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Greaterchathaminitiative.org

**Greater Chatham Initiative
Youth & Support Services Committee Meeting
Held at the Urban Partnership Bank
7801 S. State Street, 2nd Floor, Chicago, IL 60619
Friday, September 8, 2017 – 10:00-11:30 a.m.**

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 a.m. by Staff Liaison Ashley Casiello. Casiello welcomed and thanked everyone for coming. Individuals in attendance introduced themselves:

Ashley Casiello, GCI
Charlene Campbell, COFI
Kimberly Smith, Wings of Discovery
Kristen Strobbe, WITS
Kristina Williams, The Bleu Den
Nedra Sims Fears, GCI
LaShawn Hoffman, GCI
Octavia Tyson, Chicago Department of Public Health
Rev. Phyllis D. Harrell, Alliance for Community Peace
Talibah Moore, COFI
Terica Middleton, GCYC
Tracy Occomy, COFI

July 7, 2017 Minutes were reviewed and ratified.

COFI Planning Grant Update

GCI's Executive Committee agreed to pay COFI \$13,000 to plan and implement a principal RJ training event, and a parent leadership training event with Greater Chatham elementary school administration and families. COFI plans on holding its event for principals and administration the last week of September, with the parent event in October shortly after. The project will also include a brief needs assessment surveys for school administration, one-on-ones to discuss school climate and needs concerning restorative justice, and it will allow GCI to form relationships with the schools in the area.

Restorative Justice Events

GCI is partnering with ReCAST to hold a restorative justice (RJ) event in Chatham on Saturday, September 30th in order to introduce youth to the idea of RJ, the work on RJ currently being done in their communities, and to host workshops and break-out sessions on how to practice RJ themselves. A similar event is being held on Saturday 23rd in Austin. Committee members are asked to send the word out about these events to increase youth registration.

Photo Contest Update

GCI is holding a photo contest for the youth in the community. Residents and community members aged 12-18 are asked to pick up a disposable camera, take pictures of what they find to be beautiful in their community, and return the used camera to GCI. All participants' photos are eligible to be used in GCI promotional materials, website, etc. and will be credited. Additionally, there will be three cash prize winners. The contest will run from

August 21, 2017 until September 21, 2017. Winners will be announced in October and celebrated at the Harvest Fest.

Whitney Young Library

The Whitney Young library has been set to close on September 9, 2017 to begin construction. The library will remain closed for approximately 18 months as it works on reconstruction and improvements. Residents are advised to travel to neighboring libraries for interim services, but we are looking for community organizations to step up and offer services that will not be provided due to the library closure. The Gary Comer Youth Center has memberships for youth to participate in after school activities, as well as memberships for adults. Youth memberships cost \$35 for a year, and adult memberships cost \$75 for a year. Any other organizations with the ability to offer interim programming for children, teens, computer access, and/or workforce development services should contact ashley@greaterchathaminitiative.org to make their services known.

Park Districts

The committee members discussed how the park districts could help by offering services and a space to meet for any programs operating during the period of the library's construction. This led to a conversation about the accessibility and safety of the parks in the Greater Chatham area. Some committee members reported facing resistance when attempting to implement programming for teens, while others noted that they were each being told different things about the application process and what sort of programs were eligible to take place at the parks. GCI will be in contact with residents, committee members, and the Chicago Department of Public Health to survey the community about their experience with the parks and issue a streamlined guide for how to use the parks to host outside programs. We will also make note of which parks have infrastructure needs met in order to be safe for use. Committee members are asked to fill out the following survey: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf8YGuAtqOGvkc86zWifa1bgrArxe3RzN7umoRefxq8gyFKew/viewform>

Career Fair Prep and Hiring Event

GCI is partnering with New Life Covenant to host a pre-hiring event on September 9th. This event will help those looking for work to improve their resumes, interview skills, and other soft skills necessary to succeed at procuring a job. This event serves as preparation for a career fair on September 26th, cohosted with Skills for Chicagoland's Future. Employers in the sectors of retail, TDL, food packaging and production, and manufacturing will be present at the fair, with some conducting interviews on the spot. Committee members are encouraged to spread the word directing youth to both events.

Additionally, October 6th is Manufacturing Day. GCI will be participating by inviting youth from local high schools to attend tours of the largest employers in our area as well as community colleges with programs to prepare students to enter these professions.

Harvest Fest

On October 27th and 28th, GCI will be hosting its first annual Harvest Fest in celebration of the organization's birthday, and to bring attention to the creation of a Downtown Chatham. That Friday, the 27th, GCI will be targeting school-aged children by inviting elementary schools and local daycare and early childcare centers to participate in a field trip at the event. GCI will charge \$5 a head, and attendees will receive access to all of Harvest Fest's activities for this price. Activities include a haunted house, a hay maze, face painting, pumpkin carving, a petting zoo, and much more. On the 28th, families and community members are invited to attend as well. Vendors selling food and merchandise will be present on this day. GCI is looking for volunteers to help each day, as well as in advance for Harvest Fest preparation.

Expanding Placements in Level 1 and 1+ Elementary Schools in Greater Chatham

GCI is looking to make local elementary schools a more attractive education option for both current and prospective residents alike. To make this happen, we plan on going to CPS with a plan to increase the number of slots available for community residents to attend our level 1 and level 1+ schools. GCI is looking for committee

members with connections to parent groups to contact ashley@greaterchathaminitiative.org so that we can arrange a coalition to make a case to the City.

Social Lab

Nedra Fears, Executive Director of GCI, and Ashley Casiello, GCI staff, attended a Master Class on Social Labs at the Chicago Community Trust. This class introduced a new way to implement programming and go about obtaining funding for programming with the mission of creating systems-level change. Committee members will be sent information about a current South Side Social Lab in Bronzeville, and are asked to provide their opinions on the process, and suggest how and if the concept might work in Greater Chatham.

Internships, Apprenticeships, and Job Offerings for Youth

GCI is looking to expand its network of youth employment opportunities. If you or anyone you know has any information on available internships, apprenticeships, job offerings, and/or other employment opportunities, please contact ashley@greaterchathaminitiative.org.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am. Youth and Support Service Committees will revert to month meetings, abandoning the bi-monthly schedule. The next Youth and Support Service Committee Meeting will be held Friday, October 6th from 10:00 – 11:30 at the Urban Partnership Bank.