

AFRICAN AMERICAN - IMMIGRANT ALLIANCE BUILDING



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African American-Immigrant Alliance Building Efforts across the United States

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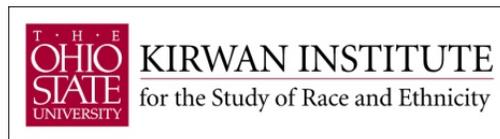
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Executive Summary

Relations between immigrants and African Americans increasingly draw the attention of policy-makers, researchers, community organizers, and community members alike. Sheer force of numbers accounts for much of this interest. Latinos, many of them immigrants or the children of immigrants, now outnumber African Americans nationally, and many of the nation's largest cities already are "minority-majority." Actual and perceived tensions between the groups also attract attention. From gang violence to political representation, from labor concerns to negative stereotypes, black Americans and immigrants are engaging each other on a range of issues. In many communities, including some in the South, Midwest, and Northeast previously marked almost exclusively by black-white interactions, inter-minority relations feature more prominently on the political agenda than white-minority relationships do.

Many progressives, in particular, also note that during this generation-long American era of deepening inequality between the most affluent Americans and everyone else, African Americans and immigrants number disproportionately among our nation's truly disadvantaged. Increasingly, we also hear nonprofit leaders, advocates, community members and even some elected officials pushing the observation about the communities' common challenges one step further. Rather than succumb to largely structural inducements to regard each other as rivals, they argue, the interests of black Americans and immigrants would be served best by deliberate, strategic collaboration between them.

In light of this range of interests in relationships between the communities, in this report we highlight the challenges and opportunities that characterize collaborative efforts between immigrant and African American communities in the United States. The five examples presented do not represent the full range of efforts that could be described as alliances. Rather, we focused our efforts specifically on alliances that, 1) involve one or more social justice organizations with a primarily African American constituency; 2) involve one or more social justice organizations with a significant immigrant constituency; 3) work on specific policy advocacy that is a common concern of both constituencies. Most of the information offered here was gathered in the course of interviews, conducted between November 2007 and September 2008, with 46 individuals representing 32 social justice organizations.

Many historical, structural, and cultural barriers sometimes interfere with collaboration attempts between African Americans and immigrants. Historical challenges include the legacy of U.S. immigration policies such as the *Bracero* program that fueled immigration to the U.S. for many years and recent controversies around comprehensive immigration reform. Structural challenges are also significant, including the socioeconomic marginalization that affects both African Americans and immigrants and the fact that the communities often share residential neighborhoods, provoking tensions over the allocation of limited resources. These strains are compounded by cultural barriers such as the misperceptions that the communities harbor about each other, the existence of an anti-immigrant wedge movement, and the prevalence of a conflict narrative in the mainstream media that encourages a zero-sum mentality among both groups. Nevertheless, as demonstrated by our case studies, opportunities to unite and to achieve important policy successes exist.

The five case studies discussed in this report and their key member organizations are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: The Five Alliance Case Studies

Alliance Name	Participating Organizations	Location	Description
United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO)	TARGET Area Development Corporation (TARGET Area) Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN) Albany Park Neighborhood Council (APNC) and 9 other organizations	Chicago, IL	Multi-ethnic, multi-cultural human rights alliance
The Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative (IMRI)	African Services Committee (ASC) Federation of County Networks (FCN) and approximately 20 other organizations	New York, NY	A multi-community alliance focused on addressing infant mortality
Gamaliel of Metro Chicago	South Suburban Action Conference (SSAC) Pilsen Neighbors Community Council (PNCC)	Chicago, IL	A social justice alliance
CASA de Maryland - NAACP	CASA de Maryland (CASA) NAACP chapters in Prince George's County, Frederick County, and Montgomery County, Maryland	Maryland	The organizations collaborate on voter registration, education reform, and immigration
MIRA - The Center	Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance (MIRA) Mississippi Workers' Center	Mississippi	The loosely-structured alliance addresses workers' issues

The five alliances represent varying stages of institutional development (Table 2). The United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO) and the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative (IMRI) are well-developed institutionally: they feature well-structured governing bodies, clear decision-making processes, and explicit recruitment tools. On the other hand, the alliance between the Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance (MIRA) and the Mississippi Workers' Center relies largely on the friendship and interaction between the leaders of the two organizations, forming what we call here a loosely structured partnership.

Table 2: Alliance Stages of Institutional Development

Well Institutionalized	Fairly Institutionalized	Early stages of Institutionalization	Loosely Structured
UCCRO IMRI	Gamaliel of Metro Chicago	CASA-NAACP	MIRA-MWC

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUILDING STRONG AFRICAN AMERICAN-IMMIGRANT ALLIANCES

This research generated many insights about the conditions and practices that best support the formation and development of strong African American-immigrant alliances. We have unpacked these “lessons

learned” into three categories: 1) place-based conditions that abet or hinder the formation of alliances in the first instance; 2) the dynamics of functional alliances, including issues of governance and the work of alliance members; and, 3) the institutionalization of the alliance, with an emphasis on sustainability. These lessons learned are discussed in detail on page 23. Based on these lessons, a brief list of recommendations for both funders and advocates follows.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Formation Stages of Alliance Building

- **Focus on inter-organizational work on non-controversial issues with attainable goals:** While pursuing inter-group advocacy on issues perceived to be controversial or zero-sum (such as immigration reform) is important, bringing communities of color together on non-controversial and win-win issues (such as health care) is much easier and more conducive for sustaining an alliance. The alliance may later leverage its work on non-controversial issues to tackle more controversial issues.
- **Concentrate on capacity building aimed specifically at developing strong and sustainable alliances:** Successful alliances require that at least one of the organizational pillars have substantial strength along multiple dimensions, including strong ties to the local African American or immigrant community; full-time, preferably paid staff; and access to the civic, political and policymaking apparatus that must be successfully engaged if the alliance’s goals are to be realized.
- **Uplift all partners of the alliance instead of only one organization:** Resources come in a wide variety of forms ranging from the material (such as staff and meeting space) to the nonmaterial (time, energy, previous experience with alliance formation and development). While it is not necessary for each organization to bring equal resources to the alliance, the combined resources should ideally be complementary so that the organizations’ weaknesses may be counterbalanced.

Strong Alliance Operations

- **Set an advocacy agenda predicated on mutually agreed upon priorities and expectations:** The fact that allying communities possess common concerns is not sufficient to form a healthy common agenda. It is imperative that the alliance sets priorities and forms its policy advocacy around priority issues. Expectations should be identified in the initial stages of the alliance building in order to be able to measure success in the later stages. A planning grant can support the alliance in setting mutually agreed upon terms and goals for its work.
- **Recognize alliance building as long-term work while celebrating intermediate goals:** Forming a social movement and changing policy take time. While working to achieve these long-term goals, it is also necessary that alliance partners set medium-run goals. Achieving these intermediate goals creates a sense of efficacy on the part of the partners. Furthermore, the alliance partners need to acknowledge each others’ contribution along the way and present a united front in their dealings with third parties.
- **Invest in community driven projects:** Effective alliances engage community members not only as the beneficiaries of their work, but also as shapers of that work. If the alliance does little or nothing to educate and empower the community to pursue the ends to which the alliance was organized – preferably, to actually embed its structures and activities in the community itself—it is unlikely that the alliance or its work will be sustained.

Institutionalization and Sustainability of Alliances

- **Focus on leadership development:** Alliance partners need to promote leadership training. It is very important to explicitly raise leaders for the alliance. This is significant because efforts might crumble after the leave of initial, influential leaders; investment in leadership building will ensure the continuation of already-promising efforts.
- **Promote inter-organizational trainings:** Trainings provide the opportunity to both share skills/knowledge and provide the chance for the various organizations to interact, learn more about each other's organizations, and create the grounds for the establishment of referral systems and other informal networks.
- **Encourage evaluation of impact and course corrections by allocating resources that facilitate the adoption of evaluative measures:** One important element missing from most of the cases was an evaluation process. In the case studies covered through this research, only one alliance, the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative (IMRI), has employed an evaluation process. It is important to have an evaluation process in order to be able to assess the success of desired goals. This can help us further understand what makes alliance building successful.
- **Recognize that qualitative factors such as relationship building help foster strong inter-group alliances:** Even when the emphasis is on policy advocacy and change, learning experiences that increase understanding of the other group's culture and worldview can be extremely helpful to alliance building. Although informal relationship-building efforts can be successful, more formal efforts using locally-specific tools and curricula are advisable, not only for their specificity to local circumstances, but also for the signal they send about the importance of the relationship.

I. INTRODUCTION

Overview of Alliances

Recent years have seen a spate of books with titles such as *The Presumed Alliance: The Unspoken Conflict Between Latinos and Blacks and What It Means for America*, and *Neither Enemies nor Friends: Latinos, Blacks, Afro-Latinos*. In October 2008 alone, three conferences were held by regional and national social justice advocates to help build bridges between the African American and immigrant communities: The National Black-Latino Summit in Los Angeles; The United Colors of Mississippi Conference in Gulfport, Mississippi; and the Black-Brown Unity Conference in Greensboro, North Carolina. Of late, African American – immigrant alliances have been getting focused attention from academics, journalists, community organizers, and policy makers. In terms of dialogue, writing, and programming, concern with "Black-Brown" relations has moved to the forefront of key issues facing the nation.

These relations have generally been conceptualized as centering on Latino immigrants, and especially on working-class Mexican immigrants.¹ However, while many immigrants are Latinos, a great many are not. Of the foreign-born living in the U.S. in 2006, a slight majority (54%) emigrated from Latin America.² Immigrant groups in the U.S. also include Blacks who do not identify themselves as African American, including some African and African Latino/Hispanic immigrants. Alliances between African Americans and immigrant communities do not have to be multi-racial alliances, although they very well might be.

This report presents cases that embody a particular form of alliance building. At the request of the Public Interest Projects, we have chosen alliances that, 1) involve one or more social justice organizations with a primarily African American constituency; 2) involve one or more social justice organizations with a significant immigrant constituency; 3) work on specific policy advocacy that is a common concern of both constituencies. While this case selection has its own focus and strengths, depending on how one defines alliances, the range of relevant efforts between African Americans and immigrants includes at least four other forms that do not fit these parameters.

First, many alliances are intra-organizational, meaning that collaboration occurs within one organization. Second, a slight variation on the intra-organizational alliances yields some partnerships that are workplace-based. The "Justice at Smithfield" campaign (see inset box) is one example in which African Americans and immigrants who shared similar economic and employment circumstances joined forces to improve their working conditions. Third, some alliances focus first and foremost on building relationships between the groups. These partnerships emphasize building trust between the two communities through dialogue and

Justice at Smithfield

The Smithfield hog processing plant in Tarheel, North Carolina voted in December 2008 to unionize following a 16-year struggle against the employer who consistently resisted unionization efforts. The Justice at Smithfield campaign had been waged in an effort to bring a voice to workers at the world's largest pork processing plant, which was notorious for its dangerous working conditions and management's use of worker intimidation tactics. The intense campaign was facilitated by the United Food and Commercial Workers Union and included frequent protests and boycotts of Smithfield products. Latino immigrants and African Americans joined forces in this unionization effort. Latino immigrants constitute 60% of the plant's workforce; 30% are African American.

