

Launching a Local-to-Local Community-Based National Policy Initiative

Louis Delgado

Policy Research Analyst

On December 3 and 4, 1999, Philip Nyden and Louis Delgado of the Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL), James Brennan, Dean of the Graduate School, Pam Andresen of the Nursing School, Maureen Hellwig, of the Policy Research Action Group (PRAG), and Merwyn Mendez of Latinos United visited Philadelphia to meet with representatives from Temple University's University-Community Collaborative of Philadelphia (UCCP). The purpose of the trip was to design an initiative that will link the two cities in an exciting new research and public policy collaborative. Initially dubbed the Local to Local

"There is a lot of potential there.

Initiatives in a single city location usually have local implications but this initiative has national potential."

Jay Fagan, Professor, Social Work, Temple University, Philadelphia

Community Based National Policy Network, the initiative will create an approach to policy development that is community-anchored, cross-city focused, and will lead to increased civic engagement in the political and decision making process both at the local and national levels.

The premise behind this effort is that public policy can and should

be informed by local experience. Traditional policy research in the United States has either come out of "inside-the-beltway" think tanks or elite universities. It has been difficult, if not impossible, for local-level research/action projects to move beyond their immediate communities in comparing policies or strategies with similar organizations

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\$2.5 Million Endowment Challenge Grant Received by CURL

On February 17, CURL received word that it had received a \$2.5 million endowment challenge award from the Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation. We had been discussing this possibility with the Foundation over the past few months and had submitted a formal proposal in December. The endowment is earmarked for CURL and is expected to provide income to support general operating expenses. The University will be expected to raise a matching \$2.5million over the next five years. The Foundation sees the award as a way of producing a \$5 million endowment that will cover the basic operating expenses of CURL and make its collaborative university/community work a permanent fixture at Loyola.

"Since its inception six years ago, CURL has proven to be an outstanding example of how a university can use its resources to make a difference in the community through its research, academic programs and initiatives," said Nick Goodban, vice president for philanthropy for the McCormick Tribune Foundation. "We hope that this will encourage other contributions to provide support necessary for CURL to pursue its mission." Larry Braskamp, Loyola's senior vice president for academic affairs, said the grant speaks well of Loyola and its commitment to the city. "This is validation of the good work of CURL as an important partner in advancing the social well-being of Chicago and its communities," he said.

The McCormick Tribune Foundation had provided the initial grant for CURL's first three years of existence. This included a \$600,000 grant for operating expenses and a \$900,000 endowment gift to support faculty, graduate student, and community fellows. This initial endowment has since grown to \$1.6 million dollars. Last year the Foundation had given us a \$750,000 grant for another four years.

Director's Corner

As reported in Louis Delgado's article on our Chicago:Philadelphia partnership meeting, CURL is moving to a new level of collaboration. In cooperation with the Policy Research Action Group here in Chicago, we are looking at better ways of linking community-anchored research to national policy making. Within academia there is a tendency for colleagues to treat researchers doing community-based research as second-class citizens. In reporting on our research, we often get a smile, a "pat on the head," and empty compliments like "it's good that someone is doing service work." The unspoken additional sentence is "but, my data analysis has national implications," or "my theoretical research is important to the whole discipline."

However, the path that CURL, PRAG, and the Urban University Community Collaborative of Philadelphia are now walking down is a new route that is largely unexplored. It is also a path that can connect community-based research with national policy making. Those attending the December meeting in Philadelphia realized that making these connections is a complex task. Much of past research efforts have not attempted to make these links because of the difficulties in maintaining multi-city, multi-community projects with both university and community participants. While past national research projects have used communities as case studies, such research typically has not used a collaborative model where community activists are involved in all stages of the research from conceptualization of the research issue to analysis, report writing, and dissemination. As Louis notes, we now have new computer and communication technologies, along with more experience in doing collaborative university:community research under our belts. This experience and our new tools will allow us to navigate what promises to be a rewarding trip down a new path.

Phil Nyden
Director and Professor of Sociology

Documenting the Impact of Community Development in West Garfield Park

Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology

In May 1998 CURL staff began a partnership with Bethel New Life for the purpose of documenting Bethel's impact in West Garfield Park. West Garfield Park is a predominantly low-income African-American community marked by the resiliency of its people and its physical assets (i.e., proximity to downtown, easy access to public transportation and closeness to the expressway). Bethel, a faith-based community development corporation, was created in 1979 in response to the housing shortage in the community. During the first three years of Bethel's existence, the focus was on developing affordable and decent housing for its residents. This focus evolved over the next seven years to include economic development, job creation, and home ownership. Soon after, Bethel New Life added other programs to increase the health of the community including childcare, health care, education, and safety among others.

