



**October 10, 2023**  
News & Updates from the Chicago Rehab Network

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## UPDATES FROM CRN

### **The Empowerment Series Kicks Off with Community Building**

The 2023-2024 Community Development & Empowerment Series is underway! The Empowerment Series uses practical tools and real-world knowledge of practitioners to teach you how to make positive change in communities through housing development. Offered every year, the Series is designed for staff and board members of community-based affordable housing development organizations, government employees, community bankers, small neighborhood developers, and elected officials and their staff.

The Empowerment Series began with Community Building in September taught by Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation CEO Joy Aruguete. The first in the series, this workshop presented the community assets perspective as a model for community planning. By looking at strategies employed by community-based development organizations, we discussed the elements beyond bricks and mortar that community building requires. Joy and CRN Executive Director Kevin Jackson led students on a tour around the city that included stops at the Renaissance Collaborative's historic Wabash Y, Bickerdike's Lucy Gonzalez Parsons apartments, and Lathrop Homes, in addition to driving through neighborhoods including Bronzeville, Woodlawn, Humboldt Park, Logan Square, Pilsen, and Cabrini Green. We're looking forward to continuing to connect and learn together during seven more classes!



## Housing Choice Voucher Webinars

The Chicago Housing Authority maintains an online library of educational resources for property owners and managers renting units with the Chicago Housing Authority Housing Choice Voucher Program. Featured videos include Accessible Units & CHA's Home Modification Fund, HQS Inspections for Housing Providers, and more. [Find videos and other resources through CHA.](#)

## Chief Homelessness Officer Job Announced

The City has established a senior-level Chief Homelessness Officer within the Mayor's Office focused on addressing the complexities of homelessness and housing insecurity in Chicago. Reporting to the Deputy Chief of Staff, the Chief Homelessness Officer will lead the development and implementation of a 5-year Citywide framework and plan to prevent and end homelessness, with a clearly defined set of goals, strategies, and performance measures. [Find out more and apply.](#)

## Research Reinforces Need for Community Development Capacity-Building

One of the key findings of NACEDA's three-year Grounding Values study reflects what those working in affordable housing have long known: Many nonprofit community development corporations (CDCs) lack one crucial component when developing and implementing community strategies: capacity—the organizational ability to marshal human, financial and other resources to make meaningful change for the people and places they serve.



Through an initial analysis of tax data, NACEDA found that there are 5,720 nonprofit housing organizations operating in the U.S., with over \$54 billion in assets, of which more than \$19 billion are in real estate. While the sector has seen steady growth over time, many organizations reported shrinking operating margins and declining net income. Large groups, which receive the lion's share of government revenue and donations, hold 84 percent of the sector's total revenue and 71 percent of total assets. Smaller CDCs rely more heavily on earned income, and have far less cash on hand than larger nonprofits and are much more likely to experience negative net income, financial disruptions, and insolvency.

NACEDA also commissioned a survey of CDCs and that data will be coming out later this year. [Read more.](#)

## ILHAF Accepting Applications

The Illinois Emergency Homeowner Assistance Fund (ILHAF) program will accept applications for assistance until 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2023. ILHAF provides up to \$60,000 in mortgage assistance to eligible homeowners — paid directly to the servicer, taxing body or other approved entity. Find more information on applications and information sessions on [IHDA's website.](#)

## Right to Counsel Ordinance Introduced

Last month, Mayor Brandon Johnson introduced the Right to Counsel (RTC) Ordinance to City Council. The RTC Ordinance establishes the permanence of the RTC pilot program, which provides essential legal representation to qualified tenants facing eviction or lockouts. Under the ordinance, DOH will expand the pilot program to serve all eligible tenants – those at 80% Area Median Income (AMI) and below. The City noted that "eviction can lead to homelessness and exacerbate poverty and instability within households and communities. Research has consistently shown that eviction is not only a consequence of poverty but can also perpetuate the cycle of poverty, making it vital to safeguard the rights of tenants." Read the [full text of the Ordinance](#) and the [press release.](#)

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## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Oji Eggleston Joins The Renaissance Collaborative

After the retirement of Founder and Executive Director Pat Abrams, Oji Eggleston has been announced as the new Executive Director of TRC. A

resident of Bronzeville for over 20 years, Oji bought his first home in Bronzeville, where he currently lives, and chose the neighborhood as a place to raise his family. Mr. Eggleston brings over 25 years of community development experience to TRC. Oji has focused his efforts to bring resources to underserved communities to aid in residents achieving self-sufficiency, a goal inline with the mission of TRC, and one of the many things that attracted Oji to being the next E.D. of TRC. Oji is always excited to say, "he can finally walk to work." We look forward to continuing our long-time partnership with TRC under Oji's leadership!



### **Judy Levy Leaving JCUA**

After more than 12 years as Executive Director of the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, Judy Levy will be leaving the position in summer of 2024. From her note: "Leading JCUA has been without a doubt the most meaningful, gratifying, and transformative professional experience in my life. I am so proud of all that we have built and accomplished together, acting on our Jewish values in pursuit of a more just world. It has been a profound honor to work with you all. As JCUA approaches its 60th anniversary in 2024, we are poised for a strong and vibrant future. I know that with our engaged membership, outstanding staff, dynamic Board of Directors, and powerful partners, we will continue to be instrumental in creating a just and equitable Chicago, Illinois, and world." [Read her full message here.](#)

### **Nina Idemudia is New CNT CEO**

CRN member CNT recently welcomed Nina Idemudia as new CEO. As a city planner and community leader, Nina looks to usher in a new era of innovation towards addressing sustainability and equity as the Center for Neighborhood Technology's new CEO. Idemudia is a Detroit-born urban planner with a passion for empowering people to be change agents through planning. Most recently, she served as the Chicago Recovery Plan Director for the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development. Her work has been honored by the American Planning Association, and she is also the first elected Black president of the APA's Illinois Chapter. Idemudia looks forward to bringing her experience and knowledge of urban planning and development to CNT. [Find out more about Nina.](#) We wish Nina the best of luck in her new role!



***Want to be featured in our newsletter? If you have an event, announcement, or resource to share, [let us know!](#)***

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### **About CRN**

For over 45 years, the Chicago Rehab Network has worked to train, coordinate, and empower community-based organizations developing affordable housing across Chicago and the region. CRN's advocacy has resulted in policies and resources including the Affordable Requirements Ordinance, the Tax Reactivation Program, the State of Illinois Housing Trust Fund, and the Illinois Affordable Housing Tax Credit. In addition to advocacy and training, CRN provides industry-wide thought leadership through regular policy updates, best practice case studies, and demographic and economic analysis related to housing needs and markets.



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