¹ We recognize that within the panethnic label "Latino/Hispanic" considerable variation exists, including individuals from numerous national, racial, social, and cultural backgrounds. According to the 2006 Current Population Survey, Mexicans comprise the majority of Hispanics (65.5%), followed by Puerto Ricans (8.6%), and Central Americans (8.2%). See: "U.S. Hispanic Population: 2006." U.S. Census Bureau presentation. http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/hispanic/cps2006/CPS_Powerpoint_2006.pdf

² Selected Population Profile in the United States. 2006 American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder.

education in order to forge effective bridges between them, sometimes, but not always, as a prelude to doing policy advocacy work.

The Research Process

This report draws substantially on interviews with 46 people, representing 32 organizations.³ Each interview lasted approximately one hour; a few respondents participated in follow-up interviews.

Although the five case studies included in this report vary usefully along several dimensions, some gaps inevitably remain. For example, after extensive searches and inquiries of key contacts, as well as consultations with activists on the field, we were unable to identify any alliances involving African Americans that also feature Asians and Asian Americans prominently, suggesting that a lot of work is needed at that intersection. The immigrants in most of the case studies are Latinos, often Mexican. The alliances are located in the Midwest, along the East Coast, and in Southeast. The policy agendas they cover are quite extensive, encompassing areas such as workers' rights, economic justice, education, health care, and racial justice.

Organizing the Case Studies

We organize the five case studies along two dimensions. The first considers the impetus for the formation of the alliance (Table 3); the second addresses the alliance's stage of institutional development (Table 4).

1. Impetus for Alliance Formation

With respect to the fundamental reason for alliance formation, two main possibilities emerged. The first relates to the constituencies of the organizations seeking to ally. Here, one organization deliberately reaches out to another organization based on the constituency of the second organization. For example, a primarily African American organization may seek to form a coalition with an immigrant organization after realizing that the struggles immigrants face align with those of its own constituents, creating the opportunity for a joint agenda.

In other cases, alliance formation is driven by concern with a specific issue or set of issues – an issues-first, rather than target-population, approach. In this scenario, two or more organizations join forces to engage a shared issue-based challenge. That these alliances may include both African American and immigrant constituents is likely to be unintentional.

Finally, some alliances represent a hybrid of these two approaches. In these situations, the organizations converge due to a shared policy concern but simultaneously pay comparable attention to developing stronger working relationships between African Americans and immigrants, identified as such.

2. Degree of Institutionalization

A second useful way of categorizing the case studies is to consider the degree to which the alliance is institutionalized. Degree of institutionalization operates along a continuum.

At one end of the spectrum, in the category of *well institutionalized*, are The United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO) and the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative (IMRI). The UCCRO has a very carefully planned and formal alliance structure. Seven founding members form a body that acts as the judiciary of the alliance, ensuring that alliance activities are consistent with stated goals. An Executive Council meets regularly and decides on the future agenda of the alliance. The members of the United Congress put the decisions of the Executive Council into action and prepare the events.

³ One individual was an academician, and one respondent worked at a research institute. The remainder was involved with social justice organizations. Please see *Appendix C* for a full list of respondents and their organizational affiliations.

The Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative (IMRI) similarly is highly structured and institutionalized. The IMRI maintains a formal decision-making structure that includes a steering committee, subcommittees, and organizational representatives. A direct service staff meets three or four times each month, thus providing the opportunity for frequent interaction among the organizations. The alliance also participates in an evaluation process to gather the numbers and narratives necessary to advocate for long-term funding.

Next on the institutionalization continuum is Gamaliel of Metro Chicago, an alliance between the South Suburban Action Conference (SSAC), a faith-based organization with a significant African American constituency, and Pilsen Neighbors Community Council (PNCC), a community group comprised of Mexican and Mexican-American immigrants. This alliance is *fairly institutionalized*. Gamaliel of Metro Chicago maintains a formal structure with an executive board that meets monthly and draws members from SSAC and PNCC leadership. Along with a history of productive working relationships that preceded the alliance’s formation, the alliance also enjoys the support of the Gamaliel foundation. With the impending creation of Gamaliel of Illinois, the alliance’s prospects are promising.

The partnership between CASA de Maryland, a Latino immigrant rights/social service organization, and several branches of the NAACP are at the *early stages of institutionalization*. In some cases, groups have begun to seek joint funding as leaders maintain a degree of confidence that the alliance will survive beyond their own departures. CASA emphasizes maintaining relationships with the African American community in adherence to the organization’s principle of solidarity. Organizational representatives do not maintain a schedule of regular meetings but instead employ an ‘open door’ policy that encourages communication. Another sign of increasing institutionalization is CASA’s recent hiring of a staff member dedicated to maintaining and growing the alliance.

Finally, the relationship between the Mississippi Immigrants’ Rights Alliance (MIRA) and the Mississippi Workers’ Center (The Center), a primarily African American workers’ organization, is relatively *loosely structured*. Connections between the two groups are cemented largely through the relationships between the organizations’ directors, and not by formal, established arrangements.

We present detailed case studies of these five alliances in the following pages. Case studies are presented in order from the most to the least formally structured and institutionalized alliances.

Table 3: Impetus for Alliance Formation

Issue-based	Target population-based	Hybrid
IMRI	CASA-NAACP Gamaliel of Metro Chicago UCCRO	MIRA- Mississippi Workers’ Center

Table 4: Degree of Institutionalization

Well Institutionalized	Fairly Institutionalized	Early stages of Institutionalization	Loosely Structured
UCCRO IMRI	Gamaliel of Metro Chicago	CASA-NAACP	MIRA- Mississippi Workers’ Center

II. CASE STUDIES

1. United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations

Overview and Organizational Profiles

We spoke with representatives of three organizations within The United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO), the grassroots multi-ethnic and multi-cultural human rights alliance: The TARGET Area Development Corporation, an African American community organization, the Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN), a community-based organization with a significant Muslim constituency, and the Albany Park Neighborhood Council (APNC), a largely immigrant community.

Founded in 1995, “TARGET Area engages Southside residents in a grassroots decision-making process that ultimately builds alliances and partnerships and promotes systemic change, social and economic justice, and mutual understanding.”⁴ Developing citizen leaders to be effective community advocates, the organization uses a collaborative approach (business, government, academia, and community) to generate responses to community concerns, and to forge a shared policy agenda with individuals from a variety of ethnicities.⁵ While the organization’s primary work is in the Chicago area, it also has activities across Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan.

Incorporated in 1997 to address inner-city poverty and abandonment, the Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN) focuses its work in three main areas: providing direct services, organizing and social justice, and arts and culture. IMAN’s constituency includes individuals who are geographically close to the organization’s location, as well as a diverse cross-section of the Muslim community that is targeted for organizing and mobilizing around social justice and human rights issues affecting marginalized urban communities. Overall, immigrants, including first and second-generation residents, comprise roughly half of IMAN’s constituents.

In January of 2000, the Albany Park Neighborhood Council (APNC) formed its community organization to revitalize and strengthen community institutions, promote public engagement, and organize individuals so that they have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives.⁶ “APNC’s approach involves formal trainings, research, identifying common issues, creating collective and strategic ways to address those issues, and systematically strengthening institutions.”⁷ APNC’s work is done mainly by immigrant community volunteers in the context of local organizing campaigns.

Institutional History

Founded in late 2005, the United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations is a byproduct of Chicago Community Capacity Building Incorporated (CCBI). After hearing a presentation at a CCBI event on the importance of unity and building coalition, TARGET Area and the Coalition of African, Arab, Asian, European, Latino Immigrants of Illinois (CAAELI) decided to form the UCCRO. A TARGET Area representative took the lead, reaching out to Mr. Jesus Garcia from Latinos United, and to Mr. Rami Nashashibi from the Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN), who had worked with TARGET Area in a previous collaboration. In its initial formation, the UCCRO had seven key members. The Albany Park Neighborhood Council (APNC) joined the UCCRO after the alliance’s formation.

The UCCRO was formed with the understanding that communities of color cannot achieve all their policy goals through independent, isolated efforts. The member organizations recognize the need to bring together their capacities and constituencies in order to achieve long-term success. They also believe that working together will undercut any perception that one community’s success is another’s loss. A series of dialogues called ‘No Separate Peace’ explored these themes and proved to be very helpful in understanding the need for cooperation. The UCCRO emerged as a product of these dialogues.

With 12 members, both individuals and organizations, the UCCRO has a well-developed, organically-built alliance structure. The seven founding members, known as “the keepers of the flame,” form a body that acts as the judiciary of the coalition by making sure that group activities are consistent with alliance goals

⁴ <http://www.targetarea.org/advocacy.html>

⁵ <http://www.targetarea.org/advocacy.html>

⁶ “Who is the Albany Park Neighborhood Council?” <http://www.apncorganizing.org/orghistory.htm>

⁷ Ibid.

and that the focus on human rights remains steadfast. The Executive Council, comprised of seven groups, determines the organization's agenda and plan of action. Lastly, there are Congress Members, who implement the decisions of the Executive Council but lack voting power.

Capacity Building, Policy Advocacy, and Success

The initial impetus for the alliance came from the wish to create a long-term, multi-group movement. It also was clear to the founding members that they shared policy concerns that could take the form of a policy agenda. After the initial formation, lasting one and a half years, the United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations decided to prioritize five policy areas: health, education, employment, wealth building, and safety. The UCCRO has composed policy papers for each of these areas. Presently, the United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations has not written any bills on these policy areas; however, it has identified state-level bills that are relevant to its causes. The alliance tracks those bills and supports them. Ultimately, the UCCRO wants to have a significant impact on the discourse around policy on the municipal, state, and federal levels.

Another form of action taken by the UCCRO is the regular development of racial justice report cards for legislators in the state of Illinois. These individual report cards track legislators according to their voting records, specifically addressing whether they take into consideration racial groups other than their own when they vote. Approximately 300 individuals recently went to the state capitol in Springfield to present these report cards to legislators. By offering itself as a multi-racial/multi-ethnic group, the UCCRO sent legislators the message that their communities were united, and that work for the advancement of all communities was a shared concern among its constituents.

The UCCRO also created a proposal for the governor to create more summer jobs for youth to help prevent youth violence. Initially, the UCCRO asked for the creation of 3,500 jobs. The governor provided 10,000 jobs statewide, 500-600 of which the UCCRO was able to place throughout Chicago. This allowed the UCCRO to reach out to new groups that may be interested in some of the jobs allocated to Chicago, including Native Americans. The organization then implemented a justice training and human rights leadership boot camp for 40 young people of high school and college-age to prepare them to become community ambassadors. This multi-ethnic group of youth visited various neighborhoods, learned about each other's culture, visited several museums, participated in voter registration work, and worked with each other in community outreach programs.