Bethel's *outcomes approach* to its initiatives is at the cutting-edge of best practices in community development. Bethel has adopted a broad definition of a healthier, sustainable community emphasizing four areas: economic security, ecological integrity, quality of life, and public participation. The focus of the partnership between CURL and Bethel was on documenting exemplars of impact of community initiatives under those four areas of sustainability with an emphasis on concrete community outcomes. The documentation process included an analysis of Bethel's growth and development over the years, documenting:

- Bethel's adoption of an *outcomes approach*;
- Changes in policies, services and practices across programs;
- Residents perspectives; and
- The impact of several community initiatives.

The partnership team used an interactive documentation framework which included the following phases: collaborative planning, identifying key impact indicators, identifying the

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"In addition to cross-city collaboration, the project may offer opportunities for collaboration across university departments and fields of interest! The issues will benefit from diverse perspectives and expertise."

*Pamela Andresen,
Director, The Nursing
Center, Loyola University
Chicago*

elsewhere in the country. However, with the advent of a more effective telecommunications system (particularly e-mail and the Internet), more sophisticated community organizations, and an increased need to move beyond the local-level in order to have an impact on policy, the time is ripe to explore new avenues of policy research.

To increase the Chicago delegation's understanding of

Philadelphia and its related community development needs, the group spent the first day visiting the Ceiba, Inc. organization in the Norris Square neighborhood on the city's north side. Ceiba is a coalition of four development organizations and a credit union established to better serve the needs of the Latino community. Mr. Jose Rivera, Ceiba's executive director, provided an overview of the coalition's work including the issues and activities they are engaged in. Much like the community organization experience in Chicago, Ceiba works tirelessly to address problems of poverty, disinvestment, and crime, all with an eye toward a better future for the community, one that provides ample opportunity for personal growth and fulfillment for all its residents.

While impressed by the tenacity and commitment of Ceiba, the Chicago visitors were clearly struck by the level of need in the community and the seemingly low level of city services going into the neighborhood. "It's as if the city government redlined the neighborhood," commented one of the Chicago delegates.

Ironically, Ceiba's organizing and advocacy work is a badly needed and critical function of the organization, yet it is one of the most difficult areas in which to secure grant support, according to Mr. Rivera. The group ended the day enjoying a nourishing dinner at a Chinese restaurant in the City's Chinese community adding to everyone's appreciation of the rich ethnic diversity in the Philadelphia area.

The second day in Philadelphia was devoted entirely to planning the Local-to-Local initiative with a comparable group from Temple including UCCP and its community partners, other Temple faculty and administrators, and

foundation representatives. Phil Nyden, director of CURL, and Barbara Ferman, director of UCCP with old ties to Chicago where she was part of PRAG when on faculty at the Illinois Institute of Technology, provided an overview of the unique characteristics of the two centers as well as what is meant by collaborative community-based policy research. "Being community driven," "shared ownership and responsibility," and "joint sharing of resources" were among the many ideas touched upon as being crucial to doing collaborative research responsibly and effectively. Many ideas were shared by both delegations.

The meeting format quickly moved to an interactive mode as participants were asked to engage in small group planning exercises. First, they discussed what the local-to-local initiative would look like after three years of operation. Of particular importance were who would be involved and how would the initiative be documented and disseminated. Second, the small groups addressed specific operational issues including program objectives, organizational design and project outcomes. Many interesting ideas as well as concerns were produced. All of them were shared with the entire assembly in a respectful, spirited, and sometimes humorous exchange.

Among the many topics and issues identified were: engage youth in a positive and meaningful way; maintain a commitment to diversity and inclusiveness; ensure fair and equitable sharing of resources; empower the community; and increase university involvement and commitment to doing collaborative community-based research. It was felt that if these and other issues are appropriately addressed in the project, it will not only lead to good outcomes for the two cities but will increase knowledge in the field concerning how to do this work effectively. Prior to closing the meeting, all participants identified activities they would do in the future to help move the initiative forward.

In general, there was a commitment from the entire assembly that they should proceed in developing the initiative. Even though there are issues and concerns that will need to be addressed along the way, it is an innovative and challenging initiative that is indeed worth doing. Considering the extensive experience amassed by both CURL and UCCP through their previous work at the local level, there is a basis for believing the project will be accomplished successfully. Unquestionably, their combined knowledge and skills will be tested through this initiative, but it is a test that both centers accept enthusiastically.

