni, Director of UACDC and Distinguished Professor in the Fay Jones School of Architecture, says, "The project is intended to establish agricultural urbanism as a normative real estate product." As part of the initiative, fifth-year architecture students working with UACDC staff are preparing neighborhood plans within an urban agricultural framework that includes walkable, transit-oriented neighborhoods.

The goal is to visualize new possibilities and then produce a best-practice manual that can be used by other communities, adds Jeffrey Huber, AIA Assistant Director of UACDC and Adjunct Assistant Professor. UACDC's research incorporates design visioning, interdisciplinary thinking, and communicating complex concepts to the general audiences. Along with its nonprofit partners Feed Fayetteville, the University's Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department, the Food Law Program, and Food Sciences Department, UACDC is advocating for more robust planning that will help create resilient cities.

**For more information: [acdc.uark.edu](http://acdc.uark.edu)**



# FAITH-BASED INSTITUTIONS

## City of Riverside Faith-Based Initiative

Riverside, California

In 2009, Partners for Livable Communities collaborated with the City of Riverside, the California Institute for Local Government, and Rabbi Jay Miller of San Mateo's Peninsula Clergy Network to help create a new multi-faith leadership body for civic affairs.

The Peninsula Clergy Network (PCN), the nation's first association of all clergy in a region, has developed a database of 440 clergy and 310 congregations that maps all of these resources. The PCN has transformed relationships between faith-based communities and the education, business, government, and social services sectors, and expanded the congregational responses to meeting community needs. This new dynamic network can be tapped for rapid and continuing volunteer response not only to natural disasters, but to a variety of social-service projects, including food drives, fundraising efforts, tutoring and mentoring of youth and young adults, and more. The PCN connects clergy and congregations and opens up communication among different faiths. Government and nonprofits see the Network now as the go-to place to tap resources of the faith community. Health officials rely on the PCN to get out news of how to prepare and respond to a disaster; and PCN conducts diversity training for city and school officials.

Rabbi Miller has become so well known for his work in bridging the gap between faith communities and the community at large that leaders in places as far away as Westchester County, New York, and even Shanghai, China, have asked him for guidance.

**For more information: [www.peninsulaclergy.org](http://www.peninsulaclergy.org)**

# FAITH-BASED INSTITUTIONS

## Circle of Support

Dane County, Wisconsin

Since 1971 MUM has evolved into an interfaith social justice organization that has spurred social change in and around Dane County. MUM's staff and board understand our mission to be "a prophetic voice for justice, neighbors working together for social change."

Developed in 2003 MUM's Circle of Support program utilizes groups of four to six community volunteers, recruited, screened and trained by MUM, to meet weekly with someone newly released from prison.



The person newly released, or "Core Circle Member" finds a new community, a support network to welcome him or her home. The Circle of Support offers a respectful, positive and supportive environment for the Core Team Member as they adjust to the demands and challenges of everyday life on the outside. The Circles of Support Program is effective because it provides a space for the Core Team Member to be heard, to be encouraged and to be respected.

Here is what one Core Member had to say about his experience with Circle of Support:

"I've enjoyed working with MUM because they've helped me to enroll in finance and employability classes, which has been truly helpful being that I've never worked or had to pay my own bills. I work with MUM in a few other areas as well, such as advice in healthy relationships of any kind, any depressing thoughts and on how to deal with them... I meet with MUM every week and we go over whatever pressing thoughts or issues I have had that week which helps me to keep myself in check...I feel that they are extraordinary people for trying to help to give those of us that others call monsters a second chance at life and not just a life but a meaningful life. There are some who don't get that second chance. I wake up every morning and give praise to my Father that I have people in my corner that are willing to take the time to help and work with me on my day to day issues. So to MUM, thanks."

**For more information, [www.emum.org/wedo.html](http://www.emum.org/wedo.html)**



# FAITH-BASED INSTITUTIONS

## Hope for the Future

### Bloomington, Illinois

As part of its outreach to the community, the Mount Moriah Christian Church in Bloomington, Illinois, has established a Hope for the Future nonprofit that aims to support young people, at-risk students especially, as they move through middle school, high school, and college.

The vision statement for the nonprofit: “If you can dream it, you can do it.”

The organization offers an array of services – mentoring, tutoring, supplementary education programs, college tours, and more to give students the support they need to be successful academically. They have access to programs that include:

- Rap sessions that seek to find realistic solutions to the needs of students
- Presentations addressing abstinence, substance abuse issues, and motivation
- College prep sessions on setting goals, applying to colleges, and finding scholarships and other financial support
- Mentoring services to help students become more resilient and to promote a sense of belonging among family, the community, and peers

Through a partnership with Heartland Community College, Hope For The Future also offers a Saturday Academy—with classes designed for participants that focus on national exam preparation, study and test-taking skills, financial preparedness, and other topics.

Parents and other family members can attend presentations and discussion sessions to learn strategies for advocating for their child, completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and saving for college.

John Rayford, Senior Pastor of Mount Moriah, established Hope For The Future in 1999. Since then, more than 400 young people have benefitted from the program.

**For more information: [www.mountmoriahcc.org/outreach\\_hftf.html](http://www.mountmoriahcc.org/outreach_hftf.html)**

# FAITH-BASED INSTITUTIONS

## Bronx Health REACH

### Bronx, New York

Faith-based institutions play a critical role in reaching out to community members and providing information to improve the lives of their congregants and communities. With more faith leaders making connections between physical and spiritual health, these institutions are in a unique position to incorporate health messages into church activities. The historic ties between the faith-based community and the civil rights movement have also motivated clergy and congregants to advocate for health equity in their communities.



Bronx Health REACH works within communities to address health equity issues -- through education and outreach, policy, and community partnerships. The Bronx Health REACH Coalition brings together community residents, educators, healthcare providers, community and faith-based leaders, and businesses to build healthier communities.

The Bronx Health REACH Faith-Based Outreach Initiative helps faith organizations – of all denominations – provide health programs on nutrition and fitness, diabetes prevention and management, and health disparities to their constituents. Through the Initiative, churches establish health ministries that distribute information and organize health activities such as:

- Fine, Fit, and Fabulous, a nutrition and fitness program
- The Culinary Initiative, a healthy cooking course for culinary committee members
- God's Health Squad, a youth nutrition program
- The Way, a support program for congregants living with diabetes

To date, 47 faith-based organizations in the Bronx and Northern Manhattan participate in the Bronx Health REACH Faith-Based Outreach Initiative. In addition, Bronx Health REACH provides technical assistance to other similar initiatives in Virginia and North Carolina.

**For more information: [www.bronxhealthreach.org/our-work/faith-based-outreach-initiative](http://www.bronxhealthreach.org/our-work/faith-based-outreach-initiative)**

# HISTORICAL AND PRESERVATION SOCIETIES

## Missouri Historical Society

### St. Louis, Missouri

Reflecting on the work of the Missouri Historical Society (MHS), President Robert Archibald states, “Our work requires that we first study our own time so that the conversations we facilitate about the past are useful, pertinent, and encourage discourse about what ought to happen next.” However, the Missouri Historical Society does more than just study; it actively engages the community on education, social, economic, and environmental issues.

In addition to a library, extensive archives, a collections center, a research arm, and a press that publishes journals and books, the Missouri Historical Society runs a number of community programs. One such program, the St. Louis Urban Forum, sponsors presentations, discussions, and tours on urban life themes such as housing, jobs, public safety, the environment, and education. Together with local newspapers, MHS publishes easy-to-read historical information on specific neighborhoods and communities. MHS staff have also helped with development plans for area neighborhoods and the downtown, facilitated an alternative transit plan, and conducted a series of studies about diversity and inclusiveness in area cultural institutions.

The Missouri Historical Society works to address issues of racism and seeks to create an inclusive identity. Through a partnership with Historyonics Theatre Company, MHS created a play called “How Far Have We Traveled?” to help students examine racism and urban crime. The “Exploring the ‘Hood’” program encourages students to envision a new future for their communities. Other programs include storytelling and music performances, as well as trainings on how residents can research the history of their own neighborhoods.