The United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations utilizes a unique recruitment and capacity-building strategy. The founding groups were handpicked for their strengths, with a particular emphasis on those groups that possessed both the capacity and will to participate. An attempt was made by TARGET Area and CAAAEI to reach out to potential partners that had much to gain if the alliance worked, and a great deal to lose if it did not. Allies were chosen, as well, according to their strengths and the contributions they could make to the overall needs of the UCCRO.

The incorporation of members is a distinctive process. The UCCRO allows community leaders to join the alliance, and, after these members become familiar with the goals of the UCCRO, they return to their own organizations to foster the idea of a coalition within their communities at a grassroots level. Organizations are not formally admitted into the UCCRO until people at all levels of the prospective partner organization have expressed support for the partnership. As Rev. Patricia Watkins, Executive Director of TARGET Area Development Corporation, noted: "In order to join the United Congress, you have to join as an individual first. Then you have to go back and build the organizational capacity to do this work. In other words, identify who could do the work and who could be a part of making the work successful, and to get the institutional buy-in from the organization – not from the bottom-up, but from the top-down. It had to come from the board president, the board vice-president, the people on the board, and then, down into the organizations." Rev. Watkins asserts that alliance members have learned that it is best to work with committee members of various

The UCCRO advocates building institutional buy-in from the top-down, thus attaining support from the board president on down through the organization.

organizations to have effective outreach. The UCCRO is currently working to articulate and standardize its membership process, including clarifying the guidelines for becoming an organizational affiliate.

Rev. Watkins also noted that the occupation of leadership positions by representatives of communities of color was vital for the success of the alliance. Until now, the UCCRO's focus has been on building alliances between communities of color; due to differences in worldviews and experiences, they have not allied with Caucasian/white groups. However, the UCCRO is planning to hold seminars on the issue of whiteness and to move toward integrating white communities who have developed similar worldviews. The alliance also is preparing a public launching of the UCCRO,⁸ and seeks to expand into an international network by 2009.⁹

Relationship Building

Known as the Lived Experiences Series, the United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations developed a series of talks that promotes story telling by members of each community in a safe space. These talks try to ensure that community members learn directly from each other's experiences rather than learning about each other exclusively from the media or other sources. Mr. Nashashibi of IMAN reflected, "We spend some time doing that -- both talking at a very intimate level about shared experiences -- and we do that oftentimes from each person's perspective, giving people the opportunity to really talk about some very difficult things in a room with other leaders. Then we also try to, in addition to that, try to connect then those experiences very deliberately through this kind of evolving language that we are in the process of developing, both around notions of identity, but also around ideas like a common platform." Discussions are held after the presentations, and the expression of stereotypes is not criticized. The emphasis is on working through misperceptions and mistakes to promote mutual understanding. During the first 18 months of its existence, the UCCRO hosted two-day retreats at which individuals were able to share their experiences in a series of "fishbowl conversations." As a result of these activities, Rev. Watkins of TARGET Area Development Corporation observed increased tolerance between members of different communities. She says the African American community is becoming more aware of the struggles of the Latino and Arab communities.

On the *Lived Experiences Series*:

"We provide that safe space. We say you can mess up here, and we're going to help you. We're going to help you learn how to work through this, because if you don't help me, and I don't help you, how in the world are we going to learn? Nobody else is going to teach us. So we take the time to really work with each other to try to get each to understand more about the other ethnic groups."

~Rev. Patricia Watkins, Executive Director of TARGET Area

Another way to foster strong relationships is to emphasize human rights as a frame for uniting different constituencies. Rev. Watkins stated that the UCCRO's human right framework is effective because it expands the ideals of both 'what is right' and 'what is not right.' The framework also broadens individuals' worldviews, making a compelling case for why group members should be concerned about the welfare of other groups. The UCCRO is in the process of drafting a "Grassroots Declaration of Human Rights." The next time the UCCRO visits Springfield to deliver its racial justice report cards, they also hope to collectively ratify the Declaration through a symbolic ceremony.

Ms. Jenny Arwade of the Albany Park Neighborhood Council emphasized the significance of doing work across neighborhoods as a key component of relationship building. She noted that Albany Park's

⁸ Interview with Ms. Jenny Arwade, APNC. 19 Sept. 2008.

⁹ "The Innovators: People Moving Ideas and Action in 2008." By Kari Lydersen. *Colorlines Magazine* 1 Jan. 2008. <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+innovators:+people+moving+ideas+and+action+in+2008.-a0173677739>

demographics are skewed towards immigrants; only two or three percent of the residents are African Americans. This disparity makes it difficult to build intentional relationships between these two groups. She also notes that the cross-neighborhood aspect of the UCCRO has had a significant impact on relationship-building efforts.

Challenges

Mr. Nashashibi stressed that the United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations differs from a typical coalition because it has a long-term outlook. Rather than focusing only on short-term, “urgent” issues, the UCCRO believes its full influence and effect will not be felt for five to ten years. This long-term view is challenging to some; not everyone has the patience or faith to wait for the eventual triumphs. It also can be challenging for individual organizations to slow down their own local work in order to facilitate this larger collaboration. However, the UCCRO is unwilling to back away from the ideal of a long-term movement. To overcome the desire to seek short-term gains, the UCCRO establishes intermediate goals and acknowledges intermediary successes, such as the production and presentation of the legislators’ report cards, as a way of marking its progress.

Institutionalization

The UCCRO has worked to promote institutionalization and organizational “buy-in.” One example of this is the “deliberate, incremental building of ownership” by which organizations first become involved in the UCCRO through the participation of one or more of their individual members.¹⁰ This gradual process of integrating organizations into the alliance promotes investment and ownership. The UCCRO members are working on articulating these processes in order to create a curriculum that can be used as part of the orientation process for new members. Finally, the UCCRO has built institutional “buy-in” into the vision through retreats and shared board meetings.

2. Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative

Overview and Organizational Profiles

This case study explores the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative (IMRI) in New York City, a well-institutionalized alliance. We highlight the role of African Services Committee and Federation of County Networks within this partnership of approximately 20 health-focused organizations.

Founded by Ethiopian refugees in 1981, African Services Committee (ASC), based in Harlem, reaches throughout New York City, working to improve the health of new immigrants. Focused broadly on the areas of housing assistance, health care, and legal support, the multiservice agency aids immigrants, refugees, and asylees from a variety of African countries. The key goals of the organization are to help develop the self-sufficiency of new immigrants, as well as those who are living on the margins of society.

“The Federation of County Networks (FCN), established in 1996, is operated by five community-based organizations: the Northern Manhattan Perinatal Partnership, Brooklyn Perinatal Network, Queens Comprehensive Perinatal Council, Caribbean Women’s Health Association, and the Bronx Health Link. FCN’s membership includes the organizations of the Citywide Coalition to End Infant Mortality and its mission is to reduce the rate of infant and maternal morbidity and mortality through the implementation of innovative citywide and local initiatives; advocacy; outreach; and training.”¹¹

Institutional History

The Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative, a project funded by the New York City Council, began work in Brooklyn in 2002. It is a highly structured partnership of approximately 20 health-focused organizations

¹⁰ Interview with Mr. Rami Nashashibi, Executive Director of IMAN. 28 Aug. 2008.

¹¹ <http://www.todays-child.com/fcn.pdf> and <http://www.westchestergov.com/youth/Conference%20eliminating%20health%20disparities.pdf>

servicing individuals who live in upper Manhattan and the Bronx. Several Hispanic groups and African American groups participate in the alliance. The Initiative “works to strengthen the infrastructure, capacity, and effectiveness of community-based organizations and services to reduce infant mortality through health education workshops, outreach, referral services, case management and other activities,” targeting pregnant women and mothers with young children.¹² Their focus is on communities that have particularly high infant mortality rates, as well as the areas where infant mortality rate disparities exist with regards to race and ethnicity.

One key component supporting the initiative is community involvement and partnership development; a second component is cross-cutting participation within the Department of Health. These practices involve the convening of a coalition of agencies which seeks to coordinate and strengthen efforts aimed at reducing infant mortality, addressing women’s health before, during, and after pregnancy. The Initiative guides the introduction of specific interventions; educates medical providers and the community, engages in media campaigns, and holds intra-departmental activities. These activities are coordinated with programs directed by the Department of Health, local community organizations, and clinics (see *Appendix A* for a list of participating organizations).

The IMRI evolved from a group of agencies that included five perinatal networks concerned with the infant mortality rate in New York City. With no discrete funding from the city of New York on this topic these networks formed a coalition of agencies seeking funds from the New York City Council in 2000. In June of that same year, the City Council voted to fund the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative with the amount of \$5 million. The Initiative initially used this money to fund approximately 27 agencies that addressed this issue throughout the city, including five perinatal networks (Northern Manhattan Perinatal Partnership, Brooklyn Perinatal Network, Caribbean Women’s Health Association, Bronx Perinatal Consortium [which eventually closed], and Queens Comprehensive Perinatal Council). As a result, these groups became the larger, regional coordinating bodies with which the smaller organizations worked.

As the Initiative has grown, the number of contractors, the number of participating boroughs, and the amount of funding has increased. At the end of 2004 twenty-seven agencies participated in the Initiative; this number rose to forty-two in the past three years. Over time, two or three agencies have declined the funding and left the coalition. Ms. Joyce Hall of Federation of County Networks (FCN) explained this attrition noting that work involving infant mortality reduction was not within the mission or original scope of these agencies. However, two additional agencies were added to replace those that opted out and the Initiative has continued to grow.

Capacity Building, Policy Advocacy, and Success

The governing structure of the alliance revolves around the five coordinating bodies and the Federation for County Networks. These organizations form a steering committee for the alliance which recommends to the full body what needs to be done. The full body then votes on the proposed strategy or issue at a rate of one representative per organization. This governing structure tends to work successfully; the only challenge to its efficiency is the possibility that agencies may not fully participate. However, this does not seem to be a significant concern.

Members of the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative typically meet at least once a month for a general meeting in addition to attending required training sessions. This allows for considerable and consistent contact (3-4 times per month) for direct staff, such as outreach workers and program managers. Lead organizers convene twice a year, and members of the coalition often meet at each other’s organizations allowing them to witness the processes and actions of each other’s sites firsthand.

Ms. Joyce Hall and her organization, the Federation of County Networks, coordinate schedules and trainings. The FCN also plays a key role in the negotiation of funding received from the City Council every year, as well as assisting the Initiative in making a decision as to what the focus will be for the year. In

¹² “New York City’s Infant Mortality Rate Continues to Decline.” Press Release 14 Sept. 2006. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/pr2006/pr088-06.shtml>

cooperation with FCN, the Bureau of Maternal, Infant, and Reproductive Health helps guide the alliance's contact with City Council.

