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PROVIDING INFORMATION ON RESOURCES AND EVENTS THAT IMPROVE THE LIFESTYLE OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY

ALD. DIXON HOLDS PHASE 1 NSP\LAWNDALE REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE MEETING FOR 24TH WARD

Paul M. Stewart

The Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), from the administration of President Barack Obama, appears to have generated a tremendous amount of interest in the North Lawndale Community, based on the 85-90 persons who attended a two hour presentation on NSP Phase 1 Saturday, June 20, 2009. The meeting, sponsored by 24th Ward Alderman Sharon Denise Dixon, was held in the gymnasium of the North Lawndale College Preparatory School. Ald. Dixon, who introduced the plan for the 24th Ward, along with The Lawndale Reinvestment Initiative (LRI) Program in her May 20, 2009 Town Hall Meeting, brought the non-profit facilitator for the City of Chicago NSP, Mercy Housing, to present the components of the program. One of the more unique components, acquisition of a "rehab" (renovation) foreclosure through rent-to-own drew a lot of interest from the audience.

The NSP is a nationwide program rolled out by the Obama Administration targeted to stabilize neighborhoods devastated by the effects of the sub-prime loan



Three young men who came to find out about summer employment attended the Lawndale Reinvestment Initiative and were informed the Chicago Youth Ready summer jobs program deadline was extended beyond June 19 to July 6th.

mortgage foreclosure crisis. Major cities like Chicago, have been given multi-million dollar grants to begin the process of re-stabilizing communities heavily targeted with sub-prime

loans. In Chicago, African-Americans were 54 times more likely to receive a sub-prime loan with Hispanic-Americans and low-to-moderate income Caucasians at rates of 47 and

23 times more when compared to the majority. Chicago has received a NSP Phase 1 grant of \$55.2 million. The program directs municipalities, teamed with experienced 501(c)(3) non-profit housing development corporations, such as Mercy Housing, to purchase foreclosed properties in bulk from banks. Mercy Housing will then facilitate the sale of the property to qualified local developers who will develop the properties at no cost for resale to local residents. The developers will receive grants and other advantages for their efforts. "NSP Phase 1 was designed to purchase foreclosed units" according to Henrietta Owusu, Project Coordinator, Department of Housing and Economic Development, Trenton, NJ. Ms. Owusu, recently in Chicago for the Center For Housing Policy National Housing Conference "Solutions for Working Families", 2009 Learning Conference on State and Local Housing Policy, June 28-30 at the Palmer House, was the point person on Trenton being awarded a \$2.5 million NSP Phase 1 Grant. Ms.

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State Budget Cuts Alarm Youth Services in Illinois



David E. Whittaker, Executive Director of Chicago Area Project speaks about the devastation that the Illinois Budget Crisis is having on youth programs and about the importance of passing a budget that restores those programs during a press conference sponsored by the Chicago Youth Services Network at the State of Illinois Building in downtown Chicago on July 14, 2009.

Father Pfleger: "The Burr Oaks Cemetery scandal has caused an angry outburst—and that is understandable," he said. But what about the living? Our youth are dying in our streets. Why don't we care as much for the living as the dead?" Chicago Youth Services Network, a coalition of more than 40 youth service organizations including Chicago Area Project (CAP) and The ARK of St.

Sabina held a press conference on Tuesday, July 14, 2009 at the State of Illinois Building, 100 W. Randolph St. in Chicago. Their message to the Illinois State Legislature: "The Budget Crisis is Devastating Youth Services—AND Jeopardizing the Future of our Youth. The Doomsday Budget is dooming youth services in Metropolitan Chicago and Illinois."

Speakers at the press conference

included Rev. Michael L. Pfleger, pastor of The Faith Community of Saint Sabina, 1210 W. 78th Place in Chicago. "I'm tired of politicians getting up and saying that they care about our children and then cut youth programs," stated Father Pfleger. "Stop lying! No government official or administrator should take another paycheck until our social programs and our youth programs are restored.