The BP AMOCO PROJECT

Lucia Orellana-Damacela, M.A.

CURL and the Department of Psychology are collaborating in a one-year initiative funded by BP Amoco Foundation. The purpose of this initiative is to enhance the capacity of community-based organizations to document and evaluate their own initiatives. The organizations are located in the five community areas targeted for funding by the Foundation over the past five years.

The research team is composed of Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar, the principal investigator on the project, and an associate professor of Psychology; Lucia Orellana-Damacela (Psychology), as project coordinator; five graduate students—Sean Hill (Education), Emily Keeker (Counseling Psychology), Mindy Lanum (Psychology), Nelson Portillo, Aparna Sharma (Psychology), and Adam Carrico, an undergraduate student. Also participating are five BP Amoco Community Fellows—Yvonne Butchee, Freddy Calixto (Broader Urban Involvement and Leadership, BUILD), Grace Hou (Chinese Mutual Aid Society), Robert Houston (Paternal Involvement Project at Kennedy-King College), and Michelle Williams (Options for People, Inc.). The BP Amoco fellows, who receive awards from the Foundation and complete an

extensive training in management and organization development, are assisting the research team in the evaluation capacity phase of the project.

During the first phase of the project the team will be working with ten community-based organizations to develop documentation tools and protocols. The organizations are:

Austin	South Austin Job Referral Services Youth Guidance
Grand Boulevard	Options for People, Inc. Abraham Lincoln Centre
Roseland	YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago Christian Community Health Center
Humboldt Park	Broader Urban Involvement and Leadership Development Youth Service Project, Inc.
Pilsen	Midtown Education Foundation Spanish Coalition for Jobs, Inc.

During the second phase of the project the team will be providing technical assistance to over 40 community-based organizations (CBOs) in adopting the tools to document their own initiatives. The BP Amoco fellows will assist with the dissemination to the 40 CBOs. The project has received a very welcoming reception from the community-based participants.

Community Development in West Garfield Park

methodology, tracking community change and collecting data, and a feedback and utilization phase. Different methods of documentation were used including: conducting interviews with 14 program directors to identify changes in program, policies and services; developing customized activity logs to track the actions of Bethel's community development initiatives, such as the Accelerating Community Transformations workgroups and COR (Community Organizing and Re-Neighboring) program; capturing the views of 104 community residents on neighborhood change using a door-to-door surveys and public forums; using Geographical Information Systems to map drug-related arrests; and developing a matrix of key indicators and outcomes to track changes across areas of a healthy sustainable community.

One of the key learning experiences for the research team (including Bethel staff, CURL graduate fellows, and faculty)

was the development of an *outcomes* matrix that facilitated the linking of community initiative's goal, objectives, actions, outputs and outcomes. Once this matrix was developed by the partners, *outcomes* sessions were conducted with different programs under each of the four areas of sustainability. During these sessions program staff made a stronger link between what they do and the concrete changes achieved in the lives of residents or in the conditions of the community. We found that the development of this matrix was consistent with Bethel's adoption of an *outcomes* approach. Examples of outcomes achieved include the area of employment and reduction of drug-related activity. Bethel has had a major impact in the employment area. Of the 224 participants served by the employment services department in a period of 1-year, 58% were placed in permanent/temporary employment. All participants received training in crucial job-related skills and support services such as counseling, case management and follow-up. Data from the Illinois Department of Employment

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Kale Williams, CURL Senior Scholar, Honored

Last October the CURL family took the occasion of a Friday Morning Seminar to honor our colleague and friend, Kale Williams. It seemed appropriate to acknowledge the incredible amount of volunteer work he does at the Center. We were able to pull off a surprise by soliciting the assistance of his wife, Helen; their son in California, Kale, Jr.; and former co-workers from around the city, including John Lukehart from the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open

"No, he's not leaving us. We just felt we needed to say 'thank you' to Kale for all he does with us."

*Phil Nyden,
Director of CURL*

Communities. Kale retired from the Leadership Council in 1992 after leading the respected fair housing organization for 20 years.

With the help of his family and friends, we identified symbols of Kale's vast involvement in fair housing, peace education, hunger

and community development issues both in this country and worldwide. Besides the Leadership Council, symbols represented Kale's commitment to such organizations as the American Friends Service Committee, Centers for Horizons, Wheaton Franciscan Services, and Loyola University Chicago where he was named to the first Considine Chair for Applied



The CURL family presented Kale Williams (middle) with a tile depiction of his many accomplishments. From L to R are John Lukehart, Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities; Helen Williams, his wife of 50 years; Lin Von Dreele, Assoc. Director, CURL; and Phil Nyden CURL Director

Ethics in 1994. Symbols also depict how devoted Kale is to his family. All the wonderful representations were incorporated into an 8"x8" tile by Kay Hauck, the talented artist who designed the large tile mural that hangs at the entrance to the CURL office.

