



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY CHICAGO BREAKFAST SPEAKER SERIES

Healthy Neighborhoods

December 2022

Healthy Neighborhoods are a vital part of ensuring the stability and wellness of communities across Chicago. What makes a healthy neighborhood relies on a multitude of factors and can vary depending on geography and demographics. In this conversation we explored three organizations whose work significantly contribute to the health of neighborhoods across Chicago, providing resources impacting education, healthcare, and crime prevention sectors. We discussed how these priorities intersect, merge, and sometimes even compete - all in the efforts to support the needs of Chicagoans.

TAKEAWAYS

What does it take to build a healthier community? How do we together forge what Martin Luther King Jr. called “a beloved community; a community in which everyone is cared for, absent of poverty, hunger, and hate”? We asked experts from Habitat for Humanity Chicago, the University of Chicago's Office of Civic Engagement, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital, and Chicago CRED what impacts neighborhood health and to share the kinds of resources and relationships that need to be brought together to improve health outcomes for all.

1. “Health” is holistic: Whether an individual, a neighborhood, or a city, “health” can’t be measured by only one criterion; it has to take into account emotional, physical, and mental wellness. Wraparound services, whether provided by your organization or a vetted partner, are key.

2. Create a hub and a community connectivity strategy: By carefully identifying and leveraging existing resources, we can create hubs for aligned work around healthy neighborhood outcomes. One example shared is the Youth Peace Center of Roseland, founded by credible messengers from the community, and how they use the outreach workers from Chicago CRED to address safety and bring peace to the neighborhoods.

3. Partnerships are a great way to go, but they are not a one-way conversation: Identifying other organizations aligned with your work can help infuse new ideas and expand a suite of health-related offerings. However, in building partnerships, we have to truly listen and be open to feedback or shifting course.

4. Listen to—and trust—the community you serve: Social impact organizations are increasingly engaging and compensating individuals from the communities they serve in their work. Authentically involving and supporting these representatives (for example, with ongoing training) is key to ensuring that potential solutions to challenges are informed by people who understand from their lived experienced what approaches will be most effective. Remember: “the community” reflects many different voices and not all of them will be in agreement.



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PANELIST QUOTES, RESOURCES & LINKS

"All the work we do is predicated on the community connections - with schools, CPS and health centers. Our Community Engagement Specialists come from the neighborhoods. We want to make sure that we create these relationships and make sure they are being fostered and strengthened. What better way to do that than with members of these communities and organizations?"

- Jacinta Staples, Patrick M. Magoon Institute for Healthy Communities

"We take the approach that the young men in the program are the change agents and the leaders that will take us to a safer Chicago."

- Paul Robinson of Chicago CRED, on the paradigm shift to recognize the innate strengths and abilities of outreach workers who are bringing about peace in the community

"A healthy community is a hopeful community. Nothing speaks to hopefulness like education. In creating investments in schools, whether it's dollars or people or partnerships, it creates a different sense of worth and value, especially in a city like ours with deep histories of inequities and disinvestment."

- Shaz Rasul, The University of Chicago
Office of Civic Engagement

"Chicago is a great city. It should be great for everyone. We have a job to do to address inequities so that every neighborhood and every resident of Chicago feels fully engaged, safe and that they can thrive. That should be something that as a city, we collectively advance."

- Jennifer Parks, Habitat for Humanity Chicago

To learn more about the work of our panelists, please visit:

[Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Institute of Chicago](#) [Patrick M. Magoon Institute for Healthy Communities](#)
[Habitat for Humanity Chicago](#)
[The University of Chicago Office of Civic Engagement](#)
[Chicago CRED](#)

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