Father Pfleger also compared the uproar over Burr Oaks Cemetery to the reaction to the closing of youth programs. "The Burr Oaks Cemetery scandal has caused an angry outburst—and that is understandable," he said. But what about the living? Our youth are dying in our streets. Why don't we care as much for the living as the dead?"

Another speaker was David E. Whittaker, Executive Director of Chicago Area Project, which has worked with grass-roots affiliate organizations since 1934 to address the problems of juvenile delinquency and provide services to youth and families in some of the poorest communities in Chicago and the suburbs. Whittaker compared the Doomsday Budget to Hurricane Katrina. "Katrina was a natural disaster," he stated. The Illinois Budget Crisis is Illinois' Katrina. This Katrina is not a natural disaster, it is man made. It is destroying the social services and youth services infrastructure that acts as a safety net for the citizens of Illinois."

Ella Robinson from the Mid-Austin Steering Committee reminded legislators that they were elected by the people to work for the people, our children, and our future. "We are voters and we will remember in November what you've done," she said. Irving Wright from Roll Call, an group that works with ex-offenders at the Major Adams Community Committee on the westside pointed out youth centers keep young people off the street and out of prison. "There is funding for prisons, but no funds for youth centers

that keep kids off the street," he said. "If you don't give the youth something positive to do, then they will do something negative."

Members of the Chicago Youth Service Network pointed out that the Illinois Budget Crisis is already wreaking havoc on youth services throughout Metropolitan Chicago and the entire State of Illinois. However, they also pointed out that it is not too late. The Chicago Youth Service Network and the youth and families they serve called on the Illinois State Legislature and Governor Quinn to act now, before it's too late and the safety net of youth and social services has been irreparably destroyed.

Speakers at the press conference issued the following demand: Now is the time to act and save these crucial social services. The leaders in the Illinois legislature must act immediately to pass the tax increase proposed by Governor Pat Quinn. This tax increase will address Illinois' \$12 billion deficit and allow the legislature to craft a fair budget that will preserve and strengthen social services—including youth services—in Illinois.

"Youth services are being eliminated just when they are needed more than ever as families become destabilized due to the economy and increased violence in our communities," stated Whittaker. "Youth murders have reached a crisis level in Chicago with at least 40 deaths. Scores of other Chicago children and teenagers have been wounded in

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# NLCN

## 2009 FOCUS

### HEALTH & THE ECONOMY

One of the major issues of the recent presidential campaign was health care. Health care costs have become an escalating burden for employers and consumers alike. Research has shown that total health spending is reduced when consumers bear more responsibility for their health and the expenses related to it. One of the best ways to increase life expectancy while reducing disability is to encourage a culture of self-care practices.

Self care is personal health maintenance. It is the care taken by individuals towards their own health and well being. Self care includes the actions individuals take in their role as care givers for their children, their families, and others to stay fit and to maintain good physical, mental, and spiritual health.

Extreme self care means making choices and decisions that honor our soul in everyday living. It means feeding ourselves whole foods, moving our bodies every day, balancing silence with activity, and surrounding ourselves with supportive, like-minded people who are committed to improving or restoring health and uplifting the quality of their lives as well.

More than 75% of people surveyed in the United Kingdom said if they had guidance or support from a professional or peer they would feel far more confident about taking care of their own health. Research shows that supporting self care can improve health outcomes and increase patient satisfaction. Our intention is to support individuals, families, institutions, and communities in their efforts to practice extreme self care. During 2009, the North Lawndale Community News focuses on cost-effective ways you can improve your health by practicing self care.