Kale has been with us for over three years. He works tirelessly on hunger, employment, and housing issues. Currently, he is supporting the efforts of a broad-based affordable housing collaboration in Rogers Park.

Community Development in West Garfield Park

Services indicate that between 1990 and 1995 unemployment decreased in West Garfield Park from 24% to 15%.

In another example of impact, the partnership team used Geographical Information Systems and mapped drug-related arrests in corners on which the COR program staff had implemented a number of street actions to deter drug activity. The data indicated that drug-related arrests dropped 31% and 69% on two different street corners characterized with high drug activity. These are just two examples of the wonderful cases of individual and community level change documented. Overall, Bethel's approach to community development has been holistic, emphasizing partnerships, capacity building, faith in the community and its residents and adopting an *outcomes* approach.

To make this project possible the partnership team embraced important principles of community-university partnerships such as respect for each other's culture, a reciprocal learning approach, open communication, and a truly collaborative approach to research in which all partners involved contributed significantly to the research process and methods. Other staff who participated in this partnership project included Daniel Kruger, a CURL graduate fellow (psychology); Anita Jayaraj, Bethel's director of research and evaluation; Lin Von Dreele, associate director of CURL who provided advise and consultation throughout; and many Bethel staff. Most importantly, this project was possible because of the constant inspiration and commitment from Bethel's president, Mary Nelson.

Joseph Hoereth Joins CURL Staff

“CURL’s collaborative research projects provide a needed service to the community, while allowing staff and students to learn about the challenges that community base organizations face. I am very excited to be joining the CURL team.”

Joe Hoereth

CURL is pleased to welcome Joseph Hoereth who joined the staff February 1.

Joe will contribute skills to support research project development, particularly economic development and housing projects.

He is a Ph.D. candidate in urban planning from Rutgers

University where he expects to

complete his dissertation by spring of this year. He brings strong analytical skills, having been a research assistant examining community development partnerships for the Ford Foundation. He worked with the New Jersey Community Development Loan Fund to conduct background research on the prospect of geographically targeting small business lending to low-income areas of New Jersey.



At the Family Resource Coalition of America he researched and wrote a primer on community economic development intended to introduce family support groups to community development strategies. Most recently, he was a planning consultant for Strategy Planning Associates where he conducted fiscal and economic impact studies for proposed residential and commercial developments.

Joe is from Long Beach, California. He and his wife, Michelle, have been in the Chicago area for 2 years; they presently make their home in Oak Park.



Tomorrow’s Leaders Through the Arts

*“I’m building tomorrow today
I’m shaping my future, I cannot delay;
I’m building tomorrow, building tomorrow,
I’m building tomorrow today.”*

Eight young boys and girls belted these lyrics to Tony Small’s original score during a recent CURL Friday Morning Seminar. In a lively session of hand clapping and audience participation, Tony led his students and seminar participants through a series of original songs he composed while working with youth on science, geography, and language arts.

Tony is a gifted musician and educator who currently works part-time at CURL as coordinator of the Passport to Chicago project. Last summer, he spearheaded a program hosted by St. Benedict Academy, Brenneman Elementary School, and Fourth Presbyterian Church that served 150 youth. Tony has been selected as one of the 55 top community artists in the White House Millennium Project for his unique pedagogy. He is currently working on a symphony that will be premiered in April in Raleigh, North Carolina.

No one doubts that if Tony has his way, every child who works with him will be one of tomorrow’s leaders.

University-wide Service Learning Becomes a Reality

With the hiring of a coordinator, Kimberly Fox, Loyola has affirmed its commitment to the Jesuit tenant of “knowledge in service of others.” Kim came on board in January and is hard at work exploring ways in which students from all disciplines can be linked to community service. When funding from the Loyola’s Academic Vice President and additional staff and resource support from CURL, the Service Learning Coordinator position has become a reality at Loyola. Kim will be working with faculty in strengthening the already broad array of service learning activities in the university along with building new initiatives. In addition to guidance from a university-wide faculty service learning committee, three professors will be serving as faculty co-directors of service learning: Gene Zechmeister (Psychology), Ed Gumz (Social Work) and Frank Fennell (English/College of Arts and Sciences).