Through the Federation of County Networks, the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative gives training to the staff of the participating organizations. The Federation of County Networks focuses on education, capacity building, and coalition building, specifically training on evaluation capabilities, cross-cultural communication skills, and developing and implementing health education curriculums. Ms. Hall indicated that approximately 50-60% of the agencies have participated in these trainings. One respondent noted that the trainings provide the ability to share across programs, and is a major benefit to being in the alliance as it has helped each individual improve their ability to do work. Trainings also create grounds for the establishment of referral systems and other informal networks.

In terms of the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative's successes, respondents note that more women are being connected to antenatal care that otherwise would not have been; infant mortality numbers are decreasing accordingly. More women and children have been able to receive Food Stamps and are connected to WIC programs – women and children who would have otherwise not been aware of these programs. An increasing number of women and children have been connected to case managers who speak their language. A broader success of the coalition is the leverage it is able to exert on funding for the programs and the coordination the coalition provides to those doing work in this field. The City Council has learned what the community wants and needs in terms of infant mortality reduction funding. Moreover, some relationships transcend this initiative, such as providing referrals for health areas outside of maternal and infant mortality (HIV, TB testing, etc.).

Funding

New York City is moving towards a contract-based or deliverable-based contracting process at the city government level. One of the deliverables for the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative is the attendance of meetings. There is monetary compensation for meeting attendance and this, of course, boosts coalition meeting attendance. Typically, this funding process involves payment for services exclusively. This coalition, however, is unique in that organizations are paid for both services and meeting attendance.

The funding situation for the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative is distinctive as well. Part of the funding comes from City Council and the amount is matched by the State Department of Health. This money has been crucial for the initiation and sustenance of the alliance. The money that is granted to the Initiative is divided in half between community-based organizations and initiatives within the New York City Department of Health. The five coordinating agencies receive more money due to the fact that they are in charge of organizing agencies within their borough. Given that the funding is neither guaranteed, and the amount is not stable each year, the Initiative is beginning to seek alternative sources of financial support.

Challenges

The IMRI encountered relatively few difficulties initially. One respondent described one challenge: bringing all the agencies together to write a position paper which would be presented to the City Council to make a case for funding. The Initiative approached agencies with whom relationships related to maternal and child health already existed and also followed recommendations of the perinatal networks in gathering a group of agencies to be funded.

Institutionalization

In terms of looking forward toward further institutionalization, Ms. Hall notes that the Initiative's ability to unite in order to advocate for funding is strong. Along with this, the agencies within the Initiative work together well. She mentions that the Initiative has looked to outside sources of funding to shore up the long-term funding issues. In the past three years, the Federation of County Networks has also begun an evaluation process that seeks to acquire both data and narratives illustrating the

Members of the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative typically meet at least once a month for a general meeting in addition to attending required training sessions. This allows for considerable and consistent contact (3-4 times per month) for direct staff, such as outreach workers and program managers.

successes the Initiative has achieved, and their impact on the city.

3. Gamaliel of Metro Chicago: Pilsen Neighbors Community Council & South Suburban Action Conference

Overview and Organizational Profiles

This case study highlights the efforts of Gamaliel of Metro Chicago, an alliance between the South Suburban Action Conference (SSAC), a primarily African American faith-based organization, and Pilsen Neighbors Community Council (PNCC), a Mexican immigrant community organization. As previously noted, this alliance is fairly well institutionalized but is not as formally structured as the previous alliances. Nevertheless, continued institutionalization is evident, as noted by the impending creation of Gamaliel of Illinois (described below).

The *South Suburban Action Conference (SSAC)* organizes grassroots institutions to participate in efforts geared toward strengthening communities in the south suburbs of Chicago, Illinois. The faith-based organization serves 33 local communities and works on issues related to education, health care, drugs and public policy, fair housing, and community investment. While open to all racial and ethnic backgrounds, African Americans currently constitute 40 percent of the organization's constituency. With the recent increase of Latino immigrants into the south suburbs, the percentage of Latino constituents is gradually increasing; currently Latinos make up approximately 20% of the communities SSAC serves.

Formed in 1954, the *Pilsen Neighbors Community Council (PNCC)* is a local civic organization located in Pilsen neighborhood in the South side of Chicago. PNCC is dedicated to providing social services to needy community members as well as rallying residents on grassroots community action. Currently, the council consists of a network of core teams that train clergy, school officials, and other leaders to organize residents and advocate for policy change. Institutional members of the organization include schools, churches, and some social service agencies. The PNCC works with a range of issues such as immigration, education funding reform, economic development, and universal healthcare.

Institutional History

The relationship between the South Suburban Action Conference and Pilsen Neighbors Community Council traces itself to 1998, when the Metropolitan Alliance of Congregations (MAC) was formed in May of 1997 by a Catholic priest and a Baptist pastor. SSAC and PNCC were members of MAC along with other organizations, such as JACOB (Joliet Area Congregation-Based Organized Body) and ACTS (Alliance of Congregations Transforming the South Side). This alliance focused on regional work and organizing, and gradually began to crumble due to various dysfunctions; these included network flaws, biases, and power/control problems. Most notably, the director hired by MAC in 2001/02 was not sensitive to the African American and immigrant leadership in the community.

Yet PNCC (through Ms. Marty Sanchez) and SSAC (through Rev. David Bigsby) were willing to work together and maintain their partnership; the two organizations formed Gamaliel of Metro Chicago in 2006 to continue their already existing relationship. As mentioned by Reverend Bigsby, one of the main reasons for continuing the partnership was an awareness by both organizations that they needed each other. The South Suburban Action Conference was in need for funds and Pilsen Neighbors Community Council was very successful in grant writing. On the other hand, PNCC tried to outreach to faith communities, and SSAC included many congregations under its umbrella. In addition to this, trainings and technical assistance provided by Gamaliel proved very useful. In turn, both communities worked together with the Gamaliel foundation.

Although Gamaliel of Metro Chicago often presents itself as simply a large organization, it has a formal alliance structure. The alliance is led by an executive committee, co-chaired by the presidents of PNCC and SSAC. The executive board is composed of elected board members from both organizations. The board meets once a month and decides the strategy and the policy advocacy agenda for the alliance. Mr. Mike Kruglik, the Executive Director of SSAC, indicated that the two organizations have been careful,

making sure that one organization does not dominate the other, nurturing the alliance through its early stages of development. Mr. Kruglik reflected,

“There was a concern in the beginning of GMC about how the two groups would work together without one group dominating the other ... and making sure that leaders of both organizations felt like they were sharing the power. And I think that, to some extent, that concern was also a reflection of the fact that you have a Black organization and a Latino organization, so the question is how are they going to share power without one dominating the other? It’s a political question, but there’s also a race dimension to it.”

In addition to the executive meetings, staff members from both organizations come together in training workshops. These workshops address topics such as the engagement of politicians or union representatives on targeted policies. Both lay people and leaders of congregations attend these workshops and receive training. Workshops also provide an opportunity for the SSAC and Pilsen constituencies to interact closely and socialize with each other. Through the sharing of food and music, cultural exchanges occur during these events, creating a closer relationship between the two constituencies.

Gamaliel of Metro Chicago follows a relationship-building practice developed by the Gamaliel Foundation aimed at building interpersonal relationships, and to address race issues directly. It conducts one-on-one sessions; time is set aside at meetings for staff members to intermingle individually or in small groups so that they may get to know each other. This is a simple practice done within all of the organizations, and specifically within Gamaliel of Metro Chicago. Participants focus on practicing active listening, listening for 80-90% of the time and asking mostly open ended questions. This works successfully as a means of discussing race since it

is a deliberate process of communicating and building relationship. By dealing with race issues directly, on a personal level, cultural awareness is raised and competing goals are minimized.

Capacity Building, Policy Advocacy, and Success

When establishing an agenda, the executive

committee considered focusing on workforce development, educational funding, healthcare, and immigration as important issues. Ultimately, the alliance members decided to concentrate their efforts on workforce development, which they see as a common priority area for both communities in south side of Chicago. Since African Americans, Latinos, women, and ex-offenders often struggle to acquire jobs, the executive committee decided to focus on these groups as the target population of their efforts. In the beginning stages of the workforce development program, PNCC and SSAC held press conferences, instituted training programs, and organized public meetings. In these public meetings, all stakeholders, such as the politicians, employers, unions, and other concerned parties, came together and discussed the issue.

Later, Gamaliel of Metro Chicago prepared a bill requiring that 1) at least 0.5% of the money collected from the highways in Illinois go to apprenticeship training by accredited schools; 2) no less than 30% of the work hours in these training programs be allocated to Gamaliel of Metro Chicago’s target population; 3) unions open their ranks to training graduates from the apprenticeship; 4) an oversight committee be formed to monitor job conditions in the workplace for the graduates from the apprenticeship training program. In order to get support for the bill, the executive committee held a meeting in April 2008 with the

How Gamaliel of Metro Chicago deals with race:

“We are not afraid to put the race question on the table. We are not afraid of that. We are dealing with it. Sometimes people tell me: Juan, you are very naïve by doing that, because what people are going to care at the end of the day is what the Black community’s going to get, what the Latino community’s going to get. I say to them: no, this is not how we are going to play the race card. This is going to be a paradigm shift. We are going to talk and deal with race from the get-go because if we cannot have this conversation with each other, we cannot have trust.”

~Mr. Juan Soto, Executive Director of PNCC

chairs of the Black and Latino caucuses. Gamaliel of Metro Chicago is also engaging key white legislators to support the bill. The legislation has been written and sponsored; currently the bill is being discussed within the Illinois House and Senate.

One success of Gamaliel of Metro Chicago is the cross-fertilization that happens between PNCC and SSAC. For instance, Pilsen Neighbors Community Council, the primarily Latino organization, employs an African American staff member. In addition, after its participation in Gamaliel of Metro Chicago, Pilsen Neighbors Community Council draws more African Americans to its constituency. Similarly, the South Suburban Action Conference has hired a bilingual staff member with a grant from the Center for Community Change. This individual specifically targets Spanish speakers during voter registration drives. Moreover, four Latino congregations joined SSAC due to the new influx of Latinos to the South suburbs. Reverend Bigsby claimed that because of their close relation with PNCC, they were able to attract more Latino congregations.

PNCC and SSAC have a symbiotic relationship within Gamaliel of Metro Chicago. For example, the boards of each organization will work to raise money for the other organization in its fundraising ventures. The two organizations also support each other's activities in different capacities. For instance, SSAC helps PNCC in their yearly event, Fiesta Del Sol, by assisting in coordinating parking during the event. PNCC subsidized a paid Latino organizer for SSAC when the latter was in dire financial conditions. Both organizations also help each other to expand their staff base, seeing each other's staff as shared, thus increasing their joint organizational power. Mr. Juan Soto of Pilsen Neighbors Community Council believes that the alliance is sustainable in the long-term due to the involvement of various community leaders. Currently, the two organizations are in the early stages of creating a statewide organization, named Gamaliel of Illinois, in order to ally with community organizations from different parts of Illinois and build political power.

