

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
COMMUNITY OUTREACH
PARTNERSHIP CENTER**

**GRANT # COPC-NJ-98-029
*SEMIANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT***

JULY 1, 2000 – DECEMBER 31, 2000

PART A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Submitted to:

**Armand Carriere, Government Technical Representative
Office of Community Partnerships
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

Submitted by:

**Robert W. Lake
Center for Urban Policy Research
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Tel 732-932-3133, ext. 521**

**George Paschalis
Newark Center for Families and Communities
Rutgers University
Newark, NJ 07102
Tel 973-353-1946**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Rutgers Community Outreach Partnership Center (RCOPC) has completed its second year of activities in the West Side Park community in Newark, New Jersey. During the current reporting period – July-December, 2000 – we have focused on several major projects in the areas of neighborhood revitalization, healthcare, youth and education, and economic development.

RCOPC continues to meet or exceeded all of the goals in all of the functional categories identified in the Project Management Work Plan in our original funding proposal.

Following is a summary of major highlights for the past six months.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

- RCOPC's 40-member Community Advisory Committee met on December 6th at the West Side Park Salvation Army. The very successful meeting reported on recent activities and charted the RCOPC agenda for the next six months.
- Through NCFC's Community Scholars program, 16 Rutgers-Newark students participated in RCOPC activities with West Side Park community partners during the summer and fall semesters.

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

- CUPR continued to provide coordination, support and technical assistance for the West Side Park Community Technology Network, consisting of networked community computer centers operated by four community partner organizations.
- In collaboration with the Corinthian Housing Development Corporation, an RCOPC community partner, NCFC designed and taught a writing seminar for senior citizens, resulting in publication of *Destination: Newark*, a compendium of neighborhood descriptions, memoirs, and family histories of West Side Park.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- CUPR completed data preparation, analysis, and GIS mapping for a retail market survey for the supermarket and neighborhood shopping center proposed as Phase I of the West Side Business Hub being developed by CREST Community Development Corporation.
- Through RCOPC, the MBA Interfunctional Program at the Rutgers-Newark Graduate School of Management initiated a two-semester feasibility, financial, and market analysis for a retail incubator planned as Phase II of CREST's West Side Business Hub.

HEALTHCARE

- CUPR continued to develop and update the *West Side Park Health Care Services Directory*, containing a data base of 146 health care service programs available to West Side Park residents.
- CUPR initiated a feasibility analysis for the proposed West Side Park Health Care Center, a joint project of Tri-City Peoples Corporation and Corinthian HDC.
- NCFC continues to offer primary health care services to residents of the West Side Park community.

YOUTH AND EDUCATION

- CUPR and NCFC are jointly supporting the implementation of the Newark Neighborhood Youth Leaders in Technology project, operated by the International Youth Organization (IYO) in West Side Park with funding by a grant from the Lucent Foundation.
- RCOPC contributes staff and leadership to Newark's Youth Investment Council, part of the city's Workforce Investment Board developed under the Workforce Investment Act.
- NCFC continues to support the activities of the West Side Park Youth Leadership Council.

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
COMMUNITY OUTREACH
PARTNERSHIP CENTER**

**GRANT # COPC-NJ-98-029
*SEMIANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT***

JULY 1, 2000 – DECEMBER 31, 2000

PART B. NARRATIVE DISCUSSION

Submitted to:

**Armand Carriere, Government Technical Representative
Office of Community Partnerships
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

Submitted by:

**Robert W. Lake
Center for Urban Policy Research
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Tel 732-932-3133, ext. 521**

**George Paschalis
Newark Center for Families and Communities
Rutgers University
Newark, NJ 07102
Tel 973-353-1946**

OVERVIEW

This report summarizes the activities of the Rutgers Community Outreach Partnership Center (RCOPC) during the period from July 1 through December 31, 2000. In September 2000, midway through this reporting period, RCOPC completed Year Two and initiated the final year of the three-year grant period. RCOPC has met or exceeded all of the goals for this period in each of the functional categories identified in the Project Management Work Plan included in our original funding proposal.

