



center for great neighborhoods OF COVINGTON



be INFORMED | be INVOLVED | be INSPIRED

Annual Report 7y 2012

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www.greatneighborhoods.org



Be informed, be involved, be inspired!

Recently, I met with a group of college students who were amazed that I was celebrating my 36th year with the Center for Great Neighborhoods. They asked how I stayed passionate about my work in what had to have been many changes over the years.

To be honest, I had a quick answer that related to passion for mission, always new endeavors and challenges and working with great people. All of that is true. CGN has thrived on taking on new initiatives and challenges over the years. We have always attracted talented and dedicated staff and we have always been very mission-driven. All of these factors have kept me driven and focused in my work.

Since that meeting with the students, I have had more time to think about the question: “what sustains my passion for my work?”

Over the years, all of us at CGN have had the privilege to become **informed** about the hopes and desires of so many youth and adult neighbors. In response, we became deeply **involved** in the life of this community, and answered the challenge to be the best resource to those who work so hard to make their lives better and their community great.

It is the dedication and perseverance of the residents who have helped to make our community a vibrant caring place that has **inspired** us.

As many of you are aware, our city is facing some significant financial challenges. Difficult decisions have been made that require sacrifice and “doing more with less.” In order to achieve a brighter future and successfully revitalize our city, we all need to work together. I am confident in the people of Covington and optimistic about our community because you have shown you are capable of great things. **All of us at Center for Great Neighborhoods promise to stand by you and support your efforts.**

Sincerely,



Tom DiBello





Patch designed and distributed by the Awesome Collective of Covington

*CGN supports
neighborhood residents'
efforts to build a better
community*

Pictures below are snapshots from Quest 2012



High Quality Housing Helps Neighborhoods & Families Succeed

CGN revitalizes neighborhoods by reducing blight, improving the quality of housing, and providing homeownership opportunities. Our housing production is geographically focused so that we can increase homeownership rates, strengthen property values, improve the physical appearance of the area, and bolster neighborhood participation. We focus so that we can build momentum and create lasting impact.

Quality housing also strengthens families. Homeowners benefit from the accumulation of equity, which can further a family's education or retirement. Children in owner-occupied households are less likely to experience the problems associated with changing schools. CGN's homes are also very energy-efficient, allowing for lower utility bills and maintenance costs. Our homes are free of environmental toxins such as lead, mold, and asbestos which can create long-term health problems that can prevent children from succeeding academically or socially.

In 2012, we focused on Covington's Westside neighborhood. We completed the rehab of 1106 Holman, and work is underway at 1105 and 1108 Holman. We are also in predevelopment on six additional homes that will transform another block. CGN continues to leverage loans and grants from the Hubert Family Foundation, the City of Covington, Kentucky Federal Savings & Loan, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and private foundations for this revitalization work.

Finally, CGN is a partner in Covington's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) collaborative along with the City of Covington, Housing Opportunities of Northern Kentucky, and Housing Authority of Covington. NSP is a federal program aimed at reducing vacant and foreclosed properties in neighborhoods. Together the partnership has produced 33 housing units in Covington.

CGN served as developer and general contractor for 8 NSP-funded homes. In the Westside, CGN completed the rehab of 304 Berry, 908, 912, and 914 Banklick. We also completed two new-construction units at 902 and 916 Banklick. We are thrilled to have transformed the entire block! CGN also rehabbed two units at 819 and 821 Bakewell in nearby Mainstrasse, catalyzing other improvements along the block.





Be Informed: Over the last decade, CGN has invested over \$6 million in 33 homes in Covington neighborhoods

Be Involved: Come to our next open house!

Be Inspired: For homes sold between 2008 and 2011, our work increased the tax assessment value of these properties by 1165%
This increase bolsters property values in neighborhoods dealing with foreclosures and vacant buildings



Building Youth Leaders

The number of students (163) who participated in our three main programs – BLOCK (Born Leaders of Covington Kentucky), Art by Covington's Future Youth Microenterprise Program, and the Covington Youth Commission – grew last year. We served 17% more students than during the previous year.

BLOCK thrived at the elementary level. Ninety-six 4th and 5th graders from five elementary schools participated in the program - the highest number of students ever. In addition to completing a community-based service-learning project, students attended a Citizenship Retreat at the Center where they met with a civic engagement panel consisting of Tess Burns, Arnold Simpson, Chuck Scheper, and Mark Neikirk. In February, BLOCK students also took a field trip to the State Capitol and Kentucky History Center and presented their projects to Representative Arnold Simpson.