The Missouri Historical Society recently won awards from the Institute for Museum Services and the Congressionally-appointed National Museum Services Board.

**For more information: [www.mohistory.org](http://www.mohistory.org)**

# HISTORICAL AND PRESERVATION SOCIETIES

## Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center

San Antonio, Texas

The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center (GCAC) is a nonprofit, multidisciplinary arts organization dedicated to preserving, developing, and promoting Mexican-American arts and facilitating a deeper appreciation for Chicano/Latino and Native American cultures. Toward these ends, the organization offers programs and classes in Chicano art history, music, literature, visual arts, theater, dance, and media. The Historic Guadalupe Theater includes a visual arts gallery and spaces for performing, film, and video events – from traditional music festivals to competitions featuring international Latino films. Other annual events include a book fair, a literary reading series, a season of plays by the resident acting company, a concert series, and a fine arts and crafts market. GCAC draws 100,000 people a year to its many activities.



By offering a sophisticated venue for Latino art and culture, GCAC already plays a significant role in addressing community issues in San Antonio, where more than half the population is Chicano. But the organization does more than simply showcase cultural traditions and expressions; it also strives to make an economic impact.

First, GCAC provides jobs for Chicano artists and arts administrators. It has a permanent full-time staff of 18 and provides short-term employment or exhibition opportunities to more than 400 individual artists, writers, actors, and performers, and about 50 music, dance, and theater groups yearly. Second, GCAC has spawned other Hispanic-focused organizations and businesses. The Avenida Guadalupe Association, an economic development group that helps support fledgling Chicano businesses, renovated a marketplace across from GCAC. By creating amenities and basic services in a neighborhood that has the 11th lowest per capita income in the country, the Association intends to erect an infrastructure that will enable a higher standard of living.

**For more information: [www.guadalupeculturalarts.org/](http://www.guadalupeculturalarts.org/)**





# LIBRARIES

## The Providence Public Library

Providence, Rhode Island

The “Good Food Gives Good Life” campaign collaborated with the Providence Public Library to design literacy and nutrition education materials for low-income ESL adults and families with young children. The “FoodTalk-ESL” curriculum, developed to introduce adults learning English to the concept of healthy eating, consists of four low-literacy lesson plans on topics such as the USDA Food Guide Pyramid, label reading, unit pricing, and food safety.



Knowing that low-income families use the library’s free internet access, library staff compiled a list of interactive nutrition and food safety websites so adults can learn about topics of interest for themselves, their children, or their classroom.

The campaign also offered cooking demonstrations at food stamp offices throughout the state and conducted a series of hands-on workshops at public library branches serving target neighborhoods. Food stamp participants and food stamp-eligible families sampled foods and were offered information to help plan nutritious and low-cost meals.

**For more information: <http://bit.ly/14sHAZE>**

# LIBRARIES

## Small Steps Towards Healthy Living

### Santa Ana, California

Teens and young people ages 12-24 who become Youth Health Ambassadors in Santa Ana, California, help other young people, parents, and friends learn how to take small steps towards healthy living. In this library outreach program, health ambassador teams are recruited from various youth organizations and clubs, the library's TeenSpace programs, high schools, and colleges.

These young people learn the technical skills -- video production, film editing, sound editing, and broadcasting -- to produce bilingual videos on different health topics that are available to Santa Ana residents on its local CTV3 programs.

The ambassadors cover lots of different issues: how and why of stretching, the importance of reading food labels, understanding the difference between whole and processed foods, choosing healthier meats and proteins, workouts for Big Buddies and Little Buddies, how to create a hydroponic garden. In one series of videos, the teens demonstrate how to cook healthy Mexican dishes, such as chicken chile verde. That clip even included tips on the best way to wash the chili peppers before using them.

**For more information: [www.ci.santa-ana.ca.us/library/teens/smallsteps.asp](http://www.ci.santa-ana.ca.us/library/teens/smallsteps.asp)**



# LIBRARIES

## The Health and Wellness Center at the Bluford Branch Library

Kansas City, Kansas

The Health and Wellness Center is the newest addition to the recently renovated Bluford Branch Library. Created in partnership with Truman Medical Centers and the Health Sciences Institute of Metropolitan Community Colleges-Penn Valley, it provides access to health, nutrition, and wellness information in a variety of ways.

“It’s a community center and it’s a study room,” said Cheptoo Kositany-Buckner, Deputy Director of the Kansas City Public Library. “We didn’t want to just renovate the building. We looked at the entire needs of the community.” Spaces were created for different uses while keeping an open atmosphere with glass walls and book stacks at a height of 42 inches.

“It acts as a greeting point,” said Kwame Smith, project manager at SFS Architecture. “It tells you exactly what the library’s about.” Exhibits also tell the history of the neighborhood and feature quotes from distinguished African-Americans.

“We really wanted to create something that was inspiring, that was welcoming and also reflected the community,” Kositany-Buckner adds.

Financed by the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City, the Health and Wellness Center offers educational resources and programs, including health screenings, a healthy book club series, and informational sessions with a doctor.

Since reopening, circulation has increased 80 percent, and the branch surpassed the highly frequented Plaza branch in the number of visitors.

**For more information: [www.kclibrary.org/bluford](http://www.kclibrary.org/bluford)**

# MEDICAL CENTERS

## Mercy Neighborhood Ministries Home Aide Training Program

Mercy Neighborhood Ministries (MNM) is a non-profit organization serving disadvantaged adults, youth and seniors in the near-eastern neighborhoods of Cincinnati. It has an eighteen-year history of successfully transitioning women from dependency on welfare to self-sufficiency through work as home care aides. It has developed a proven program of ongoing training in workplace and life skills, access to supportive services and mentoring that makeup the long term investment required for women of generational poverty to successfully enter and stay in the workforce.



Mercy Neighborhood Ministries' Home Care Aide Training (HCAT) program is a comprehensive three-week program that prepares women striving to attain self-sufficiency to work as home care aides. Students must pass 21 tests and master 21 nursing-related skills.

Upon graduation, these women provide compassionate home health care to older adults living in inner-city neighborhoods, many of whom suffer from poverty, infirmity and loneliness. It is a win-win situation— aides benefit from steady, meaningful employment and the clients have dependable, compassionate care that allows them to “age in place” in their homes

The organization provides ongoing training, employment, and retention support for women and men striving to attain self-sufficiency by working as home care aides. These individuals then give back to others by providing compassionate home care for impoverished older adults suffering from infirmity and/or loneliness in their inner-city neighborhoods.

Aides benefit from steady and meaningful work and the elderly they serve maintain their independence through the support of these dependable caregivers and companions.

MNM has developed “My Pathway to a Health Career” to create economic empowerment in the lives of some of the community’s most disadvantaged members: undereducated, unemployed mothers. Through the Home Care Aide Training program, the women are not only trained and certified to become employable as home care aides; they are also challenged, in addition, to complete their basic educational requirements and pursue further technical training along the healthcare pathway. In this way they can advance along the path of economic empowerment to attaining self-sufficiency for themselves and for their families. By increasing the number of competent and caring home care aides in the work force, elderly neighbors will be able to “age in place” as desired. In My Pathway to a Health Career, low-income women seeking self-sufficiency for themselves and their families through meaningful employment are introduced into a progressive workforce training, employment and job retention support. MNM will use its Alumni Network grant for training equipment, supplies and materials it needs to grow this program.

# MEDICAL CENTERS

## TimeSlips

TimeSlips is a creative storytelling program based on a simple idea: show photos to people with memory loss and encourage them to make up a story. This shift – encouraging people to use their imagination rather than depend on memory – is helping people with dementia improve their ability to communicate with caregivers.

The technique was created by Anne Basting, director of the Center on Age and Community at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, who was looking for a way to give people with dementia a low-stress way to communicate, one that did not rely on their memories. She says the idea works anywhere – at home with family members as well as in group settings with trained facilitators.