The Economy has made itself the number one issue with gas prices reaching almost \$5.00 per gallon and having a domino effect on everything else sold, except housing stock which experienced a terrible decline with the high rate of foreclosures. The Chicago metropolitan area reported 5,821 new foreclosure filings in December, a foreclosure rate of one new foreclosure filing for every 499 households — more than twice the national average. That brought the area's fourth quarter foreclosure total to 16,949 and its 2006 foreclosure total to 57,706, according to Realty Trac.

Even transportation on the CTA went on the rise with one day passes increasing by seventy-five cents and monthly passes increased by \$10.00 from \$75.00 to \$85.00. Those are just a few of the increases.

The North Lawndale Community News this year is expanding on last years financial focus to give attention to its broader parent the economy. Saving and making smarter shopping decisions will help stop us losing through wasteful choices. Finding new ways to increase our income is a necessity for many in an area where gentrification is not going to stop.

One of the hardest things to change is behavior. Modifying behavior seems to be easy when it comes to pain. Social pain lack of money has to be extreme for many to change. 2009 should be different for many and of course many will continue toward economic mistakes and financial ruin.

But in today's information society there is no excuse for not making smart choices. Financial literacy alone is not enough. Look what happened to Lehman Brothers and what's happening to many other financial institutions let alone individuals, families, and small businesses.

Solutions come to the internet, books, economic experts, financial counselors and experts, the media and your economical neighbors.

The North Lawndale Community News will tap into resources and share them with you, our reader. So to help you improve your health and your economy keep reading The North Lawndale News. We say yours because some may not modify their behavior, except when the pain comes and still some won't change.. Your input is also welcome If you have some information that is beneficial please submit it. Let's make smarter health and economic moves for life in 2009.

## THE NORTH LAWDALE COMMUNITY NEWS

The North Lawndale Community News is now published weekly by Strategic Human Services. Our purpose is to help inform our community on resources, events, and issues relevant to them and our neighboring communities. Our community includes those who live, work, worship in, and/or care about North Lawndale. Our focus is on positive, productive solutions, that will improve the lifestyle of our community members.

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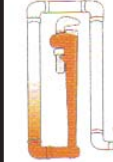
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# AT THE FLICKS

David H. Schultz, film critic

**HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF BLOOD PRINCE** (\*\*\*/2) It's time to get serious and "Man Up!" for Harry Potter in his latest film installment. Where all things fairy tale-like have departed from Hogwarts along with the magic that saved the day in earlier films.

With the city looking dark and dingy that seems to introduce the evil that emerges from the gathering storm clouds with a sinister configuration that represents the Dark Lord who sends down his trio of Death Eaters who are behind the collapse of a public bridge.

Now, Harry Potter (Daniel Radcliffe) who never overlooked his responsibility as the "Chosen One", which made him a media star in the news from the opening scene of Potter being besieged by the swarm of flashbulb popping paparazzi.

However, Harry is unable to satisfy his "growing pains" with women. When Harry manages to arrange an after hour date with a waitress in the subway that is interrupted by Dumbledore (Michael Gambon), who zaps them to a village outside of town to meet retired professor Horace Slughorn (Jim Broadbent) who once taught Harry's late mother whose lured out of retirement for the opportunity to teach the Chosen One as the Professor against the Dark Arts Potions at Hogwarts that Dumbledore hopes to combat against Voldemort

Where a classroom of students including Potter are asked by Slughorn to see which could perfect the "Liquid Luck" potion, that Harry manages to achieve with a little help from an advanced potion book that was the property with writings from the Half Blood



Prince. But who is the identity of this person?

There are mysteries and secret identities about that emerge along with the rites of passage for Harry whom Dumbledore reunites with his schoolmates caught up in their hidden romances, Ron Weasley (Rupert Grint) is still slow to notice the admiration Hermione Granger (Emma Watson) has for him, that leads her to cry on Harry's shoulder about. While Harry can't get into overzealous interest from groupie-like Laura Lovegood.