Challenges

Some of the challenges Gamaliel of Metro Chicago faces are in the larger community. For example, there is an expectation in the broader community that Latinos will only work with Latinos, as noted by a perceived 'take care of our own first' mentality. This must be addressed. Many Latinos also hold stereotypes and assumptions about African Americans. As explained by Mr. Soto, "From the Latinos, well, one of the assumptions is that African Americans are just angry at us – constantly being angry at us. And the trust is not there, so we can't trust the African Americans." These ideas within the broader community make for a challenging context in which to work.

4. CASA de Maryland - NAACP

Overview and Organizational Profiles

This case study highlights the efforts of alliance building between CASA de Maryland, a Latino immigrant organization, and various chapters of the NAACP in the state of Maryland and greater Washington, D.C. metropolitan region. The partnerships outlined in this case study represent alliances in the early stages of institutionalization. While there are some clear examples of the importance of these relationships (as noted by CASA's principle of solidarity, described below), the alliances lack a formalized structure, such as regular meetings and a governing board. These alliances also are challenged by an imbalance of resources each organization brings to the alliance. The likelihood of further institutionalization is probable, however, as noted by the recent hire of a staff person to manage relations between CASA and the NAACP branches.

CASA de Maryland is a community organization that was founded in 1985 by Central American refugees and North Americans in response to the emergent human needs of Latino immigrants entering Maryland. Currently, the organization is considered the largest Latino and immigrant organization in Maryland. The organization, whose activities are specifically focused on the immigrant communities in the Baltimore City, Prince George's, and Montgomery counties, has 72 employees. Women, workers, and tenants constitute the main target population of the organization. CASA works with over 20,000 low-income immigrants

every year, 61% of whom earn less than \$10,400 annually per household. The organization also offers various programs for immigrants, operating five workers' centers designed as spaces where contractors can pick up day laborers. CASA also lobbies aggressively against anti-immigrant legislation throughout Maryland.

The NAACP, which is a network of more than 2,200 branches covering all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Japan, and Germany, is headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland. Total membership exceeds 500,000. As the oldest and largest Civil Rights Organization in the United States, the principal objective of the NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of minority group citizens of the United States. In this case study, we focus on NAACP chapters in Prince George's County, Frederick County, and Montgomery County, Maryland. These chapters have worked on issues such as racial biases in housing, police brutality and racial profiling, living wage, workplace discrimination, school funding, and school desegregation.

Institutional History

CASA's partnership with NAACP branches in Prince Georges, Montgomery, Frederick, and Baltimore City counties started at the end of 1990s when the executive director of CASA, Mr. Gustavo Torres, contacted NAACP leaders in the D.C. area and Maryland in order to unite for common causes. In 2005, CASA started joint work with African American churches as well. When he initiated contact, Mr. Torres stated that the relations between African Americans and Latinos (immigrants) were strained; there was a total lack of communication between the two communities. According to Mr. Torres, the five major factors that underlie the strained relations were: 1) an inability to relate because of culture/ language differences; 2) mutual stereotypes/biases towards each other; 3) strained economic resources; 4) struggles regarding power and recognition; and 5) the issue of race. These tenuous relations and the underlying factors manifested themselves visibly between the Latino and African American day laborers in CASA's workers' centers. Despite these sentiments among the masses (or perhaps because of them), the NAACP leaders welcomed Mr. Torres' invitation to unite and showed an eagerness for joint action. When asked why he thought he had to make the first move in initiating contact for common work, Mr. Torres pointed to the lack of resources in the African American organizations. As he indicated, almost all of the board members and staff of the NAACP are volunteers. Hence, the NAACP did not have the resources to lead such efforts while CASA did, and therefore CASA took the lead.

Unlike the previous case studies, the alliance between CASA and the NAACP does not have a formal leadership structure. Meetings, usually arranged by a CASA organizer, are held only when they are deemed necessary. Very recently, CASA hired a staff member whose sole job duty is to manage relations with the NAACP. This exemplifies Mr. Torres' statement regarding CASA's ability to take more responsibility in the partnership because it has more resources than the volunteer-based NAACP.

Hence, the alliances that CASA sustains with the three chapters of the NAACP are relatively loosely maintained. Ms. June White Dillard of the Prince George's Chapter of the NAACP noted that much of her contact is with Ms. Kim Propeack of CASA. While there is not a formal channel of communication, the two organizations respect an "open door policy" in terms of dialogue between them. As an attempt toward formalizing this relationship, the NAACP had elected Mr. Torres, to their committee; however, due to Mr. Torres' workload, this attempt at creating a more formalized relationship was unsuccessful. Thus, the relationship between CASA and the various NAACP chapters largely revolves around providing mutual assistance. One organization will approach the other on issues that they share or one specific issue with which they need help, and vice-versa. With regard to lobbying for their specific policy agendas, CASA and the NAACP branches tend to do so separately.

One external factor that helped create a favorable environment for the alliance between CASA and the NAACP was the presence of a progressive white community in Maryland/ D.C. area. Since the white community holds most of the political and economic power in the state, their support was crucial in support of progressive efforts.

Capacity Building, Policy Advocacy, and Success

CASA has partnered with the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP for voter registration drives, joint candidate debates, and multicultural door-to-door outreach. The aim of these efforts was to integrate the African American and Latino immigrant communities into the political system by making sure that they vote in elections, as this activity gives a voice to communities of color. In addition to these efforts, CASA held a minority summit with 15 other organizations/institutions that represented African American and Latino communities because they recognized the opportunity to elect the first African American County Executive in Montgomery County and the first Latino county council-member in Montgomery County and in Prince George's county. For this, CASA campaigned at African American churches, radio and TV stations, newspapers, and malls for several months to get people to register to vote. As a result, Montgomery County voters elected their first African American leader.

Another issue area on which CASA and the Montgomery Branch of NAACP worked together was education reform. Education progress is marked by the work of the Thornton Commission, which was established in 1999 by the Maryland General Assembly.¹³ The Commission found that the student performance in jurisdictions statewide did not meet the minimum standards, and the difference in educational quality across jurisdictions was caused partly by the wide variation in local funding.¹⁴ The Commission's recommendations resulted in the passage of "The Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act," which increased state aid to public schools by an estimated \$1.3 billion per year until 2008. In addition, the disparities in funding between jurisdictions would be reduced substantially.¹⁵ According to the head of the Montgomery County Branch of the NAACP, Mr. Elbridge James, this legislation specifically helped the Latino and African American communities. In this specific initiative, the NAACP took the lead, rather than CASA, because of the organization's network of relationships in the political sphere. Yet CASA's participation during the commission's work provided a voice for the Latino immigrant community in Maryland.

The joint work between CASA and the Frederick County Branch of the NAACP is only one year old. According to Mr. Guy Djoken, the president of NAACP branch in Frederick County, the relationship mainly depends on the personal relationship between him and Mr. Héctor Pop Chun of CASA. Yet, both organizations have worked together on important policy issues with success. In February 2008, Sheriff Chuck Jenkins signed a 287(g) agreement with Immigration and Customs Enforcement that included the training and deputization of 26 Frederick County sheriff's deputies to enforce federal immigration laws.¹⁶ After the implementation of the agreement, the number of detainments and deportations increased substantially in the county. CASA and the NAACP lobbied extensively against the measure, including holding press conferences together and publishing reports. Both the NAACP and CASA argue that the implementation of 287(g) leads to the targeting and the racial profiling of Latinos. Both organizations also work side-by-side in their opposition of anti-immigrant bills proposed by Republican politicians. Topics of these bills often include the declaration of English as the official language, measures requiring the counting of undocumented immigrants' children in public schools, or cutting social services for undocumented immigrants.

The relationship between CASA and the NAACP Prince George's Chapter revolves mainly around the joint work on voter registration and, more recently, gang violence. The NAACP initially reached out to CASA in 2002 for a joint candidate forum. To organize this event, Ms. June White Dillard, the President of the NAACP chapter in Prince George's County, contacted several organizations, including CASA. Following a planning meeting, duties were allocated, including CASA creating and printing the brochure regarding the event and the NAACP distributing it. These joint candidate forums have continued since that time. Moreover, in their attempts to register and educate voters, the NAACP often seeks the help of CASA for bilingual volunteers to help them reach the Latino community.

Additionally, the two organizations have recently united in the Gang Community Taskforce, which aims to help prevent youth gang recruitment in the community. While CASA generally does not generally focus on

¹³ Maryland Policy Reports Vol. 5, No.1 September 2004, p.2

¹⁴ Ibid. pp.2-3

¹⁵ Ibid. pp. 6-7

¹⁶ Frederick News Post, May 06, 2008

issues involving youth, it agreed to join this cause when approached by the NAACP. The money for this Taskforce comes from federal funds. The two organizations seek to apply for joint funding in the future.

Relationship Building

In addition to the policy advocacy on issues, CASA co-authored a curriculum entitled "Crossing Borders" with the Center for Community Change and the Fair Immigration Reform Movement. Crossing Borders is an anti-racism curriculum that seeks to engage African American and immigrant grassroots leaders in confronting the supposed differences that have challenged their ability to build greater joint power. There is an Open Society Institute fellow in CASA's Baltimore office working on implementing the curriculum in Baltimore. CASA is currently in the process of hiring an organizer and educator for the Prince George's office who will establish a steering committee of political leaders for the project and, across a year, implement the curriculum in three core constituencies - policy makers, youth, and day laborers from African American and Latino communities.

Moreover, CASA espouses solidarity as a fundamental principle and includes the building of relationships with the African American community as part of its strategic plan.

This principle is affirmed in the everyday actions of the staff, as noted by the fact that every member of the Community Organizing and Political Action Department staff is required to identify the ways in which they are working with the African American community on an annual basis.

Challenges

Challenges in the Washington, D.C. metro area stem from the fact that Latino immigrant communities have strong institutions, as exemplified by CASA, while African-Americans generally lack resources other than churches.

Mr. Torres noted the racism that is embedded in the structures of society manifests itself on a daily basis. He asserted that combating racism is a task that must be tackled everyday. Stereotypes and other forms of racism came up in meetings and had to be addressed regularly.

Language barriers are another challenge to overcome. This has been notable in the relationship development of the communities through the candidate forums hosted by CASA and the NAACP in Prince George's County. In order to overcome these barriers, CASA purchased translation equipment so that participants may speak in any language they prefer and others will be able to understand. The increased presence of African immigrants also creates needs for translation of the new languages.

"African Americans are our brothers and sisters in the Latino community. ... Solidarity is a fundamental principle at CASA. It's part of all of the work that we do. ... We invest resources in solidarity, and that takes a lot of different forms."