A growing number of long-term care facilities have begun using this storytelling technique in different ways. In one center, for example, a local theater company uses a TimeSlips photograph to kickstart a discussion. The leader asks lots of open-ended questions about the image and uses the residents' comments and reactions to create a story. At the end, the company reads back the finished product.

The research community is becoming familiar with TimeSlips as well. A June 2013 study from the Penn State College of Medicine found the program helps improve medical students' perceptions of people affected by dementia, a population often viewed as a particularly challenging one to treat. The study has prompted the medical center to expand TimeSlips volunteer opportunities to nurses, faculty, staff, and patients.

TimeSlips, which became a nonprofit in 2013, not only offers training and consulting to caregivers but offers anyone visiting its website ideas about using this storytelling technique.

**For more information: [www.timeslips.org](http://www.timeslips.org)**

# MEDICAL CENTERS

## Westchester Square Partnership

### New York City

Westchester Square Partnership (WSP) was founded in 2008 to address the social and health-related needs of South Asian immigrants living in the Westchester Square and Parkchester neighborhoods of the Bronx. A needs assessment conducted by WSP identified a number of social and health priorities of Bangladeshi women, including immigration issues, emotional distress, and weight problems.

WSP created two programs specifically in response to the community assessment:

- APPLE (Activating People to Pursue Lifestyle change through Empowerment) is a program in which women learn how to improve their own health and that of their families. They share healthy recipes and ideas on weight loss as well as address other lifestyle issues.

APPLE participants are featured in cooking videos that are produced in the WSP kitchen. The Bangladeshi women demonstrate how to create healthier versions of traditional Bengali dishes. In making vegetable khichuri, for example, Johora Apa, an APPLE participant, not only gives step-by-step instructions but also explains why certain ingredients are used – “compared to other grains, the short-grained rice is healthier” – or limited (“Many people mistake potatoes for a type of vegetable, but it is a carbohydrate, like rice and bread. Adding potatoes will increase the amount of calories in this dish. I want to keep this dish healthy and low in calories by adding less oil and potatoes.”)

- ASHA (Action to improve Self Help and empowerment through Asset Building) is a community participatory research project designed to address overall health issues and enhance the emotional well-being of Bangladeshi women living in the Bronx who may feel isolated or powerless in their new country. ASHA’s goal is to empower women by providing education, support, and assistance in building financial assets.

WSP’s community health workers also provide information and counseling on different health issues; they offer monthly health fairs and demonstrations where women learn about issues ranging from diabetes prevention and monitoring to infant and child nutrition.

The organization was founded in 2008 by Alison Karasz, a clinical psychologist and health researcher at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and Jean Burg, a family physician who chairs the Department of Family Medicine in the North Bronx Health Care Network.

**For more information: [www.wspnyc.org](http://www.wspnyc.org)**



# MEDICAL CENTERS

## The Children's Cancer Hospital at MD Anderson

Houston, Texas

At the Children's Cancer Hospital at MD Anderson, young patients get the tools and resources they need to continue their education during treatment. All patients are invited to participate in a privately accredited elementary and secondary school program. Along with academic services, MD Anderson offers post-secondary educational and vocational support, including the following:



**Education Enrichment Classes:** Enrichment classes offer patients more opportunities to express themselves through art, music, and physical movement.

**Writers in the Schools (W.I.T.S.):** In this program, professional writers engage students in a variety of creative activities to encourage writing.

**Children's Art Project (CAP):** Pediatric patients can enjoy weekly art classes, and their artwork may be selected for publication in the Children's Art Project greeting card and gift collection.

**Distance Learning and On-site Visits with the Downtown Aquarium:** Using special technology, students visit the downtown Aquarium and learn about reptiles, birds, and fish.

**Health, Cooking and Nutrition:** Pediatric patients try their hand at cooking and get recipes that enhance healthy eating practices.

**Music:** A music therapist works with pediatric patients – individually and in groups. Benefits can range from improving socialization skills to learning better coping skills.

**Theater Under the Stars (TUTS):** This nonprofit group teaches students about musical theater and works with them on monthly musical performances, which are held for parents and staff.

**Mad Science of Houston:** This organization helps children explore the elements of science through hands-on projects that bring science to life. The science experiments are entertaining as well as educational.

**For more information: [www.mdanderson.org](http://www.mdanderson.org)**

# MEDICAL CENTERS

## Kaiser Permanente Health System

**Across the United States (especially in the western states)**

Kaiser Permanente Health Systems (Kaiser) was originally founded as a “prepaid healthcare system” for industrial workers in Los Angeles, Washington State, and Northern California. Enrollment was opened to the public in 1945 at their Northern California facilities. The current name—after Henry Kaiser and the Permanente Creek in the Santa Cruz mountains—is two-fold: it explains the nonprofit Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and the Permanente Medical Group, which function together as one health system. But Kaiser Permanente is not simply a health system—it is also a community health program advocating for a healthy lifestyle.

Kaiser promotes community health in many ways. Its Educational Theater program goes to schools and public theaters to teach about issues like nutrition, substance abuse, self-esteem, and AIDS/HIV prevention. Kaiser assists uninsured and low-income patients through medical subsidies and its Healthy Families Initiative, which provides health, dental and vision coverage for eligible uninsured children at minimal cost.

Perhaps the most unusual way Kaiser promotes health is through Dr. Preston Maring’s effort to bring local Farmers Markets to Kaiser facilities all over the country. In 2003, Maring, a longtime physician, administrator, and health advocate, turned his interest in organic foods and gardening into the Friday Fresh Farmers Market at Kaiser’s main medical facility in Oakland. The market sells fresh produce and offers health-enhancing recipes to patients, visitors, and employees. The idea was so successful that 27 similar markets have been opened at Kaiser Medical Centers in other locations in California, Hawaii, Georgia, and Oregon.

Kaiser Permanente primarily encourages healthy living through traditional medical outlets. However, the presence of the farmers markets at Kaiser facilities both strengthen the hospital’s role in the community and in the community’s ability to sustain itself.

**For more information: [share.kaiserpermanente.org/communitybenefit](http://share.kaiserpermanente.org/communitybenefit)**





# MILITARY AND VETERAN FACILITIES

## Vet Art Project

### Across the United States

The Vet Art Project gives veterans and their families the chance to collaborate with artists to create art about war and service and to foster discussion about how war and service affect us all. Founded by drama therapist and social artist Lisa Rosenthal, this grassroots network of creative art therapists and artists offers therapeutic workshops, community discussions, and public performances of new art by veterans and by veteran-artist teams, followed by talkbacks with veteran participants. The Vet Art Project is growing across the United States and around the world. Programming for veterans and family members is always free of charge. The project is supported through grants and donations.



The Vet Art Project sponsors a wide range of workshops, programs, and projects: stress-reduction workshops, mindfulness training, a veterans' theater project, a women warriors' project, and a reconnecting with family workshop.

In the Veterans' Theater Project, participants explore their past experiences in different ways: acting, writing, movement, and visual art. Participants come to realize that others have similar experiences, they learn to trust each other, and they discover the tools they possess that can increase their own resiliency. This project culminates in a performance for veterans' families and community members.

**For more information: [www.vetartproject.com](http://www.vetartproject.com)**

# MILITARY AND VETERAN FACILITIES

## Guitars for Vets

Guitars for Vets — the healing power of music in the hands of heroes.

That is the name and tag line for a program that aims to help military veterans heal from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other injuries.

Created by Vietnam vet Dan Van Buskirk and his guitar instructor Patrick Nettesheim, this program provides free private lessons and a new acoustic guitar to military veterans at VA medical and community-based centers. What began as an effort by this veteran and his teacher to help vets in the Milwaukee area has mushroomed. Since 2007, Guitars for Vets has provided over 1,200 new guitars and 8,000 lessons to America's veterans. Chapters have been established at VA hospitals in over 25 cities in 15 states.