All of which are lighthearted and amusing diversions compared to the stark contrast brewing from Professor Severus Snape (Alan Rickman) who has already met with the Dark Lord who has made up his mind for Harry Potter. (Do I detect a Darth Vader/ Luke Skywalker-like moment from Star Wars? The Empire Strikes Back? here for the next Potter film?) While Draco Malfoy ((Tom Felton)

becomes conflicted when the opportunity presents itself to commit the most heinous act against one of the lead characters

For those who strictly like their movies to stick faithfully to the book, chapter by chapter. Scriptor Steve Kloves again takes on JK Rowling's massive book and restructures, saves and removes some incidental moments and the violent fat in its finale to worthwhile results, surprises and a fair amount of genuine humor.

"Half Blood Prince" is the most sober screen adaptation in the "Harry Potter" franchise to date. Because this marks the characters' stage of transition into the real world, dealing with their emotions and their obligations. While maintaining their loyalty toward each other and the school. This film is also reworked well through Kloves' script in

See Flicks page 6

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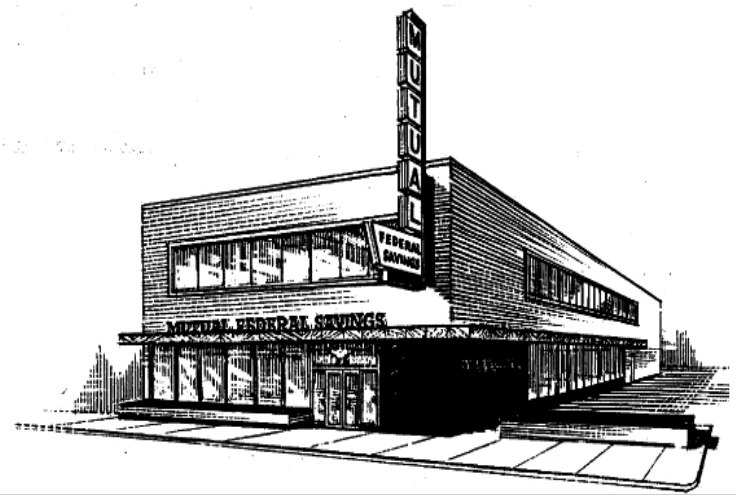
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## Doomsday from front page



"GOVERNOR, BUDGET CUTS EQUAL DEATH" is the message on the coffin brought to the press conference by youth from the Greater Roseland Community Committee (GRCC). One of the programs that is in jeopardy is GRCC's Youth Voices Against Violence, a group of young people who are working to find nonviolent alternatives for youth and families in the Roseland community.

shootings, and there are concerns that the gun violence is going to escalate now that school is out for the summer. We are jeopardizing the future—not only of our youth, but of Illinois. One of the youth leaders who spoke during our annual Youth Democracy Day in Springfield on May 28th, summarized this well when she said, 'When we are given enough resources, we young people can strengthen our communities. But now the government wants to cut the very programs that help us become the future.'"

The Chicago Youth Service Network pointed out that the budget crisis is already having disastrous consequences on youth services throughout Metropolitan Chicago. Youth programs that have been forced to close down include Community Services, Grant-In-Aid, Title XX, Teen Reach, the Juvenile Justice

Diversion Program, and Department of Alcohol and Substance Abuse programs. All staff involved in these programs have been laid off. Remaining programs and salaries have been cut by 50%.

The impact on organizations that serve youth and their families is between 30% and 75%. Up to 60% of these organizations have already been forced to completely close their doors. Thousands of youth and families have lost services including summer programming, summer youth employment, Teen Reach, out-of school and after school programming, the Juvenile Justice Diversion Program, mentoring services, sports, recreational and cultural arts programming, service learning, alcohol and substance abuse programs, college prep programs, literacy programming, etc.

