



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

G A D C

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Deliver To:

Stepping With A Vision

The Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation ended 2005 with a blast by hosting our first stepper's set fundraiser, "Stepping with a Vision." This event was a great ending to a prosperous year for GADC. Community businesses, residents, and supporters rallied together to purchase tickets to support this evening to remember.



"Stepping with a Vision" provided GADC with an opportunity to celebrate all of the hard work that the staff, task force, board members, community stakeholders and residents put into building our comprehensive plan. Everyone who attended this event took off of their thinking caps, danced and socialized while enjoying a pleasant evening discussing our successes.

This event was most certainly deserved and appreciated by all. When we look back at 2005, we can proudly say that we accomplished the following things:



Stepping Lessons are in session

- *2nd Annual Tax Clinic
- *Financial Empowerment Series
- *"Together We Can," Englewood/Auburn Gresham Community Clean-up Project
- *Unveiling of our new Block Club Signs
- *2nd Annual African Family Festival
- *2nd Annual Community Day Health Fair
- *Bridging the Gap Seminar
- *Unveiling of the Auburn Gresham Quality of Life Plan
- *006th Police District Block Club Convention
- *"Between the Parks" Model Blocks Project

These projects ended 2005 with heroic tales that have us waiting on edge for 2006 events.

Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation

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Visit us on the web: www.gagdc.org



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.

GADC The VISION

Fourth Quarter
October - December
2006

UNVEILING OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE PLAN

On Saturday, November 19, 2005, the Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation (GADC) held our New Communities Program Rollout Celebration. The 200 to 300 residents, business owners, clergy and activists gathered with elected officials at St. Sabina's Bethune Hall to take part in the unveiling ceremony. The celebration also included recognizing the accomplishments of: the GADC organization, the 40 member task force, active block club members and associations and other community leaders for the completion of the Quality of Life Plan. In addition, we provided spotlights on relationships and success stories that have emerged since the inception of the plan.

Several residents who were in attendance stated that "the spirit of the celebration will last a life time." The atmosphere of the celebration was very much that of a unified and uplifted community. The *Leo High School Jazz Band*, in full uniform, entertained the crowd at the beginning and end of the program. Englewood's *Kaotic Drum Line* wowed the crowd with a rhythmic entrance of the veiled Quality of Life plan (under lock and key) escorted by gloved, ROTC-like officers. As the plan made its way to Executive Director Nelson, the drummers built the excitement with a thunderous crescendo. The plan was then unveiled along with the map of key projects planned for the community. After a brief discussion about the two-year planning process, presentations and congratulations to the residents of the community for their work on constructing 'their' plan, awards were given out to leaders and a special recognition for the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) our prime funder for the New Communities Program; and a special recognition given to seniors. The GADC's newly created community video showing various leaders in the community, businesses being built, arts and culture available for Englewood and Auburn Gresham, new housing development, etc. was shown on the big screen as everyone in the audience enjoyed the revitalization progress made over the recent years.

The drum line then launched into an awe-inspiring performance the program concluded. During the program, all attendees were served lunch by volunteers from *Leo High School* and given quality of life plans with maps, understanding that the community must work together to rebuild a sustainable, viable neighborhood. The event ended with high-spirited comments from *Pastor Pfleger*. For the 100 or so people that refused to leave the celebration, we had *DJ Jermaine* spin the unplanned after-set which lasted for an additional two hours.

There were also over twenty corporations and social service organizations set-up as vendors demonstrating a wide variety of attractive opportunities available in the Auburn Gresham, Englewood, and West Chatham communities. Some of the vendors on site were *Shore Bank*, *JP Morgan Chase*, *ABC Bank*, *Washington Mutual Bank*, *City of Chicago Department of Housing*, *Community Development Consultant*, *Thurgood Marshall Library*, *Chicago Housing Authority*, *CleanSlate*, *Neighborhood Housing Service*, *The Beloved Community*, *State Senator Jacqueline Collins*, *6th District Police Station*, *C.A.P.S.*, *Morganway Homeowners Association* and the *76/77/78 Street Throop Block Club*. Our special guest attendees were *Alderman Latasha Thomas* (17th Ward), *Alderman Howard Brookins* (21st Ward), *Pastor Michael Pfleger* (Faith Community of St. Sabina), *Terry Peterson* (Chicago Housing Authority) and many other supporters from our Ministerial Alliance group such as *Pastor Willard Payton* and *Pastor Walter Matthews*.



FREE TAX PREPARATION
7903 S. Racine Ave
Mon & Wed 5:30PM-8:00PM
Saturday 10:00AM-1:00PM
Bring your W2 and social security card
—Last Day April 15, 2006—

JOB WELL DONE...GADC

On The Move

Auburn Gresham 79th Street Special Service Area (SSA)



As of January 1, 2006, the Auburn Gresham 79th Street SSA has been officially approved by the City of Chicago. The primary mission of the SSA is to promote investment and business development along the 79th Street corridor between the Dan Ryan Expressway on the East and Marshfield on the West. To accomplish this mission, the SSA will focus on economic development initiatives, maintenance, beautification and snow removal, business marketing programs and business safety issues. The SSA pilot program began the summer of 2005 utilizing CleanSlate; improving 79th Street with a much cleaner Business District. Many residents have already benefited from the maintenance, beautification and snow removal programs. This winter, because of the snow removal, residents can walk on clean sidewalks, instead of the streets. The 79th Street SSA is helping to make our Business District a safe and clean shopping area. If you are interested in helping us with SSA programs, please contact Cheryl Johnson at (773) 483-3697.