Veterans are referred to the program by local VA medical teams that integrate this music therapy into the person's treatment regimen. Volunteers teach a series of free private lessons, and upon graduation, the veteran receives a new acoustic guitar, gig bag, strap, tuner, method book, and certificate of completion. These new guitar players are invited to join group sessions where they talk and play music with other veterans, many of whom have had similar experiences, emotions, and traumas. The community and the music help the vets continue on the road to recovery.

Local chapters get strong support from their local music communities as well as from guitar techs, musicians, and music retailers.

Testimonials on the organization's website capture the value of the program: "At a time when I need it most, it gives me something to look forward to every week even after the initial lessons. It's not just an organization that connects you with an instructor to give you a few guitar lessons, it's an organization that gives you the chance to connect with other veterans that have gone and are going through the same things you are experiencing in life."



**For more information: <http://guitars4vets.org>**

# MILITARY AND VETERAN FACILITIES

## Foundation for Art and Healing

Bridging science and the arts to empower healing, that is the work of the Foundation for Art and Healing. By bringing together the medical community, artists and other creative professionals, and the local community members, the Foundation seeks to promote the relationship between art and healing and to improve community health through it.

The Foundation runs a program for military personnel and veterans living with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that incorporates the arts. Using creative and expressive therapies as part of treatment plans has recently shown significant and sustained benefits to veterans at leading institutions such as Walter Reed Army Medical Center, the National Intrepid Center of Excellence, and various military and veteran institutions across the country.

The Foundation for Art and Healing is committed to expanding this early field work by bringing greater awareness to how art and creative engagement powerfully influences the overall healing of PTSD and traumatic brain injury, primarily by way of connecting people with helpful resources.

**For more information: [www.artandhealing.org](http://www.artandhealing.org)**

# MUSEUMS

## Heart of Corona Initiative – Queens Museum of Art

Queens, New York

During the 1980s, the Corona neighborhood of Queens was largely Italian-American. Since then, the demographics have shifted, and now Hispanics make up 60 percent of the population, with communities of African Americans, Asian-Americans, and some remaining Italian immigrants making up the remaining 40 percent. Education levels are low, and the median income is significantly lower than that of Queens as a whole. Literacy, health, the distressed appearance of the neighborhood, and lack of cultural identity are some of the issues facing residents. The Queens Museum of Art (QMA) decided it could help.

The Museum's Heart of Corona Initiative is a multifaceted collaboration of 43 community-based organizations that is using the arts and the rich culture of the area to spark improvement. One focus is health and wellness, so the QMA Heart of Corona Initiative organizes "Corona Cares Day" Street Festivals in which QMA and their partners provide health screenings to thousands of people annually and register nearly as many new participants in free or low-cost health insurance.

The program continues to expand. New developments include a widely distributed healthy cookbook, a health walk program in the central plaza, and a wellness initiative to engage youth in baseball and tennis at the world-class facilities in the adjacent Flushing Meadows Corona Park.

The Heart of Corona Initiative has also organized several community beautification days, offered arts education to youth and adults, and installed four public art exhibits in the main community plaza. It has plans for two immigrant outreach programs: the Immigrants and Parks initiative, and the Literacy and the Arts Program for New New Yorkers. As the head of the collaborative partnership, the Queens Museum of Art is engaging the immigrant-based culture of the Corona neighborhood to make it a healthier and arts-rich community.

**For more information: [www.queensmuseum.org](http://www.queensmuseum.org)**



# MUSEUMS

## The Museum of Modern Art

New York, New York

Not only a home to phenomenal art and exhibitions, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) also leads the way on providing programs for those with disabilities. With the goal of making the museum as accessible as possible, MoMA has developed many innovative programs to serve older adults, those with dementia, and their families.

In one such program, which engages older adults and immigrants with the museum's art, MoMA staff travel to senior centers, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, community centers, and other locations. They bring reproductions of works currently on exhibit and facilitate discussion around a related theme. In the next phase of the program, these individuals visit the museum and view the original works with the same instructor. At a third and final session, participants work on a hands-on art project.

Other programs are tailored to the individual needs of the target audience. For example, museum staff collaborated with Mount Sinai Hospital and the Alzheimer's Association to learn more about how to engage people with Alzheimer's. The result of this research was the Meet Me at MoMA program.

In the Meet Me program, special tours are offered on Tuesday when the museum is closed. People with dementia, their family members, and their caregivers are invited to come to the museum. Small groups are set up so participants can reflect on the art and talk with each other. Staff and educators wait and encourage those with dementia to participate, and are frequently surprised by the elaborate responses of patients who have usually been very withdrawn. With the appropriate training, countless dementia patients have been able to engage with each other and with the art.

**For more information: [www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org)**



# MUSEUMS

## Association of Children's Museums: Good to Grow

### Across the United States

Good to Grow! is an initiative created by the Association of Children's Museums (ACM) to help children's museums promote healthy activities for children and their families and address the growing epidemic of childhood obesity. Children's museums that engage families in healthy activities can earn this Good to Grow! designation by using a self-study process to document their health and wellness efforts and create a concrete plan for expanding their work.

The Good to Grow! web site links the museum experience, home life, and the broader community with compelling messages and resources for living healthy lives. Through Good to Grow!, children and families learn the importance of eating good foods, getting plenty of exercise, reducing screen time (computer and TV), and connecting with the outdoors.

Good to Grow! has three national partners:

- We Can! (Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition), an outreach program designed to help children 8-13 years old stay at a healthy weight by making better food choices, increasing physical activity, and reducing screen time.
- American Academy of Pediatrics, an organization of 60,000 health care providers dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants and young people.
- National Wildlife Federation, a national nonprofit whose mission is to inspire Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future.

Since a review process was implemented in 2008, eight children's museums around the country have earned this national recognition from ACM:

- HealthWorks! Kids' Museum (South Bend, IN)
- Creative Discovery Museum (Chattanooga, TN)
- Children's Discovery Museum of the Desert (Rancho Mirage, CA)
- The Children's Museum of the Brazos Valley (Bryan, TX)
- Discovery Center Museum (Rockford, IL)
- Port Discovery Children's Museum (Baltimore, MD)
- Discovery Gateway Children's Museum (Salt Lake City, UT)
- Children's Museum of La Crosse (WI)

**For more information: [www.childrensmuseums.org/index.php/good-to-grow.html](http://www.childrensmuseums.org/index.php/good-to-grow.html) and [www.goodtogrow.org](http://www.goodtogrow.org)**



# MUSEUMS

## Please Touch Museum: Play Without Boundaries

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



Play Without Boundaries is an hour of museum time for kids with special needs. A time for families to interact with other families who understand the challenges of being in public with kids who are on the autism spectrum.

A study by the American Alliance of Museums more and more of these centers for learning and preservation are also places where health awareness is on display. The Please Touch Museum is one of over 30 museums in the U.S. that has responded to the special needs of visitors with autism.

So often, what seems like a fun diversion ends up causing feelings of anxiety and sometimes panic for those with autism. That's why some museums have made special accommodations. "During those hours the museum looks different," said Leslie Walker, Please Touch Museum's Vice President for Community Learning.

Flashing lights are dimmed and booming music is turned down. Kids who want a sense of security about their visit are encouraged to create custom schedules and maps beforehand. And museum employees who will teach kids about the exhibits go through sensitivity training to learn what needs a child with autism might have to interact like their peers. "They know now to bend down and get on that kid's level, and to wait awhile before following up if they ask a question," Walker said.

