

CHICAGO DEFENDER

Entertainment

ART SIMS: In the Mix

by Art Sims, Chicago Defender
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Providing Shelter for others...

Congratulations are in order for the **Chicago Rehab Network**, a coalition of community-based development organizations. The Chicago Rehab Network's primary focus is on training and capacity building for non-profit community development groups. The trainings can include everything from deciding what blighted areas to tackle for redevelopment, to finding the assets and strengths of neighborhoods that face challenges, to sharing what it takes to do actual brick and mortar construction and manage an affordable housing development. Last Thursday night CRN held a grand celebration at the Opera restaurant in the South Loop area. Over 250 supporters and well-wishers attended the swank gathering. This event was to honor and celebrate participants in CRN training programs for affordable housing development. The Chicago Rehab Network is proud to be a non-profit that has successfully completed a decade of effective training.

CRN member organizations have built and preserved thousands of units of affordable housing in the city. The network, recently recognized as one of nine "Creative and Effective Institutions" worldwide by the MacArthur Foundation, is well known for its leadership in public policy, communications and advocacy for affordable housing. Seen on the Scene was State Representative Art Turner, a longtime supporter of affordable housing programs and board president of the Lawndale Christian Development Corp.; Pat Abrams, CRN board president and executive director of the Renaissance Collaborative; Mattie Butler, of Woodlawn East Community and Neighbors; Tasha Baker, of St. Edmund's Redevelopment Corp., and former award-winning Lawndale Christian Development Corp. executive director Richard Townsell, who now works for Fannie Mae; African American program officers, Deborah Bennett, of the Polk Bros. Foundation; Phillip Thomas, of the Chicago Community Trust and Sandra Womack, of LISC/Chicago. For more information about the Chicago Rehab Network, log onto www.chicagorehab.org.