



Greater Auburn-Gresham
Development Corporation
1159 W. 79th Street
Chicago, IL 60620

GADC

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Deliver To:

Make and save money with classes on financial empowerment

The Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation and the Banking Consortium Team, which consists of several community lending institutions (Fifth Third Bank, LaSalle Bank, Northern Trust, Highland Community Bank, ABC Bank, Chase Bank, National City Bank, Shore Bank and NHS), in addition to other agencies such as the Department of Housing and the Beloved Community, has developed a partnership to provide free financial awareness classes monthly for community residents.

The Financial Empowerment Series was developed through the Auburn Gresham Tax Clinic. This provided community residents with free tax preparation services and presented educational tools to assist with sound financial decisions as they received their returns.

This is the third and most successful year of the financial empowerment series. Class attendance usually range from 30 to 70 individuals.

Courses are offered monthly, from February to October. Earlier this year the following classes; Banking 101, Understanding Your Credit, Credit Repair Part I & II and Steps to Savings. were well received.

*A calendar of upcoming financial empowerment events is on the front page.
For More Info Contact The GADC Office @ 773-483-3696*

The Vision newsletter sponsored by
National City

For more information, visit our Website: www.gagdc.org

Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation

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GADC The VISION

First Quarter
January - March
2006



The mission of the Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation (GADC) is to foster and promote revitalization of the Auburn-Gresham community, which includes Auburn-Gresham, Englewood, and West Chatham.

Seniors enjoy breakfast-n-blues

Auburn Gresham seniors showed they can still

Their most limber and light-footed days might be behind them, but more than 100 seniors in Auburn Gresham showed they can still boogie – even with full stomachs – at the 2006 Winter Senior Blues Festival, held Feb. 23 at Thurgood Marshall Library.

After downing plates of eggs, bacon, biscuits and grits, the seniors laughed, shouted, clapped and swayed in their seats to the music of Johnny Drummer and the Starlighters.

Bringing people together

All this is part of a conscious strategy by NCP lead agency Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corp. (GADC) to bring people together through music, events and parties.

Carlos Nelson, executive director of GADC, greeted attendees and noted that the event was held partly



in honor of Black History Month. “All of you sitting in this room, you are our black history,” Nelson said.

Those in attendance said they appreciated the effort on their behalf. Avernell Valentine, a resident of St. Sabina's Elder Village in Auburn Gresham, said she saw a flyer posted for the event. “I try to go to most anything that's going on, if I'm up to it. It's better than sitting in the house,” she said. “It's very nice. I'm enjoying all of it.”

Kay Sims, another St. Sabina's resident, did not take much persuading. “I like the blues, and it's a reason to get out of the house,” she said. “They served us a hot breakfast. It's nice for them [GADC] to do.” Sims added that she gets out to “some, not enough” events like this and she hasn't seen live blues in, “oh yeah, quite a while.”

Kenwood resident Gene Armstrong, who heard about the event through a friend and stopped in on his way to work, said the turnout impressed him.

“I'm delightfully surprised to see so many seniors,” he said. “Seniors probably don't have a place to go where they feel safe.”

Free Tax Clinic Serves 1,000

The Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation, St. Sabina's Employment Resource Center and the Center for Economic Progress have successfully completed the third annual Free Income Tax Preparation Clinic.

The tax clinic was offered to residents whose annual family income is less than \$38,000 or whose individual income is less than \$18,000. All tax preparations and filings were prepared by volunteers of the Center for Economic Progress. The Tax Clinic opened January 29 and ended April 15, serving over 1,000 participants. In addition, several financial institutions were on site during clinic hours to discuss financial growth and development opportunities with constituents.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

June 14: Together We Can

Clean-Up Project help create a community garden, 78th & Morgan, 10 am-2 pm

June 20: Investment Rehabbing

SouthSide Tabernacle Church, 7724 S. Racine 6pm, **FREE!**

July 18: Financial Investment Seminar

SouthSide Tabernacle Church, 7724 S. Racine 6pm, **FREE!**

July 29: Auburn Gresham 79th Street

Renaissance Festival

11am-7pm, from Racine to Ada on 79th Street

August 4-5: African American Family Festival

Thurgood Marshall Library

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On The Move: 79th Street Special Service Area New girl on the block calls her place Lagniappe

Mary Dione Madison is the new girl on the block. She recently opened the "Lagniappe Creole Cajun Joint." Lagniappe is pronounced "lan-yap" and means "a little something extra" for the customer from the merchant. Mary's decision to open Lagniappe restaurant is a direct result of her giving a little something extra to the less fortunate. She began feeding homeless people in 1999.

Every Sunday, Mary would prepare food and take it downtown to homeless people living under Wacker Drive. Church (St. James AME Church) members discovered Mary's cooking activities and asked her to cook for church sponsored events. Church members, friends and family began telling Mary that her meals "taste great" and that she should

open a restaurant. On August 22, 2005, Mary opened the Lagniappe Creole Cajun Joint.

The Lagniappe restaurant has two levels. The first floor dining area seating capacity is 35. The second floor has a seating capacity of 75 and is often used to celebrate weddings, birthdays, retirement parties and business events.