This was a rebuilding year for Covington Youth Commission (CYC). 5 seniors graduated in 2011 and 3 underclassmen were left. 3 other students joined the CYC for a total of 6 active members. Despite the smaller numbers, the members worked hard to have an impact on the community. They sponsored a canned food drive in the Wallace Woods neighborhood and recruited other students from Holmes to help collect the donated cans. They funded 3 mini-grant projects to encourage youth civic engagement in Covington and ended the year by partnering with Elementz on "Breakstreet Covington", a hip hop dance and outdoor movie event for Covington youth and families.

This was the last year for Art by Covington's Future, a youth microenterprise program. A small, but incredibly committed and talented, group of high school students participated in the program and ended the year with a successful exhibit of their digital photography work at Groove Coffeehouse in Mainstrasse.

Finally, we held a successful three week digital photography summer camp for 6th through 12th graders. 15 youth took photographs for the Covington Neighborhood Collaborative calendar and helped assess accessibility to the Licking River Greenway Trail, and the safety and walkability of the neighborhoods surrounding the trail.

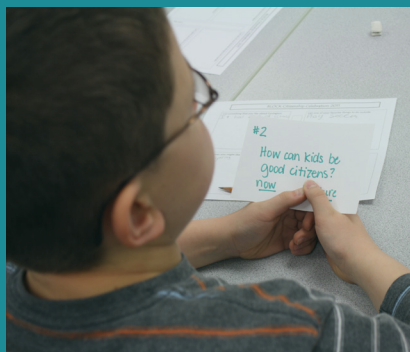




Be Informed: 98% of BLOCK students demonstrated competencies in goal-setting, decision-making, teamwork, and conflict resolution

Be Involved: We're starting a new program for middle school and are looking for 5-10 residents willing to be "coaches" and support the youth through the program. Contact Jenni for more information.

Be Inspired: 784 youth participated in short-term community activities, such as Art in the Park and the Latonia Learning Garden, continuing to increase community involvement by youth in Covington



Building Great Neighborhoods

CGN helps give residents the skills and resources they need to create true community with a sense of place, history, vision, and connection. By being informed and involved, residents can transform their neighborhood into a place they can be proud of, a place that both keeps existing residents and attracts new ones.

In 2012, we continued to develop residents' leadership skills and build the capacity of neighborhood and civic groups to address community concerns. We help residents build:

- vehicles for neighbors to get to know one another;
- leadership skills to mobilize neighbors and organize improvement efforts;
- skills to analyze their neighborhoods' physical, social, economic, and civic conditions;
- an inspired vision for the future of their neighborhood, including action-oriented plans to guide future development; and
- resources and partnerships that help implement neighborhood plans.

One of the tools that CGN uses to build resident leadership and bolster community organizations is our place matters Covington Neighborhood Mini-Grant program. Groups used mini-grants to create the CNC 2013 Neighborhood Calendar, organize the "Return of the Races" Latonia 5K, create a Covington "Index of Awesome" zine, and add shade trees and picnic benches to Barb Cook Park. In addition to the 23 mini-grant funded projects, community groups implemented another 75 unique projects to improve their community.

CGN supports the Covington Neighborhood Collaborative, a citywide network of Neighborhood Associations that builds community and buoys residents' efforts to take an active role in setting the direction for their neighborhood and city. CGN also works with creatively-inspired residents via the Awesome Collective (AC). The AC is engaging with residents in fresh ways and creating excitement about Covington's many assets. In 2012, the AC worked with Streetpops to design a custom popsicle flavor for use at Covington events, designed patches and window clings to build community pride, and offered free gift wrapping to anyone who bought from a local Covington business during the holiday season.





Be Informed: In 2012, we awarded \$39,730 to 23 projects that increased resident engagement, strengthened the capacity of resident-led associations and implemented community improvement projects

Be Involved: Join the Awesome Collective or your neighborhood association!

Be Inspired: In 2012, over 2100 residents were involved in neighborhood associations and civic groups, making Covington a regional model for active, engaged citizenry



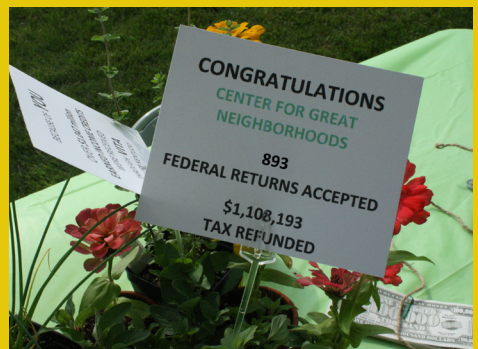
Empowering Residents to control their finances

The Center's Financial Education program helps residents understand key financial concepts, develop important skills, and take action to actively manage their finances. We accomplish this through teaching Goal Setting and Budgeting classes at Holmes High School and Gateway Community and Technical College; providing free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) tax preparation and mid-year withholding reviews; and offering a month-long financial workshop series that cover topics such as banking, budgeting, credit, investing, social security, frauds & scams, and couponing.