RCOPC's target neighborhood is the West Side Park community of Newark, New Jersey. West Side Park, a community of approximately 20,000 residents in 130 square blocks on the west side of the Central Ward, is Newark's target area under New Jersey's Urban Coordinating Council initiative and is one of eight neighborhoods comprising Newark's federal Enterprise Community. RCOPC's principal objective is to assist and support the community-based revitalization efforts underway through these state and federal programs.

RCOPC's emphasis in this reporting period focused on several major substantive tasks identified in the Neighborhood Empowerment Council's Community Action Plan. Highlights for this reporting period include:

- strategic planning, coordination, and technical assistance for the West Side Park Community Technology Network
- small business economic development assistance to the West Side Business Hub (Phases I and II) and the 16th Avenue Merchants Association
- development and updating of a directory of health care services available to West Side Park residents
- initiation of a feasibility study for the proposed West Side Park Community Health Care Center
- completion of a writing seminar for senior citizens culminating in publication of *Destination: Newark*, a compendium of family histories and neighborhood descriptions of West Side Park
- implementation of the Newark Neighborhood Youth Leaders in Technology project, with additional funding by a grant from the Lucent Foundation
- assistance and staffing support for the West Side Park Youth Leadership Council

RCOPC continues to maintain a close and cooperative relationship with our community partners in West Side Park. Our principal community contact is the Neighborhood Empowerment Council (NEC) established under the New Jersey Urban Coordinating

Council initiative to plan and implement the revitalization of West Side Park. RCOPC leadership is provided by Robert Lake, Stephen Finn, and Kathe Newman at the Center for Urban Policy Research (CUPR) and George Paschalis and Patricia Bender at the Newark Center for Families and Communities (NCFC).

Several major personnel changes occurred during this reporting period that have substantially affected RCOPC's operations. In July, NEC Neighborhood Coordinator Alle Levy resigned to take another position and has not been replaced as of this writing. Since the NEC is the principal point of contact with our community partners, the delay in filling the Neighborhood Coordinator position has considerably complicated communication and coordination between and among RCOPC and the community partners.

Although the NEC has not convened a formal meeting since July, we have continued to meet one-on-one with individual community partner organizations on an as-needed basis during this period. While our progress on individual projects thus continues unabated, the coordination and networking among community partners that had previously been facilitated by the NEC has not been available. In addition, staff turnover in critical positions at several community partner organizations has added further uncertainty and instability. The challenges of leadership succession and staff turnover that are endemic to community-based organizations have been very much in evidence among RCOPC's community partners during this period.

On a bright note, RCOPC has greatly benefited from the arrival in September of Dr. Kathe Newman as a post-doctoral associate at CUPR (through matching funds provided by Rutgers University), working full-time as an RCOPC project coordinator. Dr. Newman was already familiar with RCOPC's agenda in West Side Park before beginning this position, having taught the Community Development Studio in the Department of Urban Planning during Spring semester 2000 that produced the three-phase park redevelopment plan. This year, Dr. Newman is focusing on the health care center feasibility analysis, facilitating strategic planning for the Community Technology Network, and redesigning, updating and expanding the West Side Park Community Asset database and the RCOPC web site, as described below.

1. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RCOPC's Community Advisory Committee (CAC) met at the Salvation Army West Side Branch on December 6, 2000. Consisting of 40 members, the CAC includes community residents and representatives of community-based organizations, city and state governments, private and non-profit foundations, lending institutions, Newark-based corporations, and Rutgers University. At the December 6th meeting, RCOPC staff reported on activities during the previous six-month period with special emphasis on the community technology project, youth and young adult programs, economic development, and community-based health care. The CAC then divided into break-out groups focusing on each of these four project areas in order to discuss future directions and establish priorities for the next six-month period. The half-day meeting was especially valuable and productive in:

1. keeping CAC members informed and engaged in RCOPC activities;
2. obtaining valuable input and guidance for continuing and future directions;
3. maintaining the visibility of West Side Park's revitalization before a group of influential participants in city- and statewide community development;
4. facilitating networking among CAC members representing diverse constituencies.