The program creates a comprehensive welcoming structure for families of children with varying abilities through the following initiatives:

- Quiet Space of the Day, for children and families who need a sensory break during their visit. Just ask a staff member to point you in the right direction.
- Quiet Kits containing sensory cool-down items to set up larger quiet spaces for group visits.
- Sensory-based games and toys available in the Kids Store
- Specialized accessibility and inclusion training for staff
- Special Play without Boundaries evening and early morning events for families of children with disabilities
- Mobile programming that brings PTM-themed games and toys to schools, childcare centers, libraries, or social service agencies.
- Accessibility tools for families of children with disabilities include museum stories and gallery maps

**For more information: [www.pleasetouchmuseum.org](http://www.pleasetouchmuseum.org)**

# PARKS AND RECREATION

## St. John's Recreation Center

### New York City

St. John's Recreation Center, part of the New York City Parks and Recreation Department, is a vibrant recreational facility that serves the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, a distressed area facing crime, high unemployment rates, and other socioeconomic ills. St. John's is more than just a place for recreation and sports – it's also a hub of the area. With a staff well-trained in social services, the center provides a broad range of social support programs.



The Center hosts programs designed specifically for troubled children, such as the Positive Alternatives program where referred teens meet three times a week to learn about non-violent conflict resolution, job placement, pregnancy, drug abuse, AIDS prevention, and nutrition. Those attending the program have access to group and individual counseling, and they are paired with mentors such as community leaders, clergy, business professionals, and government administrators.

St. John's strives to be a space where all people in the community are comfortable. When it became apparent that many more men than women were using the center, St. John's set aside one night when the Center is open only to women and small children, with programs that appeal to their interests.

To ensure that programs are tailored to local needs, two part-time counselors work with a volunteer Youth Advisory Council to design and prioritize activities. Made up of 15 to 20 young people, the Advisory Council also sponsors special events, and its members serve as youth representatives to other community councils and boards. By creating a Youth Advisory Council and including youth in the decision-making process, St. John's aims to instill a sense of participation, cooperation, democracy, and ownership in the youth in the community.

**For more information: [www.nycgovparks.org/facilities/recreationcenters/B245](http://www.nycgovparks.org/facilities/recreationcenters/B245)**



# PARKS AND RECREATION

## Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force

San José, California

During the mid-1980s, the incidence of gang warfare in several neighborhoods of San José began escalating. Significant increases in drug use, gang violence, and other criminal activity were witnessed throughout the city. In 1991, the San José Mayor, Susan Hammer, created The Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF), the first in the city's history. Soon after, MGPTF developed Project Crackdown, which placed teams into neighborhoods to deal with gangs and empower the community. In 1997, the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (DPRN) began providing high-crime areas with capital funds for neighborhood revitalization for structural improvements. These projects blossomed into the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, a \$120 million program for economic redevelopment and investment in selected neighborhoods.

Four mayors, six police chiefs, and 19 years later, the MGPTF is a thriving force in San José. The DPRN employs a holistic model to foster community development and improve the quality of life for children and their families. The Task Force has two components: the Policy Team develops strategic direction, while the Technical Team implements the Task Force's anti-gang programs. Diverse stakeholders participate in the community's efforts to end gang-related violence.

The director of MGPTF, Mario Maciel, says "the beauty of housing the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force in the DPRN," is the ability to marry diverse programs to combat gang violence. The MGPTF funds more than 25 community programs, and partners with the District Attorney's office, the San José Police Department, the Probation Department, community and faith leaders, 52 community centers, mental health organizations, homework centers, gyms, and afterschool programs, all of which play a role in keeping children and youth out of gangs. MGPTF focuses on community engagement and empowerment and offers services such as neighborhood watch programs, direct intervention, parenting skills programs, and more.

The Task Force's Safe School Campus Initiative combines an internal team made up of community coordinators from the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services with a team of gang interventionists and city police officers. Each team works with 15 middle schools and high schools (of 80 campuses in the city) to assist in prevention and intervention.

San José is one of six cities chosen for President Obama's National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention. Teams from each city have met to share information on what works in preventing youth and gang violence. Each city has pledged to develop or enhance comprehensive plans to prevent youth and gang violence, using multi-disciplinary partnerships, balanced approaches, and data-driven strategies. The MGPTF believes it takes a village to combat gang violence- and the "village" of San Diego is successfully and holistically mobilized to intervene, prevent, and suppress gang violence.

**For more information: [www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=642](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=642)**

# PARKS AND RECREATION

## Splash

### Minneapolis, Minnesota

Minneapolis, like so many places across America, has become home for individuals and families from many different cultures and countries, and the community is working to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population. With that goal in mind, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board recently collaborated with the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota on a research study to investigate the outdoor leisure time activity needs of different family types and the impact of neighborhood park design on family health and well-being.

The Survey of Parks, Leisure-time Activity, and Self-Reported Health (SPLASH) project looked at the use of parks by residents of three low-income, culturally diverse neighborhoods. UM researchers asked community members how often they visited the parks—in the winter months as well as the summer—and questioned them about the importance of parks, barriers to using them, and the appeal of various park facilities and recreation programs. Faculty also asked about leisure activities and general health status. The project also included a pilot program aimed at increasing park usage.

The research, published in 2013, found that here, as in many communities, there are significant health inequities between groups of different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic status, which means that promoting park use among these population groups could play a significant role in mitigating health disparities.

SPLASH found significantly lower levels of park use, especially in cold weather, among blacks, foreign-born residents, low-income residents, and working parents in single-parent families.

In reporting the results, UM faculty said more targeted research is needed to learn why these particular groups have lower levels of park use so that the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board can develop more effective policies and strategies, especially to meet the needs of nontraditional. For example, dual-worker families may appreciate more evening-hour programs in parks while single-parent families may prefer activities that allow group participation and offer opportunities for socializing.

This study was funded by The Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) Faculty Interactive Research Program, the Children, Youth and Family Consortium and the Obesity Prevention Center, both at the University of Minnesota.

**For more information: [www.cura.umn.edu/sites/cura.advantagelabs.com/files/publications/43-I-Fan-French-Das.pdf](http://www.cura.umn.edu/sites/cura.advantagelabs.com/files/publications/43-I-Fan-French-Das.pdf)**



# PERFORMING ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

## Deeply Rooted Dance Theater

Chicago, Illinois

Founded in 1995 by dancers Kevin Ige Jeff and Gary Abbott, Chicago's Deeply Rooted Dance Theater is based in traditions of African-American dance, storytelling, and universal themes that spark a visceral experience and ignite an emotional response in diverse audiences worldwide. Drawing on topics as wide-ranging as the Somali Civil War, famine, and living with AIDS, the company's performances attract a diverse set of audience members who recognize something uniquely cathartic and revealing in the ensemble's work.

In addition to staging performances, the company also provides dance education for all levels of skill and experience. One such offering is the Mature H.O.T. Women dance class. Geared toward baby boomers and older adults, the spirit of the program is embodied by its acronym: Health-conscious, Optimistic, Triumphant. The Theater offers four eight-week sessions of the program with evening classes to encourage working women to participate.

Another program at Deeply Rooted weaves the students into its other programs, including the professional ensemble. On occasion, several of the students will perform with the dance company as part of a featured performance. The success of its many programs is prompting Deeply Rooted to consider replicating this program in other parts of the country.

**For more information: <http://deeplyrootedproductions.org>**



# PERFORMINGARTS ORGANIZATIONS

## Cornerstone Theater Company

Los Angeles, California

Founded in 1986 by playwright Allison Carey and director Bill Rauch, Cornerstone Theater works to create multi-ethnic, community-based theater that builds connections in diverse communities. The company aims to make theatrical classics accessible to small towns and diverse communities in America, so it adapts the works of Shakespeare, Moliere, Aeschylus, and other famous playwrights into more culturally relevant and understandable terms. For example, the Theater produced an adaptation of *Grapes of Wrath* in response to plans to destroy a local community garden.



The theater recruits locals to help adapt, produce, and perform in the play. A participant summed up the experience: "Cornerstone is important because it is a life-changing process. It's more than just a theater company. It gives voice to the voiceless."

Cornerstone Theater actively seeks the involvement of community members in developing and presenting new works, which allows communities to tell their own stories. One such performance, "Waking up in Lost Hills," is a loose adaptation of *Rip Van Winkle* and was crafted from interviews and story circles of Lost Hills residents, most of whom are Latino farm workers. For the production itself, some Lost Hills residents were performers and others worked backstage.