~Ms. Kim Propeack, Director of Community Organizing and Political Action for CASA de Maryland, discussing solidarity

5. Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance and the Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights

Overview and Organizational Profiles

This case study highlights the joint efforts of the Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance (MIRA) and the Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights (the Center), a primarily African American workers' organization. In terms of degree of institutionalization, this alliance is categorized as loosely structured; it is largely maintained by the interpersonal relationships between the leaders. While the two constituencies do interact, the connections are not solidified in the same way as the previous alliances, as noted by a lack of trainings or related events.

The Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance (MIRA) is a formal coalition of immigrant and non-immigrant groups in Mississippi with a mission to provide assistance and advocacy for immigrant workers across the state. Based in Jackson and Biloxi, the group was founded in May 2000 and has since grown to include more than 500 members from different religious, social service, and immigrant groups as well as from various union and civil rights backgrounds. MIRA fights for fair wages, equal opportunity, and anti-discriminatory practices but also seeks to promote fair pro-immigrant legislation. The organization currently has three paid organizers and fifteen board members. As MIRA consciously promotes forging bridges between African American and (Latino) immigrant communities, the organization has a diverse board membership. Seven of MIRA's board members are Latino immigrants, seven of them are African American, and one is an Anglo.

The Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights (The Center) was founded in 1996 by Ms. Jaribu Hill. Currently the Center has two offices, one in Greenville, and one in Jackson. The Mississippi Workers' Center, which has over 600 worker and supporter members, caters to the needs mainly of African American low-wage workers in 22 counties. Its primary aim is to provide education, advocacy, and organizing support for low-wage workers and other victims of civil and human rights violations in the workplace.

Institutional History

The alliance efforts between the Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance and Mississippi Workers' Center goes back to the close relationship between MIRA's executive director Mr. Bill Chandler, who has been involved with organizing state employees and casino workers for the past 19 years, and Ms. Jaribu Hill, who was also a long-time worker activist and Mississippi Workers' Center founder. During his work with the state employees and casino workers, Mr. Chandler realized that African Americans formed the leadership of the workers' movement in the state; he made every effort to bring immigrants and African Americans together around a progressive agenda when MIRA was formed in 2000. In addition to its close relations with African American organizations and politicians, the Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance incorporated many African Americans into its board of directors, ultimately making nearly half of MIRA's current board African Americans. This diversity in MIRA's personnel provides the organization with credibility among the African American community.

The Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance incorporated many African Americans into its board of directors, thus establishing organizational credibility within the African American community.

The alliance between MIRA and Mississippi Workers' Center was built on a long, working relationship between Mr. Bill Chandler and Ms. Jaribu Hill. According to Mr. Chandler's accounts, Ms. Hill and Mississippi Workers' Center proved to be a great influence in the formation and development of MIRA's agenda. This influence is particularly evident on the issue of workers' rights. As Mr. Chandler asserted, both organizations gained a broader view of the workers' struggles as the result of this close partnership.

Compared to the workings of Gamaliel of Metro Chicago or the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative, the alliance between MIRA and Mississippi Workers' Center is rather informal. Our interviewees claimed that in a small state like Mississippi, where close relations exist among progressive activists, alliance work can be done without full institutionalization.

Currently, Ms. Jaribu Hill, Mississippi Workers' Center's executive director, sits on the board of MIRA, and Mr. Bill Chandler, executive director of MIRA, is on the board of the Mississippi Workers' Center. Both organizations have 3-4 board meetings a year. At these meetings, interaction facilitates decisions. In addition to these exchanges at the leadership level, interactions occur at the grassroots level. The two organizations work together on rallies and provide support at events. They also make sure African-American groups participate in issues relevant to immigrants and (Latino) immigrants support African American causes.

In the legal arena, the Mississippi Workers' Center placed a class action lawsuit against Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Mississippi in March 2001. The lawsuit was filed due to racism against African American workers and alleged "a widespread failure to promote black workers, pervasive disparate treatment of black workers, systematic steering of black workers to the filthiest, most unappealing and dangerous jobs, and an endorsement of a racially hostile atmosphere for black workers."¹⁷ At the time, Ingalls was Mississippi's largest private employer with 10,000 workers on the payroll, approximately half of whom were black.^{18,19} MIRA expressed solidarity amongst the community of color. In another incident in Gulf Port, Mississippi, an African American man was beaten to death at a local jail. Ms. Vicky Cintra, an organizer for MIRA, organized a group of 30-40 Latino workers to attend the courthouse vigil and show support.

Mississippi Workers' Center also currently has a campaign around increasing the amount of weeks for which one can receive worker's compensation. MIRA supports Mississippi Workers' Center on this campaign. For example, whenever Ms. Jaribu Hill goes to Jackson to speak on the issue, MIRA brings injured workers and others that can speak on the topic. MIRA also supports the Mississippi Workers' Center in an annual workers' rally Ms. Hill holds.

Lastly, both organizations are members of STEPS coalition, the Human Services Coalition, and the Mississippi Legal Advocacy Network. Through their participation in more sizeable coalitions, both organizations co-operate in dealing with larger issues. While working together, these two organizations have also been able to unite with other organizations for policy advocacy. Thus, MIRA and Mississippi Workers' Center have contact with other progressive, primarily African American organizations in Mississippi, such as the NAACP and Southern Echo.

Capacity Building, Policy Advocacy, and Success

One way for MIRA to defeat anti-immigration bills in the legislature is by utilizing coalitions of Latinos, African Americans, and whites with progressive interests. Bills attempting to add sanctions to the REAL ID Act of 2005 which mandates that driver's licenses are tamper-proof and making it a felony to sell cars to undocumented workers have been defeated by partnerships between MIRA and the Mississippi Legislative Black Caucus and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. More than 200 anti-immigration bills have been introduced over the past several years and Mr. Chandler said that they worked with the caucus to defeat nearly all of these bills. Conversely, MIRA reaches out to immigrant voters to encourage them to support African Americans running for state offices.

After Hurricane Katrina, MIRA aggressively pursued two groups who acted unjustly following the disaster. Among these were employers who were not paying their workers, most notably contractors who came to the Gulf region as the area began the rebuilding process. After their intervention, MIRA recovered almost one million dollars in back pay for workers wronged by employers following the hurricane. MIRA also targeted housing landlords who evicted tenants in order to house wealthier residents who lost their homes and were willing to pay higher rent. In both of these situations, MIRA employed shaming strategies to achieve these goals, including picket lines and protests.

Finally, along with Mississippi Workers' Center's "Dying to Make a Living Campaign," Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance has pushed for an extension in the amount of time people can receive worker's compensation. Mississippi law limits benefits for injured workers to only 450 weeks (approximately 8.7 years). Relatedly, family members who lose a loved one as a result of a workplace

¹⁷ <http://www.allbusiness.com/legal/legal-services-litigation/6110498-1.html>

¹⁸ Porretto, John. "Shipbuilder Accused of Discrimination." *The Advocate* 27 April 2001. Lexis-Nexis Newspaper archive. http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb=21_T4326237598&format=GNBFI&sort=BOOLEAN&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T4326245101&cisb=22_T4326245100&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=144563&docNo=1

¹⁹ "Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights and Legal Aid Society of San Francisco/Employment Law Center Announce Class Action Lawsuit Against Ingalls Shipbuilding." *Business Wire*. 26 April 2001. http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb=21_T4326237598&format=GNBFI&sort=BOOLEAN&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T4326245101&cisb=22_T4326245100&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=7924&docNo=4

injury receive death benefits for only that same period of time, and this has a potentially devastating effect on the families of workers who may already be struggling financially.

Relationship Building

MIRA has held an annual Unity Conference for the past three years in collaboration with the Southern Christian Leaders Conference. In its first two years, the conference was named the Black - Brown Unity Conference, but more recently it has been called the “United Colors of Mississippi Conference” in order to reflect the diversity among the immigrant communities. At the conference, African-American and immigrant groups discuss relevant issues which help break down myths and stereotypes they may have regarding one another. The first conference featured state representatives, civil rights leaders, community/ organization leaders, union members, and activists. The second conference was geared towards initiating dialogue between working people/activists and focused on presenting the history of the U.S./ Mexico and African Diaspora. According to Ms. Cintra’s descriptions, the third conference presents a new, different vision. Experts present brief background information while more breakout sessions featuring participation from community members are conducted. Some participants are from local organizations such as the NAACP, AMOS, and Latino/ immigrant organizations and engage in conversations around issues that community members deal with on a daily basis (i.e. - race, social inequalities, religion, language, etc.)

Challenges

When it came to addressing challenges, respondents cited larger trends occurring within the state of Mississippi. For example, anti-immigrant groups and racist groups such as The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), the Mississippi Federation for Immigration Reform and Enforcement (MFIRE), and the KKK have ongoing activities that target Latinos, and have a presence throughout the state. Although many people may understand the underlying racist agendas of these groups, their presence still continues to have an effect on organizing efforts.

Also, more generally, respondents cited the fact that many people in Mississippi do not understand why immigrants enter the state. They are unaware of larger, macro-level forces such as NAFTA. The immigrant groups are also diversifying. One respondent noted the rapidly growing Asian community with individuals from China, Taiwan, and Malaysia, prompting questions of why immigrants enter the state, and what makes them “illegal.” These are general education areas that must be addressed by organizers. One way that MIRA fills this need for public education is through their contributions to editorials and newspaper columns published in both African American and immigrant newspapers that address issues faced by both communities.

III. LESSONS LEARNED

This research yielded many insights about the conditions and practices that best support the formation and development of strong African American-immigrant alliances. We have organized these “lessons learned” into three categories, although a number of items are relevant to more than one category. The first addresses the place-based conditions that abet or hinder the *formation of alliances* in the first instance. The presence of more of these indicators suggests fertile ground for effective alliance formation. The second considers the dynamics of *functional alliances*, including issues of governance and the work of alliance members. The third category speaks to the *institutionalization of the alliance*, with an emphasis on sustainability. These “lessons learned” should be viewed as advisable, rather than indispensable.

Formation Stages of Alliance Building

- **Significant number of African Americans and immigrants:** Beyond the notion that both communities must exist for partnerships to occur, the impact of the alliance must ultimately

depend substantially - on the material, political, and institutional support it is able to garner from those communities. This was particularly notable in the UCCRO case study; the immigrants in Albany Park would not have had many opportunities to interact with African Americans if it were not for the UCCRO alliance.