MOBILIZING UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

One of RCOPC's primary partnership methods is to identify and mobilize faculty, students and other University resources to work directly with our community partners in West Side Park's revitalization. The principal means of accomplishing this objective include:

1. support for graduate student research assistants to work with community partners;
2. use of the Department of Urban Planning's Community Development Studio;
3. student internship placement; and
4. close coordination between RCOPC and our community partners.

Graduate Research Assistants. During the July-December 2000 reporting period, CUPR supported nine graduate student research assistants for almost 1,000 hours of technical assistance to work with community partner organizations on a broad variety of COPC-related projects, as described elsewhere in this report.

Community Development Studio. This year, the Spring semester 2001 Community Development Studio, taught by Professors Norman Glickman and Kathe Newman in the Department of Urban Planning and Policy Development at Rutgers-New Brunswick, is working with two RCOPC community partners, Corinthian Housing Development Corporation and Tri-City People's Corporation, to prepare a feasibility analysis and operating plan for a West Side Park Health Care Center (see below). Planning for the

Studio occupied considerable time and effort during November and December 2000, involving numerous meetings between the instructors and community partners to define the project's scope and purpose, assemble background materials, and identify individuals in the city and state with expertise to serve as a resource for studio participants.

Student Internship Placement. Under the supervision of George Paschalis, Director of Rutgers' Newark Center for Families and Communities (NCFC), 16 students serving as Community Scholars completed internships with community partner organizations in West Side Park during the summer and fall semesters. Through the Community Scholars program, funded by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and Chase Bank, graduate and undergraduate students complete internships with community-based organizations. Three Community Scholars worked at NCFC in partnership with the newly created West Side Park Youth Leadership Council. Beginning in June and extending through the summer, eight Community Scholars served as literacy tutors to 32 children enrolled in summer camp run by the International Youth Organization (IYO), providing one-on-one tutoring five days a week over an eight-week period.

2. NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

WEST SIDE PARK COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY NETWORK

RCOPC continues to support the West Side Park Community Technology Network, consisting of community computer centers based at four community-partner organizations – Corinthian Housing Development Corporation, International Youth Organization (IYO), Salvation Army West Side Branch, and the United Community Corporation. (A computer center at Tri-City People's Corporation is under development.) Each of these organizations has established a computer training center providing classes and activities for school-age children, young adults, and senior citizens. In addition to providing open time for community residents to access computers, the centers also offer a variety of scheduled classes in web site development, internet use, Microsoft Office 2000, multimedia Black history, and newsletter layout and design. The four centers operate independently but are also networked so that programs and operating hours are coordinated to provide maximum accessibility for neighborhood residents.

CUPR continues to provide support and technical assistance to facilitate start-up and operation of the individual centers, to improve information sharing, and to network the centers into a coordinated program. RCOPC facilitated a series of meetings during the October and November to initiate a strategic planning process designed to improve coordination among the constituent centers in the Network. In addition, RCOPC is supporting a graduate research assistant, Kamil Olufowobi, to provide on-going technical assistance to the centers; to identify and coordinate students from Rutgers-Newark and the New Jersey Institute of Technology to teach classes at the individual centers; and to assist with publicizing the computer technology program to neighborhood residents.

During the current period, Mr. Olufowobi arranged for installation of high speed DSL service to Internet access for all computers throughout the Network, installed a server at Corinthian's computer center to host word-processing and desktop publishing software; and prepared a brochure advertising the schedule of courses and workshops.