Menu items range from Bayou Classics such as chicken and seafood gumbo to Etoufee Specials such as shrimp or crawfish smothered in gravy. Restaurant business hours are 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Tuesday – Thursday and 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Friday and Saturday. Lagniappe is located at 1525 W. 79th St. Other business services include catering, social gatherings and limousine services. If you



Mary Dione Madison preparing lunch for customers at her restaurant.



are looking for a place to celebrate or have a good meal, contact Lagniappe at (773) 994-6375.

Community Spotlight

Perspectives Charter School Offers A Disciplined Life

Both Auburn Gresham and its children will gain a great resource for growth this fall, when Perspectives Charter School opens shop in the Calumet High School Building, 81st & May.

Perspectives is a ten year old 'small school' that provides education to young people from 7th grade through high school. Perspectives was one of the first schools to gain a charter when the Illinois General Assembly granted the right to Chicago to open alternative schools, improving educational outcomes for Chicago students.

Perspectives is one of only two alternative schools that remain from that first round of funding. While Perspectives is the same as most Chicago public schools, in that every student can apply, it is also different. Teaching all classes within our philosophy of "A Disciplined Life",

Perspectives works to instill values of self-respect, respect for others, hard work, imagination and community involvement within a context of academic rigor. As a result, in contrast to the recent experience of Chicago students, 98% of Perspectives School graduates go on to college, many with scholarships that the school helped to obtain.

While Perspectives' first school, which now serves 315 students at the corner of State and Archer, draws its students from throughout the city, 75% of the students at the Calumet site will be chosen from the surrounding neighborhoods, giving those who live in Auburn-Gresham and Englewood a greater chance to attend.

Perspectives-Calumet will open this fall, with an enrollment of 270 students, 145 Ninth graders and 125 Seventh graders. In just three years,



Perspectives-Calumet will expand to educate all secondary grades, 7th through 12th. The staggered start allows the school to phase in new classes over time, *a key factor to success.*

Continued on next page

Between The Parks – Model Blocks Program

The GADC continues to work with the 7600/7700/7800 South Throop combined block club. In addition to assistance with organizing the block club, the special Between The Parks model blocks program was designed for this targeted area.

This block club organization effort is being spearheaded by the GADC in cooperation with the 006th district CAPS program. The impetus for the model blocks program in Auburn Gresham came at the unveiling of a successful Neighborhood Housing Services rehab project on the 7900 block of South Carpenter. Mayor Daley, Alderman Larasha Thomas, and other luminaries were present to see first hand how a neighborhood turned from decline to success.

The 7900 block of South Carpenter benefited from a strong block club organization, the leadership of Neighborhood Housing Services in coordinating rehabilitation financing and the integration of city services provided by the Department of Planning and Development.

With the Carpenter success came a vision for the possibility of coordinating the service providers, contractors, and funding sources over a larger geographical area. A similar program on a one-block stretch located at 64th and Fairfield, had been coordinated by the Greater Southwest Development Corporation.

The vision was to demonstrate that the combined powers of city government and community involvement were capable of an immediate revitalization impact on a designated community.

The program utilizes the Historic Chicago Bungalow Initiative, the DOH Façade funds, the Emergency Housing Assistance program (EHAP), Illinois Housing Development Association (IHDA), Department of Energy (DOE), Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, (ICECF) and the Home Repairs for Accessible Independent Living (HRAIL). In addition, Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS), will offer loan products to neighborhood owner occupants as well as non-owner occupied property owners.



HRAIL Update 2006

Home Repairs for Accessible and Independent Living



During the first quarter of 2006, over 75 letters were mailed to senior citizens on the HRAIL waiting list. Shortly thereafter, phone calls began coming in from seniors scheduling appointments to initiate the application process. The GADC project manager reviewed thirty applications, and both GADC and Team Construction began site visits in the 17th, 21st, 18th, and 15th Wards.

All applications have been sent to the Department of Housing for review and approval, but prior to construction, DOH will perform environmental clearance on each property. The approved seniors are eager for the minor home repairs to begin and have already spread the word about HRAIL to friends and family members.

The Gift

Lisa Ramsey is the new Executive Director of the Employment Resource Center (ERC) at 7909 S. Racine Ave. Lisa has the Gift of seeing the potential in people by helping people reach their goals in life.



For the past 18 years, corporations such as Kraft Foods and Sara Lee have benefited from Lisa's match making and management skills. Today, the Auburn Gresham, West Englewood and Chatham community residents are blessed to have Lisa as the executive director of the ERC.

Lisa has bachelors degree in Economics and an MBA in Marketing and Business Economics. She coordinates employment services including job readiness and job placement programs. For more information regarding the ERC please contact (773) 783-3760.

Perspectives

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Tamara Davis and Glennese Ray will serve as principals of the Calumet site.

Perspectives is actively working with the GADC and other Auburn Gresham community leaders and residents to build strong alliances for the benefit of our students and our new school community. If you are interested in learning more about Perspectives please contact Ray Thompson, Community Connector, at 312-604-2133.

Free Tax Clinic

From page 1

The Tax Clinic has become one of the greatest accomplishments of the New Communities Program strategies and projects. GADC exceeded its goals in providing a free tax clinic to Chicago residents that provides financial empowerment, information and knowledge.