One of the programs that is being gutted is the Teen Reach Program, designed to provide delinquency prevention services to youth-at-risk and their families in some of Chicago's poorest communities including Englewood, Roseland and the westside. Teen Reach services include Academic Enrichment, Life Skills Education, Parental Involvement, Recreation, Sports, and Cultural Artistic Activities, Positive Adult Mentors, Service Learning Education, including employment opportunities for both youth and adults.. The Teen Reach Programs administered by Chicago Area Project that will be forced to close include those at the ARK of St. Sabina, the Greater Roseland Community Committee, and Harvest Holistic Teen Reach at Williams Elementary School on the southside and those at Major Adams Academy and St. Malachy on the westside.

According to Whittaker, if allowed to stand, the Doomsday Budget will be Illinois' Katrina. "Just as Katrina devastated the infrastructure of New Orleans—the Doomsday Budget would destroy the entire social service—and youth services—infrastructure of the State of Illinois," he stated. "In the 1930s during the Great Depression, wise civic and government leaders laid the framework for the social services infrastructure as it exists in the United States today. We are now in what you could call a Great Recession. Will the legislative leaders of Illinois unwisely close their minds to the lessons of history and allow the doomsday budget to be enacted? Or will these legislative leaders have the wisdom to heed the lessons of the past that recognized that social services are a vital part of the recovery process during an economic crisis? We pray that the Illinois Legislature will take the path of wisdom. They must pass the tax increase and pass a state budget that fully funds social services including youth services."

## Flicks from page 4

setting the stage for the ultimate showdown between good versus evil for Potter and his unseen but mentioned arch fiend, Voldemort in the last Potter book, "Deathly Hollows" that is being filmed into two epic movies.

Like the book and movies before this one, "Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince" a literary work that multi layered with their symbolism to life in a world where kids can't be kids for too long due to the changing events around them that they must eventually confront.

This is quite an intelligent fantasy adventure that movies should be more compelling than just about loud noises of explosions and chaos along with the "eye candy" special effects. "Half Blood Prince" is quite an illuminating film to watch.

PG-13; 153min. A Warner Bros. Pictures Release – Presented at selected theaters

**(500) DAYS OF SUMMER (\*\*\*)**  
 "(500) Days of Summer" details the relationship within the romance between a young couple that shows how things went wrong in this small, cynical comedy. Told through a male perspective, shown in chronological order yet chosen by selective numbers from the days into their relationship.

This observational comedy offers an amusing and fertile look into relationships before and after the love. Delivered with a certain amount of truth in its humor through their performances. Ingeniously shown like a ritual along with the firm, deep voiced narration that you would expect from an animal mating documentary. A cleverly assembled comedy full of hilarity and irony.

Insightful yet familiar comedy chronicles the year and a half around, Tom

**See page 6**



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Tali Bakhit

## FROM SISTA TO SISTER: “Uuhm, that smells, good!” But is it good for you? We Are What We Eat (Part II)

**Chicago, IL-** In this great city of the famous Vienna hotdog and deep dish pizza, eating what one believes to be a good vegetarian dish could be quite discouraging. But did you know that eating a vegetarian dish could literally save your life.

I remember the days when delicious link sausage, crispy bacon, sunny side up eggs, and a plate of cheese grits would fill me up in the morning. And the breakfast would not be complete if I wasn't able to wash it all down with a nice tall glass of Florida orange juice. It was just the other day, on a beautiful Saturday morning around 8:30 AM I was walking down the street in my beautiful West side neighborhood when I had a flash back of those times of such unhealthy, and irresponsible eating. As I walked down the

street, I smelled the aroma, of my Saturday mornings of the past. When if I couldn't have a full plate of sausage, bacon, eggs, and grits, my day just wouldn't be complete. I knew exactly what house it was coming out of, and everything inside of me wanted to knock on the door and give a lesson on organic and healthy eating. It may sound quite strange, but according to my experience, when a community of people help each other out by way of lending a helping hand, nothing is to be expected but quality results. It's the same concept as "A family that prays together stays together."