DESTINATION: NEWARK

NCFC Faculty Scholar Patricia Bender designed and taught a writing seminar for senior citizens, co-sponsored by the Corinthian Housing Development Corporation, an RCOPC community partner. West Side Park seniors were taught strategies for autobiographical writing and began to write their memoirs, using computers. Workshops focused on journal writing, storytelling, researching family history, drafting, revising and editing, and public reading. Additional workshops taught by Tyshammie Cooper, Director of Community Development at Corinthian HDC, expanded the seniors' knowledge of computers and technology.

The seniors presented their works-in-progress at a public reading on December 6, 2000 at the Corinthian Baptist Church in West Side Park. The "Celebrating Seniors" event, jointly hosted by Corinthian and NCFC, was attended by friends and families of the writers, Rutgers Community Scholars, Corinthian HDC staff, and Rutgers faculty and students. The seniors' work, titled *Destination: Newark*, will comprise a chapter in the second edition of *One Block Over* scheduled to be published by NCFC in May 2001.

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PHASE I - WEST SIDE BUSINESS HUB

RCOPC assisted the CREST Community Development Corporation (CCDC) to develop a retail market analysis for a West Side Business Hub located on Springfield Avenue, the principal commercial corridor in West Side Park. *Phase I* of the West Side Business Hub proposal involves redevelopment of a two-block neighborhood shopping mall anchored by a 50,000 sq. ft. supermarket. RCOPC assisted CREST CDC to conduct a retail market study to assess market potential within the trade area. The analysis delineated primary, secondary, and tertiary trade areas around the proposed site; collected and analyzed demographic and socioeconomic data by trade area; identified and mapped existing retail and commercial uses within the trade areas; developed estimates of retail expenditures by trade area; and documented the community's ability to support a 50,000 sq. ft. supermarket at the proposed site. As part of the predevelopment process, CREST CDC is now using the retail market analysis to secure a developer and obtain development financing for the supermarket project.

PHASE II. WEST SIDE BUSINESS HUB

Phase II of CREST's West Side Business Hub proposal involves development of a retail incubator on a site directly across Springfield Avenue from the proposed supermarket site. The plan calls for rehabilitation of a two-story building on the site (the "Triangle Building") to provide space for a retail and commercial incubator, low-rent office space for community-based non-profit organizations, and a street-level Small Business Development Center (an affiliate of the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers). RCOPC has arranged for the MBA Interfunctional Program at the Rutgers-Newark Graduate School of Management to undertake a two-semester feasibility, financial, and market analysis for the Triangle Building incubator project. Eight students enrolled in the MBA Interfunctional Program are devoting the Fall and Spring semesters to a three-part project that will: (1) identify best practices in retail incubator operations nationwide; (2) complete a feasibility analysis for the proposed project; and (3) develop operating procedures and a management plan for the incubator in West Side Park. The project report is due to be presented on March 21, 2001.

4. HEALTHCARE

HEALTH CARE SERVICES DIRECTORY

RCOPC has continued to update and expand the *West Side Park Health Care Services Directory* initiated in the previous reporting period. The *Directory*, intended as an information resource for residents of West Side Park, consists of three sections:

- (1) a list of 146 health care programs and providers organized by type of service, including primary care providers, maternal and child health services, HIV/AIDS treatment and counseling, substance abuse and alcoholism treatment, mental health, geriatric care, home health care, and other services;
- (2) a detailed description of the services provided, including location, hours of operation, fee structure, if any), and contact information; and
- (3) a list of health care education and training opportunities available to West Side Park residents.

During the current period, RCOPC supported a graduate research assistant who entered all of the directory information into a searchable database. These data have been integrated into the West Side Park Community Asset database and map and will soon be available through the RCOPC web site.

WEST SIDE PARK COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Working jointly with two community partners, Corinthian HDC and Tri-City People's Corporation, RCOPC is continuing predevelopment planning to create a community

health center in West Side Park. A potential site has been located on 16th Avenue, adjacent to an existing small health clinic operated by Tri-City. The site, currently owned by the New Jersey Housing Finance Mortgage Administration (HFMA), would be combined with the existing clinic to provide a two-story 20,000 sq. ft. structure housing a community health center, market-rate commercial space, and office space for non-profit community organizations. NJHFMA is expected to release an RFP for the site within a few weeks.