- **Allying around pressing, non-controversial issues:** Uniting communities of color around very basic non-controversial issues (such as health care) facilitates the process of alliance building rather than bringing them together around issues that might be interpreted as zero-sum, such as immigration. The case study that addressed infant mortality is a great example of a non-controversial issue around which organizations may ally.
- **Strong, acknowledged incentives to partner:** Partnerships of any kind are difficult. Making them work necessarily exacts transactional costs that may not be matched, much less exceeded, by the benefits derived from partnering. In the case of African Americans and immigrants, intergroup relationships in the community are typically marked by avoidance and/or outright hostility, which can easily be a disincentive to partner. Even if one would-be alliance partner will bear the burden of alliance work, whether because it commands the bulk of relevant resources or for another reason, again, the incentive to partner must be substantial if the alliance is to endure. For example, in the case of CASA de Maryland and the NAACP, CASA's resources exceed that of the NAACP; however, the desire of the groups to maintain a relationship allows them to overcome this obstacle.
- **Organizational strength:** Successful alliances require that at least one of the organizational pillars have substantial strength along multiple dimensions, including at least one would-be alliance member with strong ties to and support/respect from either the local African American or immigrant community; full-time, paid staff; and connections to the power structure (the civic, political and policymaking apparatus) that ultimately must be successfully engaged and influenced if the alliance's goals are to be realized.
- **Address alliance trajectory:** All sides must seek for a long-term strategy, not simply to partner for short-term strategic gain. Ideally, there would be history and discussion of outreach between the respective sides representing the would-be alliance, and organizational leaders who are personally committed to making the prospective alliance work.
- **Presence of supportive elements within the local/appropriate power structure:** Advocates and members of the philanthropy community must assess the potential for the kind of change envisioned and the degree to which the community, including its civic and political infrastructure, is ripe to change. If all the main elements of that power structure - the leading civic organizations, businesses, the mayor and/or governor, elected officials, and the general public - seem firmly against the desired change, scarce resources are best spent elsewhere. On the other hand, if some of these elements are supportive of or at least open to change, the site is worth further consideration.

Alliance Operations

- **Recognize expectations/goals:** From the case studies, it can be inferred that organizations representing African American and immigrant communities need to have some issues of common concerns in order to build the alliance; however, this is an inadequate premise for long-term action. Alliances must set priorities and form their policy advocacy around priority issues. Further elaboration of goals and the identification of expectations in the initial stages of alliance building facilitate the measuring of success in the later stages.
- **The impact of listening during the initial agenda setting:** Two communities that listen to each other and understand challenges experienced by both sides will create a great impact on the effectiveness of the alliance. Without an open discussion on each other's conditions, successful

joint action is rarely possible. There is great value in these preliminary efforts, such as the sharing of concerns, challenges, and dreams; they form the foundation of any successful long-term partnership. The United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations exemplifies this, as they spent one and a half years creating a foundation for the partnership before they ever decided on a policy agenda.

- **Regular partner meetings:** It is important, though not essential, that alliance partners meet regularly to discuss responsibilities and expectations, share information, determine priorities and processes, and make mid-course corrections, as necessary. It is critical that this occurs at both managerial and staff levels. Regular partner meetings are related to degree of institutionalization, as alliances that are more institutionalized (UCCRO, IMRI, and Gamaliel of Metro Chicago) convened regularly.
- **Devote resources to alliance functions:** Some alliance partners employ individuals who will solely work to make the alliance a success. The Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative has prospered due to the efforts of Ms. Joyce Hall, and her employees, who have largely devoted themselves to its success. Similarly, CASA is in the process of employing a staff member who will be solely responsible from the workings of the CASA-NAACP partnership. Finally, the UCCRO has recently hired a staff person who was involved with the social justice report cards the UCCRO distributed to Illinois legislators.
- **Role of public funding:** Funding from the City Council and State Department of Health played a crucial role in the initiation and sustenance of the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative. Hence, if available, funds outside the non-profit world have a crucial role in the alliance's continuation.
- **Community engagement:** Effective alliances engage community members not only as the beneficiaries of their work, but also as shapers of that work. As noted earlier, once the initial funding dries up, if the alliance has done little or nothing to educate and empower the community to pursue the ends to which the alliance was organized – preferably, to actually embed its structures and activities in the community itself -- it is unlikely that the alliance or its work will be sustained.
- **Adjusting organizational agendas:** Although not true in all situations, several of the case study organizations displayed a shift in their agendas based on their involvement in the alliance. For example, CASA de Maryland generally focuses on adult education rather than youth issues, but it joined the Gang Community Taskforce at the prompting of the NAACP. This shift beyond an organization's original agenda shows what the presence of an alliance can add.

Institutionalization and Sustainability of Alliances

- **Acknowledge the importance of trainings:** It is important to promote the various trainings associated with efforts such as Gamaliel of Metro Chicago or the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative. Trainings provide the opportunity to share skills/knowledge and provide chances for the various organizations to interact, learn more about each other's organizations, and create the grounds for the establishment of referral systems and other informal networks.
- **Facilitate learning experiences:** Leaders are also seeking to participate in learning experiences that will help them better understand the other group's culture and worldview. An example of these hand-on learning experiences would include African American trips to the U.S./Mexico border to see the experiences of immigrants and the conditions that prompt them to travel to the U.S.
- **Develop leaders:** Alliance partners must promote leadership training, as it is critical to explicitly raise effective leaders for the alliance. Efforts in building the alliance may crumble after the leave

of initial, influential leaders; investment in leadership building will ensure the continuation of already-promising efforts.

- **Building institutional capacity:** Rather than investing exclusively or primarily in programs and leaders, institutional capacity needs to be built. The kinds of systemic and relational change to which African American - immigrant alliances typically aspire require sustained efforts that, if successful, should not rely on the efforts of particular leaders or programs. UCCRO's promotion of institutional "buy-in," "admitting individuals who must then garner support from their organizations before being fully admitted into the alliance, is one example of ensuring that the organizations possess the capacity and will to participate.
- **Personal relationships matter:** While personal relationships between organizational leaders and/or members are not a sufficient cause for collaboration, they are a vital component. In all of our case studies, the organizational leaders maintained strong connections with each other regardless of whether the relationship was formal or casual in nature. The MIRA-Mississippi Workers' Center alliance and the relationships that CASA maintains with NAACP branches both illustrate how personal relationships may facilitate alliances even in the absence of regular meetings.
- **Development and institutionalization is not directly correlated with age:** The amount of time the alliance has been in existence does not necessarily correlate with the alliance's development or degree of institutionalization. For example, the UCCRO is exceptionally developed in spite of its short history.
- **Evaluation of impact and course corrections:** One important element missing from most of the cases was an evaluation process. In the case studies covered in this research, only one alliance, the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative (IMRI), has employed an evaluation process. It is important to have an evaluation process in order to be able to assess the success of desired goals. This can help us further understand what makes alliance building successful.

IV. CONCLUSION

While the challenges to establishing strong African American – immigrant alliances are real, the potential benefits of greater collaboration between these groups are also significant. After talking to dozens of advocates and activists engaged in this critical work, we find ample reasons for optimism. More support is needed, however, to bring these opportunities to fruition. Creating alliances that endure and prosper is a challenging task that requires considerable resources. Needs are plentiful; many organizers highlight the desire for more grassroots leadership training and institutional capacity-building so that the viability of partnerships do not rely on the health of particular interpersonal relationships alone. The importance of building the field and sharing knowledge and resources among community organizers undertaking this work cannot be overstated. Prospects are promising, but will only be fully realized with continued support and dedication.



APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC CONTEXT

United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO)

With a population of more than 2.8 million, Chicago ranks behind New York City and Los Angeles as the third largest city in the United States.²⁰ The city's growth and size over recent years has allowed it to be marked by great demographic diversity. Data from 2006 indicates that among those reporting one race, 37 percent of the population was White, 35 percent was Black or African American, and 28 percent were Latino or Hispanics of any race.²¹ Data also indicates that 25 percent of all Chicago residents speak Spanish at home.²²

Another characteristic of Chicago's demographic make-up is pervasive ethnic segregation. According to our interviewees, this creates misperceptions and feelings of mistrust among different ethnic communities, another challenge that requires more focus and attention in the attempt to create successful alliance building.

Unemployment is another key issue in the city, as the rate in Chicago (7.3%) in June 2008 was higher than the national level (5.5%).²³ The Chicago region in recent years has been hit hard by manufacturing job loss; from 2000 to 2005, Chicago experienced a 22.2 percent job loss in manufacturing industries compared to a 17.6 percent job loss in the United States.²⁴ Among the entire Chicago population, 21 percent of people were in poverty in 2006 and 34 percent of families with a female head of household and no husband present had incomes below the federal poverty level.²⁵ Altogether, 436,270 Chicago region residents live in extreme poverty.²⁶ This means their annual income is less than half the poverty line.²⁷ In the South Side of Chicago, the poverty and unemployment rates are especially striking.

African Americans and the South Side of Chicago

Most of the African Americans living in Chicago arrived between 1915 and 1960, from the South, to escape violence and with hopes to advance economically. In this period, the African American population rose from constituting less than two percent of the city's population to 25 percent.²⁸ Most of these African Americans began work in manufacturing jobs, especially on the South Side, where the steel and meatpacking industries had the most numerous jobs. Due to White hostility, housing discrimination, and subsequent White flight, African Americans lived in a chain of segregated neighborhoods on the South Side of Chicago, also known as the "Black Belt." In the final third of the twentieth century, the African American communities of the South Side notably suffered from the decline of these industries.²⁹ As our interviewees indicated, unemployment and the loss of manufacturing jobs have created a significant crisis in the African American community as well as other communities of color residing on the South Side of Chicago.

Albany Park Context

Albany Park is located on the northwest side of Chicago. The neighborhood is a traditional "port of entry" for immigrants upon arrival to the United States.³⁰ It is one of Chicago's most ethnically diverse neighborhoods and boasts one of the highest foreign-born populations in the city.³¹ More than 40

²⁰ <http://www.census.gov/popest/cities/tables/SUB-EST2007-01.csv>

²¹ *US Census Factfinder*: <http://factfinder.census.gov/>

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Bureau of Labor Statistics: <http://www.bls.gov/cps/>

²⁴ "2007 Report on Illinois Poverty: Chicago Area Snapshot." Illinois Poverty Summit. Mid-American Institute on Poverty of Heartland Alliance. <http://www.heartlandalliance.org/whatwedo/advocacy/reports/2007chicagoareasnapshot.pdf>

²⁵ *US Census Factfinder*: <http://factfinder.census.gov/>

²⁶ "2007 Report on Illinois Poverty: Chicago Area Snapshot." Illinois Poverty Summit. Mid-American Institute on Poverty of Heartland Alliance. <http://www.heartlandalliance.org/whatwedo/advocacy/reports/2007chicagoareasnapshot.pdf>

²⁷ http://www.heartlandalliance.org/maip/documents/ChicagoSupplement2007FINAL_002.pdf

²⁸ Christopher Manning, "African Americans", *Encyclopedia of Chicago*, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/27.html>

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ <http://www.apncorganizing.org/orghistory.htm>

³¹ "Chicago Neighborhood & City Guide." <http://www.chicagoneighborhoods.cc/neighborhoods/albanypark.html>

languages are spoken in the local schools, as 80% of Albany Park's residents are immigrants who hail from more than 50 countries.³²

Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative

Situated in Harlem, African Services Committee is located in the midst of New York City's tremendous diversity. As the most populous city in the United States and with the city's population surpassing 8.2 million in 2006,³³ the racial and ethnic landscape remains in constant transition. The continual influx of migrants has affected these numbers; as of 2006, 37.0% of the people in New York City were foreign-born (estimated to be 3,038,139 people).³⁴ African-born immigrants to the city hail from approximately 40 countries, with the largest populations coming from Nigeria.³⁵

Contemporary African migration to the U.S. began in the early 1980s.³⁶ Between 1990 and 2000, the African-born population in New York City doubled.³⁷ More specifically, the 2000 U.S. Census found that the population of African immigrants in New York City had increased 127% during the prior decade.³⁸ Data estimates indicate that more than one million African immigrants currently reside in the United States.³⁹ One in three of them are located in the northeastern United States.⁴⁰ It is estimated that 450,000 immigrants from Africa reside in the New York City metropolitan area, thus making one out of every twenty New Yorkers African-born.⁴¹ Data from 1996 indicates that 17% of all immigrants who entered the United States that year immigrated to New York City.

