

UNIVERSITY CITY COMMUNITY BUILDING PROJECT

The University City Community Building Project (UCCBP) released an action plan February 18, 2004, during an interactive roll-out hosted by Charlotte Mayor Pat McCrory and UNC-Charlotte Chancellor Jim Woodward at the Speedway Club at Lowe's Motor Speedway. The plan's goal is to "build on the strengths of the diversity in the University City area and foster a sense of community among those who live, work, learn and worship in the University City area."

Developed through a process facilitated by CBI and the Lee Institute in partnership with the University City YMCA, the UCCBP plan addresses three major themes: Leadership; Identity and Image; and Physical and Social Infrastructure. The plan includes specific goals and strategies in these areas. (Go to www.communitybuildinginitiative.org to see the plan.)

"We'll move forward with a team of community leaders and volunteers to make this plan a reality, and to build a genuine community that can be a highlight for the city," says Mike DeVaul, UCCBP co-chair and Executive Director of the University City Y. "I believe that 10 years from now the University City area will be considered a part of uptown Charlotte — that's how quickly change happens here," he continues.

As a part of the process to create the plan, a 28-member resource team conducted research on the area and discovered facts about University City that were unveiled at the University Y's Community Festival on October 25, 2003. UCCBP team members manned a *Did You Know?* booth to showcase 10 key facts to Festival attendees (see inset at right).



UCCBP Member Pat Martinez facilitates a small group discussion of the Plan during the roll-out at Lowe's Motor Speedway February 18, 2004.

DID YOU KNOW?

1. The area encompassing University City has historically been one of the Charlotte region's most diverse areas. Today, the area remains diverse, with about two-thirds of the population being White, one-quarter African-American, 4.3% Asian and 3.6% Hispanic.⁽⁴⁾
2. Seven of 10 University City residents in an area survey said the diversity of the area was a strength; only 2.6% said it was a weakness.⁽²⁾
3. If incorporated, University City would be the 7th largest city in North Carolina.⁽¹⁾
4. Half of the available land in the University City area remains undeveloped.⁽¹⁾
5. University City encompasses two counties (Mecklenburg and Cabarrus), part of two cities (Charlotte and Concord) and one township (Harrisburg).⁽¹⁾
6. Many University City residents never leave the area: 90% do most of their shopping in the area, 60% engage in recreational activities and three-quarters socialize with others in the area; one-third work in the area, and 42% attend religious services in the area.⁽²⁾
7. Over half (52%) of University City residents say that "most people can be trusted," higher than responses from the rest of Mecklenburg County (42%), the Charlotte region (37%), and the nation (47%).⁽²⁾
8. About 80% of University City residents surveyed attend religious services at least once or twice a month, and 60% said they attend almost every week.⁽²⁾
9. About one-third of University City residents surveyed said that they have "worked with others in the neighborhood to get things fixed up" in University City.⁽²⁾
10. In a 2002 county-wide poll, between 80% and 90% of respondents said that University City had a good supply of moderate income housing, was a good place to work, a good place to live and a good place to raise a family.⁽³⁾

Sources:

- (1) UNC-Charlotte Urban Institute data
- (2) Urban Institute survey of 375 randomly selected University City citizens in December 2002
- (3) Urban Institute Annual Survey of 800 Mecklenburg citizens in 2002
- (4) 2002 US Census
- (5) University City Strategic Plan for University City Partners
- (6) UCCBP focus groups

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CBI AND LEVINE MUSEUM OF THE NEW SOUTH HELP COMMUNITY EXPLORE "COURAGE"



Community Building Initiative is facilitating a series of dialogues entitled

"Conversations on Courage" in conjunction with the Levine Museum of the New South's exhibit **COURAGE: The Carolina Story that Changed America.**

As of the middle of April, hundreds of individuals and over 30 small groups of between 10 to 25 people from area schools, businesses, non-profit organizations and government agencies have toured the **Courage** exhibit and participated in facilitated discussions.

The exhibit opened at the Museum on January 31 and will run through August 15, 2004. (For directions and information on the exhibit, go to www.museumofthenewsouth.org.)

COURAGE marks the 50th anniversary of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling that ended segregated education in the United States. The exhibit highlights the story of Rev. J.A. De Laine and others in the Carolinas who filed the first of five desegregation lawsuits that eventually became

the *Brown* case. The exhibit features artifacts, stories and opportunities for interactive learning for individuals and groups.