The 2011-2012 school year was a great one for growing our school partnerships. We continued our partnership with Holmes to integrate Goal Setting and Budgeting Curriculum into the seniors' math curriculum. We taught 135 seniors the important connection between intentionally setting goals and managing their money to help them achieve those goals. In the fall of 2011, we piloted a version of this curriculum with Gateway first year students, integrating into a required introductory class. It proved to be a great fit! This school year we scaled up the partnership and are teaching to 6 classes, reaching about 75 students.

In 2012 our VITA site served 893 households, a 30% increase in participation from 2011. Over \$1.1 million in refunds were generated, including \$499,066 in credits (Earned Income Tax, Child Tax, and Education). Two-thirds of this year's attendees were new! Since our best marketing is word-of-mouth, this guarantees that next year's numbers will continue to grow even more. We give a huge thanks to our incredibly dedicated volunteers that make this success possible.

In addition to free tax prep, VITA is a key point of access to other financial services offered at the Center. For example, during tax prep, individuals are offered the opportunity to schedule a mid-year review to help them check their income tax withholding against their projected tax liability. This helps to avoid unpleasant surprises during the next tax season. Often, withholding changes can provide additional opportunities to increase savings or income. This growing service was utilized by 50 individuals in 2012.





Be Informed: CGN is gearing up for another great year - we'll be preparing taxes Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from January 26th through April 13th, 2013

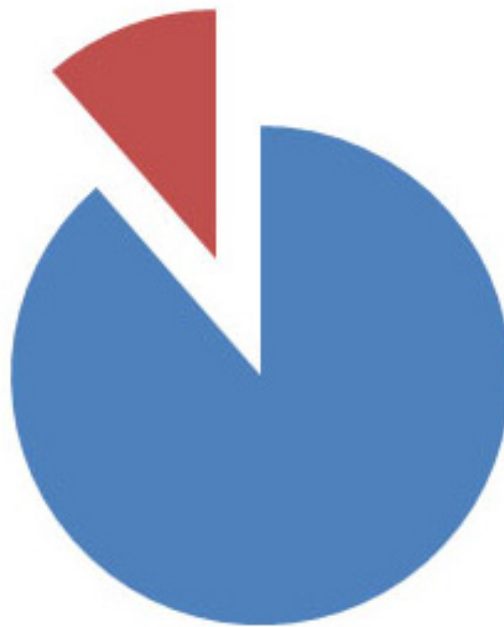
Be Involved: You can join in by becoming a volunteer tax preparer (certified by the IRS!) Contact Peg to learn how

Be Inspired: We generated over \$1.1 million in tax refunds with just 26 tax preparers, 1 site coordinator, and 7 greeters



Financials for FY ending June 30, 2012

Functional Expenses FY 2012		% of Total
Services to Community	\$2,155,934	88.59%
(Housing, Neighborhoods, Youth, Financial Education)		
Admin, General, & Fund Raising	\$277,751	11.41%
Total Functional Expense	\$2,433,685	



- Services to Community
88.59%
- Admin, General, & Fund Raising
11.41%

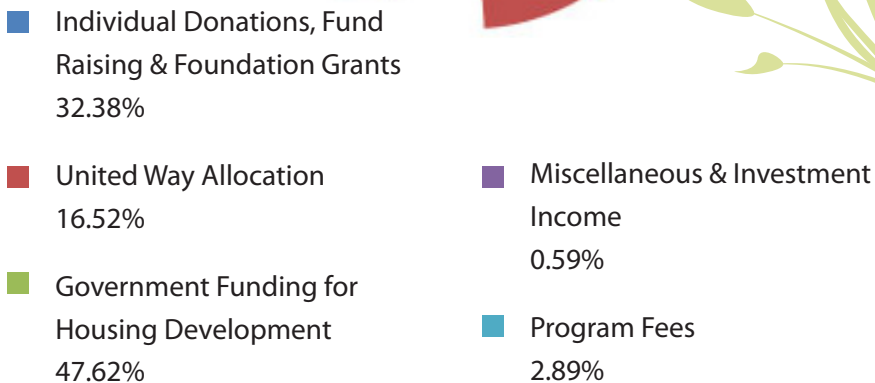
Financials based on certified year end audit 6/30/2012

Public Support, Revenues

	FY 2011	% of Total
Individual Donations, Fund Raising & Foundation Grants	\$812,172	32.38%
United Way Allocation	\$414,470	16.52%
Government Funding for Housing Development	\$1,194,533	47.62%
Miscellaneous & Investment Income	\$14,784	0.59%
Program Fees	\$72,541	2.89%

Total Support

\$2,508,500



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** photo on this page is from Linda & Dan Carter's garden*



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great stuff at CGN!



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