That Sunday evening I interviewed Chef Sham, of Taste Icons, a television program that airs on CANTV here in Chicago. Chef Sham focuses on healthy and organic eating. During this interview one major answer that Chef Sham gave was so significant to me that

I believe it should be shared with the world. The question was based on the difference between organic and conventional food and why he feels that eating vegetarian dishes will help save a life, and a community. Chef Sham said that "Pesticides and insecticides in vegetables are one of the major causes in cancer and if it isn't organic, I'm more then sure that it was grown with a chemical, this to me is very helpful information." After Chef Sham said those very words, I pause because it sent chills through my spine. It also gave me another flash back, this one was of my uncles death who suffered from stomach cancer. No one knew exactly what caused the cancer but according to his diagnosis the cancer was caused due to something that my uncle ate. But what? What was it that he ate that would cause him his life, and how exactly is one to find out, especially if this cancer was built up over the years as a result of the chemicals that are grown in our vegetables, and injected into our meats. How is one to determine such a thing? Especially when the diagnosis of this captivating disease comes years after eating what many believe is good for them? How does a vegetable that is suppose to be good for you cause such a tragedy? And how does a delicious steak that is suppose to be full of protein cause such pain? These are the many questions that we all have as we go through life's journeys, and we become more mature, and in tune with our bodies and who and what we are. But it's only until we began to help each other in ways needed in our communities that we began to awaken to the most important part of who and what we are in this life. We are one, so let's began to help each other resolve the problems of unnecessary disease in our community's by eating right, and building a community based on it's needs.



Chef Sham

And remember, the next time that your nose and taste buds are aroused by a tempting aroma that causes you to say "Uuhm, that smells good!" Ask yourself, "Is it good for me?"

For more on Chef Sham's healthy tips email him at onchicproductions@yahoo.com Peace & Light My Sister's

*Tali Bakhit is a visionary journalist, writer, entrepreneur, and owner of her own company Bon-chic Productions. Born and raised in the inner city of Philadelphia, she knows the struggles that young African American sisters go through on the everyday basis. As a writer for the the North Lawndale Community Newspaper, Tali has made a loyal commitment to give back to the Sisters and prove yes we can all get along and create a since of loyalty.*

### North Lawndale Olympics 2009 SATURDAY, JULY 25<sup>TH</sup>



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### Flicks from page 5

Henson (Joseph Gordon Levitt), a shy individual who's a trained architect working as a writer for a greeting card company who eyes the new office secretary, Summer Finn (Zooey Deschanel), who is seen by his co-workers and friends as someone out of his league.

Yet, the two eventually meet up on an elevator on day 3. Tom is looking for love in Summer who takes note of her favorite group, The Smiths playing on his iPod.

Still, early signs of trouble begin to appear. Almost at the outset, Summer mentions she doesn't believe in love and views him only as a "best friend." When clearly Tom wants more and remains undaunted and infatuated by her into their early days together.

Then on their 28<sup>th</sup> day, the couple encounters their first argument during an office gathering kanoeke bar party. Where they end up "agreeing to disagree" on their conflicted viewpoints on the reality of love for the sake of their friendship.

Still, their relationship blossoms on certain days, playing through the model rooms in an IKEA store on the 34<sup>th</sup> day, which eventually leads to their night of sex that invigorates Tom walking the streets to walk. While envisioning himself in a street dance through the park to the beat of a Hall & Oates song.

But the best fantasy sequence comes on their 314<sup>th</sup> day, when Tom and Summer go to an art movie house and envision themselves in a scene on the screen from an Ingmar Bergman movie that is clever, hilarious and smart in its symbolism of love and relationship over grief.

However, Summer's love averted mentality begins to hamper their progress and they break-up that only result in Tom's poor work performance and an unsuccessful attempt at blind dating to indicate how he can't get her out of his mind.