In anticipation of the RFP, RCOPC completed background research and initiated a feasibility analysis to document the need for a community-based comprehensive health center that focuses on the specific health needs of West Side Park residents. This exploratory research serves as background for the Spring semester 2001 Community Development Studio in the Urban Planning Department, taught by Professors Norman Glickman and Kathe Newman, which is conducting a formal feasibility analysis for the West Side Park Community Health Center.

NCFC HEALTH CLINIC

In addition to offering affordable, high quality health services to West Side Park residents through its location in downtown Newark, the NCFC Health Clinic, in collaboration with Episcopal Community Development Corporation, will provide lead paint screening for children in Newark's South Ward, including children of the West Side Park community.

5. YOUTH AND EDUCATION

NEWARK NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH LEADERS IN TECHNOLOGY PROJECT

RCOPC is assisting the International Youth Organization (IYO) to implement the Newark Neighborhood Youth Leaders in Technology Project, with funding from a \$125,000 grant from the Lucent Foundation leveraged through RCOPC. The Project prepares 50 West Side Park high school juniors and seniors for college and careers through leadership and technology training, student internships, visits to college campuses, and help with college applications. CUPR Assistant Professor Steve Finn is a member of the Project's advisory board and collaborated in developing the funding proposal. During the current reporting period, he recruited and screened candidates and hired a project coordinator and a graduate student assistant, assisted with program design, and arranged meetings with high school principals and supervisors of instructional technology in the Newark Public School system to enlist their support in recruiting participants for the program. During the same period, NCFC provided 10 college student mentors, under the direction of program coordinator Shirley Gonzales, to work with the high school participants in Workshops focused on academic assistance, college planning, and technology instruction.

YOUTH INVESTMENT COUNCIL

RCOPC is supporting Newark's Youth Investment Council (YIC), part of the city's Workforce Investment Board established under the Workforce Investment Act. The YIC's goal is to develop an integrated, comprehensive system to provide Newark's youth with the academic and vocational skills and social service support needed to prepare for and succeed in the marketplace. Professor Steve Finn, a mayoral appointee to the YIC, serves as co-chair off the planning subcommittee. In this capacity, he revised the Request for Proposals packet used to solicit vendors to serve out-of-school youth and participated in ranking and selecting applications for funding. He also initiated development of an inventory of youth services in Newark and is supervising a Rutgers graduate student who is completing a field placement through HUD's Community Development Work-Study Fellowship program.

WEST SIDE PARK YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Three NCFC Community Scholars worked with the Youth Leadership Council during the summer to help realize the Youth Council's goals for the renovation of West Side Park. With coordination provided by NCFC Program Coordinator Shirley Gonzales, the Community Scholars helped to organize a number of park cleanups, and successfully petitioned the Essex County Board of Freeholders to refurbish the flagpole and fly the American flag over the Park for the first time in well over a decade.

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Four Rutgers faculty (Lake, Finn, Paschalis, Bender) and two community partners (Tyshammie Cooper from Corinthian HDC and Judy Favors from Tri-City) attended the COPC National Conference in Providence, RI in September.

Stephen Finn attended the Office of University Partnership's Conference on Teaching and Learning for Community Building: New Roles, New Skills and Strong Partnerships, held in Washington, DC on July 12, 2000.

Stephen Finn was a presenter in a panel on "Nonprofit Applications of GIS" held at the Governor's Sixth Annual Conference on Housing and Community Development in Atlantic City on October 19, 2000. Finn discussed the lessons learned from RCOPC's Community Asset mapping in West Side Park regarding collecting neighborhood-level data for use in GIS-based planning and analysis and training community leaders in using GIS.