Cornerstone also shares its innovative community-building approach through collaboration with theatrical leaders, festivals, summer residencies, and intensive mini-courses. The summer residencies and two-day intensive courses help community leaders and individuals with theater backgrounds to introduce theater into their own communities and address their challenges.

**For more information: <http://cornerstonetheater.org>**



# PERFORMINGARTS ORGANIZATIONS

## The Beat Goes On

### Washington DC Metropolitan Area

Two Fairfax County, Virginia musicians, Alan Yellowitz and Adam Mason, are the energy behind “The Beat Goes On,” a health and wellness program that uses “rhythm enrichment” to brighten the day for seniors suffering from dementia and other kinds of memory losses. They also take their drum circles on the road to interact with cancer patients and others with special needs.

Scientists can't pinpoint exactly how music and rhythm affect the brain of a person with dementia, but there's widespread agreement that encouraging this kind of creative expression has positive effects on people's physical, mental, cognitive, and emotional states. People who work with Alzheimer's patients say seniors enjoy music even in the later stages of the disease, even when they can't remember the names of family members or friends.

The pair takes their show on the road to 15 or 20 senior communities across the D.C. metro area every month. At each stop, they hand out different kinds of drums – paddle drums, ocean drums, drums from Ghana and Senegal and other far-away places – and affix lightweight drum heads to walkers. Everyone gets a mallet or drumstick ... and then the fun begins. The two friends lead percussive versions of songs familiar to the residents – everything from “The Blue Danube” to “I've Been Working on the Railroad.” And everyone joins in.

“I think everyone down deep has some primal instinct when they see a drum,” Yellowitz says. “You don't need to be musical to have fun with what we do.”

**For more information, read the Washington Post feature on them: [wapo.st/14ju9Lp](http://wapo.st/14ju9Lp)**



# PUBLIC MARKETS

## Pike Place Market

Seattle, Washington

When urban renewal was sweeping the nation in the 1960s, the homes and businesses of many low-income city residents were razed. When Seattle announced plans to demolish the Pike Place Market in 1971, however, the community rallied to save the 64 year-old institution. A broad coalition of citizen and government leaders successfully challenged the plan and passed legislation that preserved the market, revitalized and replaced low-income housing, and developed needed social services.



Today, Pike Place Market plays three important community roles: it is a major tourist attraction and revenue generator; it provides affordable food to the surrounding low-income and elderly community; and it offers social support to residents. For example:

- The Downtown Food Bank gives over 1,000 bags of food to seniors and the unemployed per week.
- The Pike Market Child Care Center provides childcare and preschool services for low-income children.
- The Pike Market Senior Center provides meals, employment assistance, activities, and social services.
- The Pike Market Medical Clinic helps preserve the independence of older adults by providing comprehensive medical care, including mental health counseling, home health care, and on-site lab and pharmacy services.
- The Market Fresh program provides coupons for fresh produce to low-income and elderly residents.

When these social programs were threatened by federal budget cuts in the 1980s, local providers created the Market Foundation. Using cooperative fundraising techniques, the Foundation has been able to stabilize these agencies and help finance needed renovations to the facility. Like the Market itself, the Foundation pledges to preserve the spirit of the surrounding neighborhood and to improve the lives of the people who live there.

**For more information: <http://pikeplacemarket.org>**



# PUBLIC MARKETS

## Urban Oasis Farm and Market at Kingsboro Psychiatric Center

Brooklyn, New York

There is a gazebo just inside the gate of Kingsboro Psychiatric Center. It is the home of this Brooklyn community's first farmers market, and it welcomes residents to step inside and experience a market sponsored by the New York State Office of Mental Health at Kingsboro Psychiatric Center. The mission of the psychiatric hospital is to provide competent and compassionate psychiatric care to people with serious mental illness, and to help them reintegrate into the community, which includes many diverse cultures: Caribbean, African American, Hasidic Jew, and Latino. The hospital and farm serve the Crown Heights and East Flatbush neighborhoods and sits on hospital row, which includes Kings County Hospital, SUNY Downstate Medical Center, and Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center.

Urban Oasis, a horticultural business and agricultural initiative of Kingsboro Psychiatric Center, has provided vocational training through real job employment opportunities for trainees since 1997. Urban Oasis operates under the auspices of the Rehabilitation Services Department, and in 2004 it expanded beyond a mini-farm and greenhouse operation to include a farmers market. Produce is grown onsite and includes apples, pears, pumpkins, among other produce, with support from Trinity Farms in upstate New York.

State farmers market nutrition checks are accepted at Urban Oasis, a clear benefit for a distressed community. Not only do the farm trainees sell their produce but they also explain to customers how to grow collards and clean tomatoes with genuine care. The market now also sells houseplants and holiday specialty gifts, grown and arranged by the Urban Oasis employed participants.

Urban Oasis partners with the Cornell Cooperative Extension, a New York-based nonprofit that assists trainees in coordinating all facets of the business, from growing to selling and marketing.

**For more information: [www.brooklyn.com/farmers-greenmarkets.php](http://www.brooklyn.com/farmers-greenmarkets.php)**



# SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS

## Indo Jax Surf School

Wilmington, North Carolina

Indo Jax Surf School, based in Wilmington, N.C., teaches kids of all ages how to surf. But what sets them apart from other surfing schools is their commitment to empowering disadvantaged, medically fragile and special needs children through this sport. By exposing these populations to the ocean and teaching them to surf, the children gain life-changing confidence.



Indo Jax offers free surf camps to various groups in the U.S. and abroad – the visually impaired, children who have been abused, those who are hearing impaired, young people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS, cystic fibrosis or autism, those whose parents are deployed, and other special-needs groups. No matter what challenges these young people face, they seem to benefit greatly from their surfing experiences.

“We work with a lot of youth who have low self-esteem and think their situations prevent them from living a full life,” says owner and surfer Jack Viorel, who recently returned from his fourth trip to India, where he and other instructors worked with more than 100 girls from several orphanages. Most of the girls were non-swimmers who had never even seen the ocean before.

As Viorel tells the story on his blog: “These girls got to stay in a nice hotel, eat great food, hang out and swim at the pool, ride elephants, go to the movies, eat ice cream, and SURF! For a week straight these girls surfed until their arms were like noodles. The transformation these girls went through was mind boggling. Because of their background of abuse and neglect, these girls start off shy, timid and reluctant, but before long their personalities emerge. As they gain confidence and empowerment, they make eye contact and build courage. Then, once riding waves on a surfboard they are QUEENS, surfing with their arms up in triumph, an emotion they’ve not felt before.”

**For more information: <http://indojaxsurfschool.com/outreach.php>**





# SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS

## Team Primetime

### Los Angeles, California

Students at several high schools in Los Angeles are teaming up in an unusual way. A sports program called Team Prime Time matches up special-needs students with able-bodied counterparts who coach and play alongside them. Most of the coaches come from low-income families. The premise of this a full inclusion, peer mentor sports program is that if you bring together two high-risk populations – students with developmental disabilities and students from disadvantaged backgrounds – who share a love of sport, everyone benefits.

And that's what is happening. Not only are the players and peer coaches getting a good workout on the basketball court or soccer field, but they also are gaining confidence and report feeling much more a part of their school community.

These blended teams compete against one another in the only league of its kind, giving the vast majority of these students with Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, and autism the only real opportunity to enjoy a mainstream high school sports experience.

Modeled after a successful middle school program, the high school version of Team Prime Time began in 2012 with full-inclusion teams at Venice High School and University High School competing against each other in basketball and soccer. The program doubled in size in 2013 when Fairfax and Hamilton high schools joined this league.

The program, a partnership with the Los Angeles Unified School district, gets local businesses to cover the costs of uniforms, referees, and staff time.

The Varsity Games is a model program that meets the U.S. Department of Education's directive that all schools either include children with disabilities in sports programs or provide equal alternative options.