"Conversations on Courage" are facilitated small group dialogues led by CBI-trained facilitators. The dialogue sessions are designed to focus on the exhibit's personal impact and ask participants to compare perspectives, impressions and lessons learned with each other. Groups are invited to register for a dialogue session by calling Project Manager Stephanie Counts at 704.333.1887, extension 240.

"Community Building Initiative is very proud to be a part of the **COURAGE** offering to this community in partnership with the Levine Museum of the New South," says Dianne English, Executive Director of CBI. "The *Brown v. Board* decision was a turning point in this region's history, and this exhibit causes us to think about decisions we're facing in our community today that require courage at the individual and group level," she says.

"Conversations on Courage" is supported by a grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

COURAGE

"WE GREW AS A CLASS AND WE GREW AS PEOPLE" LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE CLASS II COMPLETE

The second class of CBI's Leadership Development Initiative (LDI) has completed its 10-month program. The class of 22 was composed of board members and senior staff from 12 non-profit organizations and was designed to increase the capacity and commitment of non-profit organizations in Charlotte-Mecklenburg to demonstrate racial and ethnic inclusion and equity.

LDI Class II Member Felicia Hall commented on the experience by saying, "We came in with our preconceived notions that this was 'just another one of those leadership programs' but we walked away with experiences, revelations, stories and friends that would say otherwise. To think that you could bring a group of strangers together and they would connect around something so personal as their past, present and future opinions, thoughts, life lessons, rude awakenings, hurts, disappointments and celebrations about race was nothing short of amazing. We grew as a class and we grew as people."

"The Leadership Development Initiative program features a variety of presentations on key community issues, facilitated discussions and group activities that build personal connections among the participants while bolstering their capacity to affect positive change within their organizations," according to LDI designer Octavia Seawell.

"I am now clear that I have a responsibility to ensure that my organization considers all aspects of diversity, the impact it has on our goals and mission and ensure that the community we serve has the gist of our new-found knowledge," says one member of LDI Class II.

LDI will continue to focus on building capacity within non-profit organizations, and Community Building Initiative is seeking participants from area non-profit boards and senior staff for LDI Class III. Please call the Community Building Initiative at the number below if you have the name of a candidate for LDI.

CBI STAFF:

- DIANNE ENGLISH (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)
 - CHRISTI LEE (PROGRAM COORDINATOR)
 - ANNETTA FOARD (ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR)
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[From left] Bridget-Anne Hampden (Levine Museum of the New South), Diego Anselmo (Foundation For The Carolinas), David Head (Gateway Village YMCA) and Omega Autrey (Metro YMCA, McCrorey Family YMCA) share their perceptions and thoughts as part of LDI Class II.

UPCOMING

Two new classes of Leadership Development Initiative are being launched, including LDI Class III and the inaugural **LDImpact**, a program that continues exploration of organizational capacity for access, inclusion and equity with organizations represented in LDI Class I or II. (For more details on **LDImpact**, look inside this issue.)

CBI will serve as the project manager for **Crossroads**, a series of workshops involving 40 organizations from the Charlotte area. **Crossroads** will use the scenarios developed during the Social Capital Civic Lab as the basis for creating organizationally-focused scenarios, allowing organizations to develop their own stories within a broader community context.

POETS, COMMUNITY LEADERS SHARE VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

LDIMPACT BEGINS

Community Building Initiative has launched **LDImpact** to focus on deepening the commitment and skill of non-profit organizations and leaders to achieve racial and ethnic inclusion and equity. Organizations with which CBI has established a collaborative relationship through participation in other LDI offerings were invited to enroll board members and staff in **LDImpact**.