The organizing of this office allows Loyola to build on the strong connections it has with the local community in addressing a broad range of community development issues. The university has thousands of students who already do significant volunteer work in the community. Many faculty currently work with students to make connections between



classes and ‘real world’ issues facing our neighborhoods. Kim’s job will be to assist in creating linkages for both the community and university.

One of her first tasks is to complete a publication that will define and explain service learning. Steve Kimmons, a CURL Graduate Fellow, is assisting Kim in this effort. She is also working on publicity for the Living/Learning residence. Beginning in the fall semester, 25 students interested in community development, public policy and service learning will live together on a floor of the West dormitory.

Kim is not new to service learning. She had her own service learning experiences as an undergraduate at Augustana College. She went on to help manage an AmeriCorp VISTA program, working both with student leaders and professional volunteers. Most recently, she worked as community resource coordinator and development officer at the Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights in Chicago. Kim holds a master’s degree in comparative politics from George Washington University.

For further information, Kim can be reached at 312-915-7765 or by email: kfox1@luc.edu

“Little Bright River” Arrives from China

After about a year of maneuvering through the bureaucratic red tape related to foreign adoption, CURL’s Mike Rohrbeck, and his wife, Andrea Raila, began their long journey to China on



And here’s little Rhea . . . held by her dad, Mike Rohrbeck. Rhea’s big brother Christopher is sitting with his mom, Andrea Raila.

December 14. They arrived back home 2 days before Christmas with a 9 month-old sister for their 3 year-old son, Christopher.

Like many girl-children in China, baby Mao Xiaosuo was abandoned by her birth mother when she was five days old. Reflecting the general lack of regard for women and female children, her first Chinese name means “little” or “trivial.” Mike and Andrea renamed their daughter Rhea Xaioming, keeping a Chinese name that means “little bright river” to denote the brightness she has brought to their lives.

Now a stay-at-home dad with not one but two bundles of energy, Mike juggles even more balls in the air. Mike works part-time with CURL to support the Community of Opportunity projects in Rogers Park.

Friday Morning Seminar Schedule, Spring, 2000

Informal CURL Friday Morning Seminars are held regularly on Friday mornings during fall and spring semesters from 10:30 until noon in the CURL classroom, Lewis Towers 10th floor. Loyola faculty and students, community activists, and guests are welcome. Please note: an update of this schedule will be available by mid-semester. *Phone 312-915-7760 or 7762 for details.

Date	Topic/Presenter(s)
Jan. 21	"Holy Land Tensions and Opportunities: Some Observations" Lin Von Dreele, Assoc. Dir., CURL
Jan. 28	"Loyola/Native American Foster Parent Collaborative: A Curriculum and Training Project" Maria Vidal de Haymes, School of Social Work, and Lawrence PeBenito, Director, Child Welfare Services, Native American Foster Parent Association
Feb. 4	"The Arts as Tools to Build Tomorrow's Leaders" Tony Small, Passport Project Coordinator
Feb. 11	"For Rent" A Summary of Findings and Research Process for a Regional Rental Market Study Janet Smith, University of Illinois at Chicago/Voorhees Neighborhood Center
Feb. 18	No Seminar
Feb. 25	"Current Efforts at Revitalization on the Southeast Side of Chicago: New Partners and New Processes" Bill Peterman, Chicago State University Fredrick Blum Neighborhood Assistance Center
Mar. 3	"Incentives and Barriers to Interdisciplinary Scholarship and Training" James Brennan, Dean, the Graduate School
Mar. 10	Spring Break, no seminar
Mar. 1	"Census 2000: What Communities Can Do To Avoid Undercounting" Ellisa Johnson, Project Director, Census 2000, Cook County Government
Mar. 24	"Financial Modernization and the Community Reinvestment Act" Malcolm Bush, Woodstock Institute
Mar. 31	FIELDTRIP — Exploring the Auditorium Theatre with Bart Swindall of the Auditorium Theatre Council. Meet at 50 E. Congress Parkway (between Michigan and Wabash) at 10:00 am.
Apr. 7	"Incorporating a Disability Rights Perspective in Collaborative Research" Rene Luna, CURL Community Fellow
Apr. 14	"EBV Online — Evaluating Technology At Work at the Block Level" Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar, Dr. Christopher Masi, Pat Wright, Sandra Tanksley
Apr. 21	Good Friday, no seminar
Apr. 28	"Careers in Community Change: Research and Organizing Work with a National Policy Advocacy Organization" Drew Astofi, National People's Action

Seminars will resume in September

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