**For more information: [www.teamprimetime.org](http://www.teamprimetime.org)**

# SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS

## Ziv Neurim



Ziv Neurim is an Israeli nonprofit founded by former navy commandos that works with young people who are on the verge of dropping out of school. The organization uses challenging marine activities to boost the skills and confidence of students aged 13-16 and helps them deal with difficulties in their personal lives.

The teens are picked up after school twice a week and go to a local marine center for two hours of water activities: sailing different sized sailboats, kayaking, wind surfing, body surfing, diving, and more.

“At sea, we create all the dilemmas that these kids encounter in life,” explains CEO Benny Vaknin. “At the end of each lesson, they sit together and talk about the difficulties they had at sea and how they apply to daily life.”

He offers an example: “If we went in the water with the wrong tools, the boat won’t sail. So we analyze what it means in life: If I don’t bring my supplies to school. It is the same issue.”

Not only do the marine activities help the teenagers academically but also socially as well. “If they used to be rivals at school,” Vaknin says, “here they understand that if they don’t help each other, the boat won’t sail, and they learn that to achieve a common goal, they have to work as a team. It unifies them.”

Each group of 15 students is assigned a facilitator who accompanies them all year at sea and is in touch with their families and educators at school.

The nonprofit, created in 2000, works with 500 teenagers each year, including many Ethiopian youth and new immigrants from the former Soviet Union who have functional and learning disabilities. The organization was created in honor of Ziv Levy, a commando who died in the line of duty.

**For more information: [www.zivneurim.org/index.php?ChangeLang=English](http://www.zivneurim.org/index.php?ChangeLang=English)**

# SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS

## Commerce Water Polo Club

### Commerce, California

When kids from Commerce, a small working-class city outside of Los Angeles, are asked who their heroes are, they will, more often than not, mention local residents Brenda Villa and Patty Cardenas. Villa and Cardenas were both key members of the Women's Olympic Water Polo Team from the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China, and they are both products of the Commerce Water Polo Club.



Recognizing the impact that the water polo club could have on the youth of the community, the City of Commerce employs five coaches—two full-time and three half-time—and spends over \$250,000 on water polo programs each year. The city pays for tournament travel, for entry fees, and for pool time in a state-of-the-art facility – all with the goal of keeping kids busy swimming and practicing water polo. To date, the efforts are paying off. Communities surrounding Commerce all have rampant gang activity, but it is absent in the city of 12,500.

Weekends are filled with games and tournaments for members of the Commerce Water Polo Club, and the pool is the social hub for this community of mostly Latino-Americans. Their “aquatorium” offers something for all ages, six months to 60+ year olds, with swim lessons, aerobic classes, recreational swims, and first aid classes.

The team atmosphere of the water polo club and the pool's role as a community center fosters a sense of belonging and pride in Commerce. Success in the athletic arena can also transfer to success in the academic arena—Villa played water polo at Stanford, Cardenas is a senior at the University of Southern California, and high school teams take the center stage during the academic year.

Whatever occasion is celebrated in Commerce, water polo will likely be involved. What began as a break from monotonous swim practices 30 years ago has exploded into one of the best known water polo clubs in the country, one that has instilled a sense of community pride in the citizens of Commerce.

**For more information: [www.ci.commerce.ca.us/aquatorium2.htm](http://www.ci.commerce.ca.us/aquatorium2.htm)**

# SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS

## CicLAvía

### Los Angeles, California

CicLAvía is a recreational and social integration program that began in Bogotá, Colombia, more than 30 years ago in response to city congestion and pollution. This movement, which has spread throughout Latin America and the United States, both connects communities and gives residents a respite from the stress of car traffic and pollution.

In Los Angeles, CicLAvía creates a temporary, free park by simply removing cars from city streets for a designated period of time. It makes the street safe for people to walk, skate, play, and ride bikes. In places where the streets are congested with traffic, the air is polluted with toxic fumes, and children suffer from obesity and other health conditions, this is a welcome health break. It creates a network of connections between neighborhoods, businesses, and parks that plan fun activities along the routes.

**For more information: [www.ciclavia.org](http://www.ciclavia.org)**



# VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

## Circle of Care

### Boulder, Colorado

Founded in 2004 to end the isolation of vulnerable elderly in the community, Circle of Care uses arts and cultural programs to connect older adults with the places they live. Founder Joan Raderman designed a model called Access to the Arts for Elders that is used by organizations, cities, and communities across the country.

Access to the Arts for Elders is an innovative way to connect community members with seniors. Volunteers accompany elderly residents to an arts or cultural performance -- and the volunteer and the senior both receive free tickets. In its pilot year, the program served 400 senior residents. Now more than 1,200 Boulder County seniors participate annually, and more than 2,500 are registered volunteers. The program partners with the Colorado Music Festival, the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, and more than 50 local arts organizations. The program also receives more than \$650,000 in annual in-kind ticket donations to senior citizens and volunteers.

Another Circle of Care program connects college students with older adults who want to audit University of Colorado courses. Although seniors were already offered the privilege of auditing classes for free prior to this program's inception, many logistical barriers prevented them from taking advantage of this opportunity. In response, Circle of Care created Senior Audit Partners, a program where volunteer students become study buddies with older adults, helping them to manage books and registration in exchange for free enrollment to audit courses.

**For more information: [www.circleofcareproject.org](http://www.circleofcareproject.org)**

# VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

## The Gatekeeper Program

The Gatekeeper Program is a proactive community training program to locate, identify and refer at-risk, home dwelling older adults.

The Gatekeeper Program was developed in 1978 by Ray Raschko, MSW, at Spokane Mental Health's Elder Services. Since its inception, the Gatekeeper model has been applied nationally and internationally to train employees to identify and refer isolated, at-risk older adults residing in their own homes. These are elders who have little or no support system to act in their behalf as they experience serious difficulties that compromise their ability to live independently.

Gatekeepers are employees of local businesses who come into contact with older adults on a regular basis. Through the Gatekeeper program, these non-traditional referral sources are trained to identify and refer older adults who appear to have problems that may place them at-risk of hospitalization and/or premature out of home placement. Gatekeepers include utility employees, bank personnel, apartment and mobile home managers, postal carriers, police, fire department, paramedics, etc.

Referrals can be made by calling in to Elder Services Information and Assistance staff 24 hours a day to help determine what level of response is needed.

Below are descriptions of situations, symptoms, and behaviors that indicate a referral to Elder Services is needed:

- Significant deterioration in personal appearance, including dirty clothing, clothing not appropriate to the weather/season, missing articles of clothing, i.e., pants, shoes, etc.
- Dilapidated and dangerous exterior/interior home environment, serious hoarding that creates safety issues, calendar on the wrong month or year; little or no food, strong foul odors, many pets, numerous empty alcohol containers.
- Confusion, disorientation, inappropriate verbal/non-verbal responses, forgetfulness, repeating information, feelings of hopelessness/suicidality.
- Significant hearing/eyesight impairment, limited mobility/inability to get food, etc., acute physical illness, numerous medication bottles.

**For more information: <http://www.smhca.org/gatekeeper.aspx>**



# VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

## Inside Out Writers

### Hollywood, California

Sometimes, all it takes for change and for the healing process to begin is a pen, paper and a caring volunteer teacher. That is how the process of helping young people with a history in the juvenile system can begin, and how willing youths can turn the corner to positive, productive lives.

Gloria Busulto, 20, has “been there and done that.” From the ages of 12 to 16, she was involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. “I was impulsive, a hot head,” said Busulto, whose single father was 66 when she was born. “Growing up, I was never heard.”

While detained in juvenile hall, she connected with a volunteer teacher from InsideOut Writers, who led a creative writing class. At first, Busulto said, she attended “for the candy,” but ended up getting much more from the experience. “It was like an epiphany,” she said, when she found someone she could talk to, a female with whom she could relate.

With the volunteer’s continuing mentorship, Busulto decided she had to change her ways. She has. Since leaving juvenile hall, she graduated high school and is now enrolled at Santa Monica College, pursuing a career in public relations.