Community Spotlight

CleanSlate

At 6:30 a.m. on each weekday, the blocks encompassing the 79th Street business corridor are just waking up. But at 79th and Racine, daily *Motivations* are getting started and CleanSlate interns are gearing up for a busy day cleaning our neighborhood.

In June of 2005, The Cara Program – a non-profit organization serving Chicago's homeless and impoverished – launched CleanSlate, a neighborhood-beautification business providing on-the-job training and internship opportunities for students in the program who face significant obstacles to employment (including recent incarceration). CleanSlate interns kick off their day in *Motivations*, where students are encouraged to share insight on personal or professional lessons learned and to inspire excitement for the possibilities each new day brings. Every day, CleanSlate interns work as a team to help keep sidewalks, parkways, public gardens and vacant lots clean, and to instill renewed pride in communities. With the full support of Mayor Daley, CleanSlate also educates community residents on the importance of recycling and facilitates local recycling efforts.

In the first five months of operation, CleanSlate interns have collected 5,819 bags of recycling and garbage to keep the Auburn-Gresham community clean, and have helped renew community pride. In fact, in a survey conducted at the end of the pilot period, 83.9% of local business owners surveyed indicated that CleanSlate has had a favorable impact on their business and community vibrancy overall; and finally, because of their experience gained through CleanSlate, eight of the first ten interns (and 11 interns in total overall) have already been placed in permanent jobs with benefits in the private sector.

CleanSlate's message is one of transforming lives and transforming neighborhoods, and we are happy to have them as part of our growing Auburn-Gresham community.



Working Hard....
Keeping The Community



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

Celebs pack Auburn Gresham Sickle Cell benefit

More than 600 people including several actors and actresses attended the 4th Annual Celebrity Skate Jam and Bowl-a-Thon in Auburn Gresham, which raised money to combat Sickle Cell Anemia and Sickle Cell Disease.

Held Sept. 3 at the Dr. Martin Luther King Park and Entertainment Center on 76th Racine, the event was co-sponsored by the Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation (GADC) and the Tate Bros Foundation, NFP.

The Skate Jam attracted such celebrities as: **Lahmard and Larron Tate, Allen Payne** (*G-Money* in *"New Jack City"*), **Tatyana Ali** (*Ashley* on *"Fresh Prince of Bel-Air"*), **Jill Marie Jones** (*Toni Childs* on *"Girlfriends"*), **Toccara Jones** (*"America's Next Top Model"*), **Wesley Jonathan** (*"Roll Bounce"*), **Ken Lawson** (*"T"* on *"The Parkers"*), **Antwon Tanner** (*"Worm* on *"Coach Carter"*), **Adam Rodriguez** (*"CSI Miami"*), and many others.

They dedicated their time to skate and bowl with children affected with Sickle Cell, who were joyful, excited and overwhelmed to be in the presence of so many well-known personalities.

GADC bought tickets for 20 children from the Auburn Gresham community to attend this event, and some of the proceeds were donated to Larabida's Children Hospital on the southeast side of Chicago, to assist in research toward a cure for Sickle Cell.

"This event was truly phenomenal," said Carlos Nelson, Executive Director of GADC. "To see the smiles upon the children's faces as they were greeted by celebrities was priceless."

GADC looks forward to playing a role in the 2006 Celebrity Skate Jam.



The Tax Project

How many times does Christmas come during the year? In addition to the December holiday, tax-time is another eagerly anticipated season.

On the twenty-ninth of January 2006, the Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation will initiate sponsorship with the Center for Economic Development, Tax Project. Utilizing the offices of the St. Sabina Employment Resource Center and additional rented office space, people will have their tax returns professionally prepared, free of charge. In addition **Fifth Third Bank and Chase Bank One** will be on hand to open new accounts for program participants. Savings accounts are needed to enable the electronic deposit of refunds. Timely refunds are assured through the process of electronic filing, which was also provided free of charge.

This is the third year of this effort. The first two year's efforts were extremely successful. Approximately 650 returns were filed in year one, and over 900 returns in year two totaling more than 2.3 million dollars returned back to the community for the two years. Early indicators are that 2006 will surpass the returns processed last year.

In addition to tax return preparation, participants are encouraged to attend several Financial Empowerment classes (see insert for more info). Through the participation of several community banks, attendees who complete three or more classes will be given a cash award.

The tax project will end Saturday, April 15th. Financial Empowerment classes will continue throughout the year. To register call **Nicole Jones** at the GADC offices, (773) 483-3696.

MOORE'S ADVICE

Tips to protecting Yourself from a Bad Loan

In recent years, an explosion of bad loans from predatory lenders and mortgage brokers has taken place across Chicago, leaving many homes subject to foreclosure and then abandonment. They use a variety of methods, such as unreasonably high interest rates, high fees and closing costs, and other underhanded scams to trick people into bad loans. Many of these lenders are only watching out for their own interest, and have no intent of making sure that people can afford to stay in their homes. These predatory practices are the new big contributor to vacant houses in many Chicago neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago, Inc., a not-for-profit organization working to rebuild low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, has several programs geared to support families in keeping their home. We will also gladly review loan documents before you sign. Please contact the Auburn-Gresham/Englewood office at (773) 488-2004 to set up an appointment.



Nurturing The Vision
The Greater Auburn-Gresham
Development Corporation

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