In this comedic attempt to analyze and dramatize how relationship falter or even succeed. The idea behind it all isn't as scientific as we think. Perhaps over emphasized as we already know from the outset, but told by the narration that it's all "coincident", not always mapped out strategy based on the battle of the sexes. Love happens by chance.

But still, the comedy serves itself like "one viewpoint fits all". When the most viewers can get is how it plays off the irony on how we view and relate to these coincidents. It's all another amusing example of the more we understand, the more we don't; when it comes to love and relationships.

**R; 96min. A Fox Searchlight Pictures Release – presented at selected theaters**

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### NSP from front page

Owusu, currently working on submission of Trenton's NSP Phase 2, which is targeted at residential ownership of 1 to 4 unit property, stated Trenton's key for success was making sure the City partnered with strong private developers in order to achieve an integrated implementation of the program. NSP Phase 2 will allow abandoned and vacant buildings, which are a major contributor to neighborhood de-stabilization, to also be purchased with grant funds

Alderman Dixon appears to have the same model in mind for the 24<sup>th</sup> Ward NSP "Team". Christine Raguso, Acting Commissioner, City of Chicago Department of Community Development and her colleague Katie Ludwig discussed the city's role in the plan. William W. Towns, Vice President, Community Action Plans, Mercy Housing & Mercy Portfolio Services was on hand to present Mercy's role and mission as the conduit between the banks Real Estate Owned (REO) Departments, and the Local Developers. Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) was represented by Charles Leeks, Neighborhood Director, who spoke on (home) ownership through education, affordable mortgages and credit worthiness. Representatives of Covenant Bank and National City Bank provided tips on Mortgage Readiness. Phyllis Logan, local realtor and well-known housing activist, and fellow member of the 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District Foreclosure Prevention Advisory Committee, gave the audience information on Loan Modification Assistance, with a "guarantee" provided from the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) available through Congressman Danny Davis's office (773.533.7520). Developers present included Kim Jackson, Executive Director, Lawndale Christian Development Corporation, Kevin McAndrews, President, Clear Cut Builders, Inc., Mazen Azman and Baha Hamayel of Holyland Construction, Inc., Alex & Yev from the Avalon Network and Kevin Rogers of Lorsch Construction a Builder Partner in the City of Chicago, Department of Housing "New Homes for Chicago" Program.

Several presenters mentioned the credit crisis by stating "the banks are not lending" in their remarks. This writer pointed out to a presenter that while it is true mortgage credit has tightened considerably, FHA & VA mortgages are being approved with FICO scores as low as 580 as long as the borrower's loan file receives an "accept" through an Automated Underwriting System software. Fannie Mae's Desktop Underwriter

(DU), Freddie Mac's Loan Prospector (LP), or FHA's Automated Underwriting System (AUS), are examples of automated underwriting systems which take all of a borrower's financial characteristics; i.e., credit, savings pattern, length of time on job, ratio of increase of proposed housing expense to present, ability to meet obligations in a timely manner in recent history (12-24 months) and several other factors to render an underwriting decision.

The LRI Program portion of the meeting focused on resources available to 24<sup>th</sup> Ward constituents for access to and improving personal and family economic opportunity. Resources represented included Mayor Daley's, City of Chicago Department of Community Development WorkNet Chicago through The Chicago Workforce Centers, Cook County Sheriff's Office (Assistance Agency matrix), Deer Rehabilitation Services Inc. Counseling And Training Services, Chicago Department of Human Services, Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, and "Home to Stay" The Chicago Continuum of Care Coordinated through the City's Department of Housing and Department of Human Services aimed at ending homelessness.

The unasked question of the day is how a community with a Median Income of approximately \$19,650 can afford to purchase redeveloped property even without the developer taking a profit. Some of the services listed in the previous paragraph are part of the answer as well as a novel program offered by the Chicago Office of Local Support Initiatives Corporation (LISC) Network of Centers for Working Families (CWF). This program is the follow-up offered through 12 of the 18 CDC's who participated in the 1998 Quality of Life Planning initiative called New Communities Program (NCP). In a follow-up article we will explore further how the LRI Program and the LISC/Chicago Network of CWF are positioned to provide the network of services aimed at improving the economic viability of working families, who are the foundation of any Neighborhood Stabilization Program.