InsideOut Writers, a Hollywood-based nonprofit organization, has worked with teenagers in Los Angeles juvenile facilities since 1996.

“We’re working with young people who have been completely underserved and written off,” said Wendelyn P. Killian, executive director of IOW. “We are saying to them: ‘You matter. The things that have happened in your life are of consequence, but they do not have to be the things that define your future.’”

Its students, as IOW calls them, include some boys and girls in the child welfare system who lack a supportive family. It would be a tragic mistake, Killian says, to give up on youngsters, some as young as 13 or even 10. “We try to inspire them, to reflect on their mistakes and to offer an opportunity to have their hopes become a reality,” she said.

Once out of incarceration, the young people can join the Alumni Program and receive a variety of services, said case manager Jimmy Wu — who himself is a former IOW alum. These include help with housing and transportation, substance abuse counseling, basic computer skills, information on building a resume and looking for a job.

“Organizations like InsideOut Writers are vital to keeping young people who have been incarcerated from committing more serious offenses, including violent acts,” said Julio Marcial, TCWF program director.

In 2012, IOW received a two-year grant of \$180,000 from The California Wellness Foundation to



sustain its Alumni Program. Killian said she is grateful the grant is for core operations. It gives IOW the “flexibility to use our resources in a way that best supports fulfillment of our mission,” Killian said.

Sessions in the Alumni Program, known as creative writing circles, enable the youths to express inner thoughts and emotions. At a recent session, poet and actress Gina Loring, an IOW volunteer, asked 15 alumni to write about forgiveness and compassion. Some of the participants expressed forgiveness to a parent who had been a “no-show” in their lives.

Gloria Busulto chose to write about her evolving journey of healing and change. In the final lines of her poem, she wrote:

I’m in a journey of forgiving myself  
For the consequences of my own actions  
And making up for the lost time

**For more information: [www.insideoutwriters.org](http://www.insideoutwriters.org)**





# VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

## Kym's Kids of San Antonio

### San Antonio, Texas

Kym's Kids of San Antonio was created to help under-served, underprivileged young people achieve their goal of a higher education—using volunteerism as a mechanism.

The program is open to students in the 8th through 12th grades who have an affiliation with one of its 10 partner organizations -- local organizations ranging from Communities in Schools and Boys and Girls Clubs. The students earn college scholarship funds by volunteering with the organization at community events while also meeting benchmarks for grades, attendance, and behavior at school.

The way the program works, students complete a certain number of community service hours each year in order to earn a set amount in scholarship funds. Those who join in the 8th grade, for example, complete at least 60 hours of community service that year – and the potential scholarship is \$500. The amount of scholarship money earned is cumulative; a student who joins in the 8th grade and continues through high school can earn \$3,300 in scholarship money. Students can keep earning scholarship money after graduation if they continue with Kym's Kids and their sponsoring organization agrees to track their hours.

What kind of community service is provided? Projects range from wiping out graffiti in the community to planting a garden at a local senior center to working at the local food bank. Some of the students end up volunteering for organizations that have provided assistance to their own needy families.

The program, founded in 2010 by business professional and philanthropist Kym Rapier, began with 100 low-income students. During the 2012-2013 school year, 363 students participated in the program.

**For more information: [www.kymkidssa.org](http://www.kymkidssa.org)**



# VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

## Neighborhood Return

### United Kingdom

Neighborhood Return is a new volunteer service based in the United Kingdom that addresses the problem of people with dementia getting lost. It uses a network of volunteers to locate the missing person and return him or her home safely.

Caregivers or other family members can register loved ones with memory problems into the Neighborhood Return database, which includes descriptions, photographs, family contact info, and likely places to look. If the unthinkable happens and the person does go missing, the caregiver calls the national office which immediately contacts volunteers in the area to help search.

People who have signed up as volunteers have provided their cell phone numbers and email addresses. When someone is reported missing, Neighborhood Return sends a text message to volunteers in that geographic area asking if they can help. Those who can are sent a description and photo of the missing person along with contact info and details of where to look. When the person is found, the volunteer calls the Neighborhood Return center, and a family member is notified to pick the person up – or if that is not possible, the center may make other temporary arrangements to keep the person safe.

The service was launched late in 2012, and the results are impressive. Up to 70 percent of people who have gone missing have been found within two-and-a-half hours. When a person isn't found within that time frame, the police take over.

Neighborhood Return is the brain child of Dr. Rupert McShane, a psychiatrist interested in dementia who works for Oxford Health NHS Foundation Health Trust (the mental health Trust for Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire). Rupert, who has taken a great interest in people with dementia who go wandering, has researched the use of GPS to help find them but concluded that GPS devices do not work in all cases. Sometimes the GPS device isn't on the person who gets lost – and first-time wanderers often don't have a device at all. He came up with the simple but effective idea of getting volunteers to find people who lived in their local area.

**For more information, [www.ourturn.org.uk](http://www.ourturn.org.uk)**



# VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

## Volunteers of America's Veterans Service

Across the United States



Homelessness is a major issue for veterans. A 2011 survey found that nearly 68,000 veterans are homeless on any given night -- and twice that many experience homelessness during a year. Today, the number of Vietnam-era veterans who are homeless is greater than the number of service personnel who died during that war, and veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan are already appearing among the homeless population.

Since World War I, Volunteers of America has provided direct services to veterans and connected them to other organizations that can help. Medical and social service providers believe the only sure way to give at-risk veterans effective, consistent access to care is to house them first. Volunteers of America, an organization committed to ending homelessness for those on the street and those at risk of becoming homeless, provides services designed to meet the range of veterans' needs. Every night, they offer emergency shelter for veterans and work to provide transitional and even permanent housing for them.

This support helps veterans overcome the barriers that stand between them and a stable, secure life. Housing units provide case management services for veterans and families; many cities support outreach centers where veterans can receive treatment for PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, and addictions. Volunteers of America connects veterans to the benefits they are entitled to receive and makes use of the strong bonds forged between veterans in mentoring and peer-to-peer support programs.

Volunteers of America also provides employment services that include assessment, training, and placement. Veterans earn stipends in work programs as they train for new careers, and they can get help with everything from resume prep to job interviewing, clothing, and transportation. Finding work is an important part of rebuilding confidence, pride and independence.

**For more information: [www.voa.org/Ideas-to-Help-Vets](http://www.voa.org/Ideas-to-Help-Vets)**

# WILDLIFE INSTITUTIONS

## The Thomas H. Kean New Jersey State Aquarium at Camden

Camden, New Jersey

The Thomas H. Kane New Jersey State Aquarium is a \$52 million facility built with state funds and operated by the New Jersey Academy of Aquatic Sciences, a private nonprofit corporation. It is part of a comprehensive revitalization plan for Camden that is being overseen by the Cooper's Ferry Development Corporation, a private organization modeled after the Baltimore Inner Harbor Commission.

The aquarium runs a variety of programs that offer resources to the local community. In addition to actively recruiting its staff and business partners from Camden, the aquarium offers free admission to city residents and the economically disadvantaged. Local youth benefit from several programs that teach ocean sciences and job skills through hands-on experience. For example, the Junior Staff Program allows students to learn about aquarium departments, become exhibit hosts, and develop lesson plans that they then teach to younger children at summer camps. The aquarium also works with local schools by creating ecology clubs and providing information on careers in biology and marine biology.

The aquarium is an active participant in the Pew Charitable Trusts' Philadelphia and Camden Informal Science Education Collaborative, a three-year program that provides science education to inner city youth and their families. Each cultural institution is partnered with a community-based organization – in the case of the Aquarium, the partner is the Camden Board of Education – which identifies families to take part in special programming. By better tailoring its programs to the community's needs, the aquarium is ensuring that its economic and cultural impact reaches all of Camden.

**For more information: [www.adventureaquarium.com](http://www.adventureaquarium.com)**











# Creating the Healthy Community

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