Twenty-three individuals from nine organizations are participating in Class I of **LDImpact**. The first two sessions of **LDImpact** in February and March have focused on the following:

- Building a learning community
- Establishing a conceptual framework for influencing at the individual, group, organizational and community levels
- Understanding the different perspectives of racial identity groups

The following organizations are participating in the inaugural **LDImpact**:

Afro-American Cultural Center	DeAlva Glenn David Taylor Michel Vaughan Cesar Velando
Children's Law Center	Jeff Passe
Foundation For The Carolinas	Reggie Hubbard Jenene Seymour
International House	Niki Simmons David Stewart
Latin American Coalition	Lisette Garcia-Johanssen Maria Quant
Levine Museum of the New South	Francisco Alvarado Susan Sidebottom
Mecklenburg County Bar	Kobi Brinson Jon Buchan Nancy Roberson
Urban League	Jeff Bradsher Gene Buccelli
YMCA	Bill DeLoache (Gateway) Natan Feldman (McCrorey) Jill Ibbotson (Gateway) Bob King (Metro) Keith Vinson (McCrorey)

"What Kind of Community Do I See?" was the theme of a special event hosted by Community Building Initiative on November 14, 2003. Nearly 100 community leaders heard four possible scenarios of Charlotte's future followed by spoken reactions from area poets.

The scenarios were developed by the Social Capital Civic Lab Steering Committee, composed of representatives from 21 organizations working together in a process to devise possible ways for the community to increase trust and social capital, particularly focusing on racial and ethnic trust. The process was funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and facilitated and managed by Community Building Initiative under the auspices of Foundation For The Carolinas.

The scenarios will be the centerpiece of **Crossroads Charlotte**, a civic engagement project facilitated by Community Building Initiative and designed to involve leaders and community organizations in meaningful dialogue and to promote individual and organizational actions that will build social capital and promote access, equity, inclusion and trust. **Crossroads** will occur in two phases over two to three years with major funding from Foundation For The Carolinas.

Raychelle Heath has recently released her first poetry Chapbook entitled, "**between tea leaves and tree leaves, by sunRay H.**" which may be purchased online from her publishers at www.ThriftPoeticArts.com. Ms. Heath has donated half of the proceeds of her book to further the publishing of new and rising poets in the Charlotte Metro area. You may contact Raychelle Heath at feedastarvingpoet@hotmail.com.



Amro Osman, an Egyptian-American who has been an active poet in the Charlotte area for over four years, reads "That Was Then, This is Now." For a copy of the poem, contact Amro at Amro@WordPhoria.com.



Heath and Osman are part of the poetic group called **WordPhoria**, led by Charlottean Jessica Deltac (pictured right), who coordinated the poets' appearances.



Clockwise: Todd Mansfield (President, Crosland Properties, and member of the Social Capital Steering Committee) shares his perspective during table discussions; Dan Ramirez (Mecklenburg County Commissioner) and Peggy Gartner (Executive Director, Blumenthal Foundation) share personal reactions to scenarios; Nancy Carter (Charlotte City Council Member) asks the group of over 100 CBI Stakeholder's Breakfast attendees to think about the implications of each scenario in their own organizations.

for my father
an original poem by Raychelle Heath
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his name is not mr. it's dr.
the youngest of 11 children
the only one not sent to war
b/c he was smart
he wore suits to school
even as a little boy
tho the family could hardly afford to eat
and he went to school
and went to school
benedict nyu duke

his name is not mr. it's dr.
he plays the piano like a fiend
and loves his children
taught English
then became a principal
then a superintendent
we didn't see him much then
but we were proud

his name is not mr. it's dr.
but that wasn't good enough
to keep him in charge
the good old boy system
still applies here
and we don't care that test scores are up
and the kids want to learn
you're making us look bad

his name is not mr. it's dr.
and it took him a while to realize
that even tho he'd been knocked down
b/c of his color
he was still somebody
now he watches his sons
go through the same struggle
wondering when it will ever end

his name is not mr. it's dr.
and I didn't always understand
what he meant to me
what he means to all of us
but now I see
why he was slow to trust
and always wanted us to have the best
it's a struggle that's hard to grasp
unless you've lived it your whole life
but I have
so I suggest you address him properly
he may not appear as the world would have him
but as God made him, he's doing just fine



From left: Gisela G. Serrano (Wordphoria Poet), Nina Wright (Deputy Chief, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department), Cammie Hauptfuhrer (Community Volunteer), James Pughsley (Superintendent, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools), Jessica Deltac (Founder and Poet, Wordphoria) and Mac Everett (Executive V.P., Wachovia Bank, retired, and CBI Co-chair) discuss their reactions to scenarios written by the Social Capital Steering Committee. (For membership of the Social Capital Steering Committee, go to www.communitybuildinginitiative.org.)