Paul M. Stewart has over 22 years experience in the mortgage industry. Mr. Stewart has participated in the NAACP/CBC initiative With Ownership Wealth (WOW), 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District Housing & Foreclosure Prevention Advisory Councils and the New Communities Program (NCP) (Housing) in North Lawndale. Mr. Stewart's column "Mortgage Talk" will appear as a regular feature of NLCN Economic Development Page. He can be reached directly at (773) 290-9419 or via email: venturefinancial@yahoo.com

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## Gov. Quinn Signs bill giving "Illinois Jobs Now!"

Travles R. Lane



Declaring, "If you are able-bodied, we want you working in the Land of Lincoln," Governor Pat Quinn signed into law Monday a \$31 million capital construction plan Monday that aims to stimulate the state's sagging economy in the midst of the current global recession.

Marshall high school on Chicago's westside hosted the signing ceremony attended by a contingent of state and local politicians as well as business and labor leaders eager to applaud a program that Quinn says will preserve or create more than 439,000 job.

The plan also includes \$40 million for construction of a West Side campus of Chicago State University, according to state Senator Rickey Hendon (D-5th), who attended along with state Representative Annazette Collins (D-10th) and 28th Ward Chicago Alderman Ed Smith.

Dubbed Illinois Jobs Now!, the law represents the state's first capital spending pursuit in over a decade and comes despite the fact the governor and General Assembly had yet to agree on a statewide budget for the fiscal year that began July 1. The plan is to be funded by the legalization of video poker and higher taxes on liquor, candy, coffee and tea and personal hygiene product. Vehicle licensing fees will also rise.

The two sides returned to Springfield on Tuesday in the hopes of passing a limited measure to fund state operations until November after the governor's earlier call for an income tax increase floundered in the face of

entrenched legislative opposition.

But Democrats and Republicans alike were all smiles and congratulatory Monday as Quinn quoted Franklin D. Roosevelt before signing the bills, saying "We have to prime the pump" of the economy with a massive public works effort which includes money for roads, schools, bridges and other infrastructure outlays. The plan is also expected to create new "green-collar" weatherization jobs while funding a high-speed rail project from Chicago to St. Louis.

The governor also addressed the social implications of the state's lack of a budget by again quoting Roosevelt in saying that "the best social program is a J-O-B."

"This is a crucial economic recovery initiative that will generate what's needed most in Illinois: jobs, jobs, jobs," Quinn said. "With Illinois Jobs Now!, our state rises to the challenge of building a viable green economy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that serves our people and strengthens our businesses."

Mayor Richard Daley, Republican Senate Leader Christine Radogno, and Republican House Leader Tom Cross also spoke to the standing room crowd in the Marshall High auditorium as did as Illinois AFL-CIO President Mike Carrigan, Chicago Federation of Labor President Dennis Gannon, Chicago and Cook County Building & Construction Trades Council President Tom Villanova and Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Jerry Roper.

Juan Rangel, the CEO of United Neighborhood Organization (UNO) and Jacky Grimshaw, Vice President of Policy at the Center for Neighborhood Technology also addressed the audience, which included a number of hecklers, one of which was removed by Chicago Police.

Lauding the rare bipartisan effort in Springfield that crafted the super majority (60 votes) needed to pass the plan, Quinn added that with capital spending finally addressed, the General Assembly must now earnestly tackle the task of approving a balanced state budget.

"Isn't it amazing what human beings can do when no one worries about who gets the credit," said the governor, quoting Ronald Reagan. Quinn then added, "We don't care who gets the credit, we just want to get to work."



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