As a thriving metropolis and popular site for international business, New York City is home to a variety of industries and occupations. Data from April 2008 indicated that more than 1.9 million individuals were employed in the service industry, with professional and business (592,000) and health and social assistance (560,000) topping that portion of the economy. Industries such as finance, insurance, and real estate comprised another 462,000 jobs followed by trade (both retail and wholesale) at 455,000 jobs. Other industries that employed a considerable population of immigrants included construction (128,000), transportation and utilities (128,000), and manufacturing (95,000) industries. The government employed 563,000. Finally, an additional 3.2 million worked in private industries.

Also notable is New York City's role in big business. Many major corporations, such as banks, investment firms, and broadcast corporations, have headquarters in New York City. Moreover, in 2007 New York City had 45 Fortune 500 companies. This was more than any other U.S. city. Those closest in competition were Houston (22), Atlanta (12), Dallas (11), and Chicago (11).

A study conducted throughout 2007 found that immigrants earned 37% of the wages and salaries in New York City while comprising 37% of the city's overall population.⁴² Many immigrants can be found driving taxis, cleaning houses, and serving as home-health care workers; however, immigrants also comprise 25% of New York City's chief executives.⁴³

³² <http://www.apncorganizing.org/orghistory.htm> and <http://www.chicagoneighborhoods.cc/neighborhoods/albanypark.html>

³³ New York City Quickfacts. U.S. Census Bureau. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/36/3651000.html>.

³⁴ American FactFinder: New York City. Data from the 2006 American Community Survey.

³⁵ "Background: About the African Community in the United States." African Services Committee.

http://www.africanservices.org/our_community_background.htm

³⁶ "Our Community." African Services Committee. http://www.africanservices.org/Our_Community.htm

³⁷ "Background: About the African Community in the United States." African Services Committee.

http://www.africanservices.org/our_community_background.htm

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² McGeehan, Patrick. "Immigrants Pull Weight in Economy, Study Finds." *New York Times* 26 Nov. 2007.

⁴³ Ibid.

Immigrant entrepreneurs have had a substantial impact on the economy of New York City. In 2000, the foreign-born occupied nearly half (49%) of the self-employed positions in the city.⁴⁴ Between 1990 and 2000, self-employment rose 53% among foreign-born individuals and declined by 7% for the native-born.⁴⁵ As such, the percentage of workers in New York City that are self-employed is higher for foreign-born individuals (9.27%) compared to those that are native-born (7.71%).⁴⁶ In some areas of the city, most notably the Bronx and Queens, the percentage of self-employed foreign-workers is nearly double that of the native-born.⁴⁷

African American – African immigrant relation in New York City (broadly)

With African Service Committee's emphasis on immigrants, asylees, and refugees from the African Diaspora, it is important to consider the relationship between African immigrants and African Americans. Generally speaking, there tends to be a lack of interaction between the two groups. Part of this stems from a lack of understanding of each other's life circumstances, particularly African Americans who are unfamiliar with the impacts of colonialism and neocolonialism in Africa. One respondent noted how these misperceptions can lead to isolation, a problem that is compounded by the cultural and linguistic differences that can limit interactions. Nevertheless, an increasing number of organizations are recognizing the need to improve these relations, whether it is through formal organizational partnerships or simply by welcoming both constituencies within the same group.

Infant mortality data for New York City

Data on infant mortality in New York City as of June 2008 revealed improvements as well as areas that need greater attention. The city's overall infant mortality rate has decreased slightly in recent years, falling to 5.9 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2006 from 6.5 in 2003.⁴⁸ While this is clearly positive progress, these numbers conceal the disparities that exist between different neighborhoods. In particular, communities with considerable minority populations reported infant mortality statistics that surpassed those of non-minority communities, reflecting a historical trend. For example, in 1999 the Black infant mortality rate (10.6) was more than double that of whites (IMR= 4.6).⁴⁹ More recently, neighborhoods with the highest mortality rates included Mott Haven (located in the Bronx, 12.7), Williamsbridge (located in Brooklyn, 11.6), and Central Harlem (located in North Manhattan) and Brownsville (located in Brooklyn) both recording infant mortality rates of 11.0.⁵⁰

Gamaliel of Metro Chicago (GMC)

This alliance is located in the same area as the UCCRO (South Suburbs of Chicago). Please refer to the background information found on pages 27-28 for the general demographic and economic context. Pilsen neighborhood is highlighted in this current case study.

Currently, Chicago's largest Latino community resides in Pilsen, and most of these Latinos are of Mexican descent. Pilsen's population is composed of 50,000-55,000 families. The neighborhood, which was a major port of entry for the incoming Mexican immigrants in the 1970s and 1980s, is currently experiencing gentrification.

⁴⁴ "A World of Opportunity." Report by the Center for an Urban Future. February 2007.

http://www.nycfuture.org/images_pdfs/pdfs/IE-final.pdf p.6.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p.8.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p.7.

⁴⁷ Ibid. p.7.

⁴⁸ Brown, Deon. "Infant Deaths Up In New York. *Weekly Gleaner* 18 June 2008.

<http://www.indypressny.org/article.php3?ArticleID=4059> and Central Harlem Healthy Start Impact Report. 7/1/2001 – 5/31/2005.

<http://www.mchlibrary.info/MCHBfinalreports/docs/H49MC00134.pdf>

⁴⁹ Central Harlem Healthy Start Impact Report. 7/1/2001 – 5/31/2005.

<http://www.mchlibrary.info/MCHBfinalreports/docs/H49MC00134.pdf> p.28

⁵⁰ Brown, Deon. "Infant Deaths Up In New York. *Weekly Gleaner* 18 June 2008.

<http://www.indypressny.org/article.php3?ArticleID=4059>

The demographics of Pilsen neighborhood are also particularly striking. The median age in Pilsen is eighteen years.⁵¹ This figure is lower than the corresponding figure in all other Chicago communities.⁵² Poverty is a tremendous problem in the neighborhood: “More than a third (36%) of the community’s children live below the federal poverty level. Of the 12,340 households in Pilsen, approximately 22% are headed by women, and 31% have incomes of less than \$15,000 per year.”⁵³ Along with this, education is also a significant issue, as 70 percent of Pilsen adults have not attained more than an eighth grade education.⁵⁴ The Chicago Board of Education also estimates that 65 percent of children drop out of school.⁵⁵ Nearly 95% percent of students at the main school in the city are considered low income.⁵⁶ Many also have limited English-speaking abilities.

Casa De Maryland and NAACP Branches

According to the American Community Survey (2006) of the U.S., Maryland has a population of 5,615,727, of which 61.3 percent are White, 28.9 percent are African American, 4.9 percent are Asian, and 6 percent are Hispanic or Latino of any race. In a report prepared by the Brookings Institution, the Washington Metropolitan Area is defined as one of the ‘emerging gateway cities’ for immigrants.⁵⁷

In 2006, 12.2 percent of Maryland’s population was foreign-born,⁵⁸ and of these 35.4 percent were from Latin and Central America, especially El Salvador, Mexico, and Guatemala. The undocumented immigrant population in Maryland was estimated at 150,000 people in 2000.⁵⁹

The number of foreign-born workers in Maryland’s workforce grew significantly between 2000 and 2006 - 45.3 percent. In 2006, the foreign-born represented 15.5 percent of Maryland’s civilian employed workforce and 38.3 percent of these foreign-born workers were from Central and Latin America. A little over eight percent of the foreign-born lived below the poverty threshold in 2006 compared to the 7.7 percent of the native-born population. CASA operates three workers’ centers helping primarily immigrant workers, attributable to these statistics regarding the immigrants in Maryland’s workforce.

In terms of English language proficiency, the 2006 American Community Survey indicates that 39.8 percent of all civilian employed workers (including native and foreign-born) in Maryland were limited English proficient. CASA’s work specifically focuses on the immigrant population in three counties in the state of Maryland. Prince George’s County has a population of 841,315 residents, of which 64.6 percent are African American, 3.8 percent Asian, and 11.7 percent are Latino or Hispanics of any race.⁶⁰ In Prince George’s County, the foreign–born population increased by 176 percent from 1980-2000.

Montgomery County has a population of 932,131 residents, of which 61.8 percent are White, 16.2 percent are African American, 13.4 percent Asian, and 13.8 percent Latino or Hispanics of any race.⁶¹ In Montgomery County, the foreign-born population increased by 232 percent from 1980-2000. Almost 30 percent of the people living in Montgomery County in 2006 were foreign born⁶² while 71 percent were native, including 23 percent who were born in Maryland.⁶³ Among people at least five years old living in Montgomery County in 2006, 36 percent spoke a language other than English at home.⁶⁴ Of those

⁵¹ University of Illinois at Chicago Neighborhoods Initiative. <http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/gci/uicni/partnerships/pilsen.htm>

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ The report is available at: <http://www.casademaryland.org/docs-pdfs/brookingsimmiggateways.pdf>

⁵⁸ <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/MPI-ImmigrantsandVoting-MARYLAND.pdf>

⁵⁹ Equality Works p.10, Footnote 12 taken from Migration Policy Analysis

⁶⁰ American Factfinder. U.S. Census Bureau. Data from 2006 American Community Survey.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

speaking a language other than English at home, 36 percent spoke Spanish and 64 percent spoke some other language; forty percent reported that they did not speak English "very well."⁶⁵

Baltimore City has a population of 631,366 residents of which 30.9 percent are White, 64.4 percent are Black or African American, 1.9 Asian and 2.4 percent Latino or Hispanic of any race.⁶⁶ Only six percent of the people living in Baltimore City in 2005 were foreign born. Ninety-four percent were native, including 70 percent who were born in Maryland.⁶⁷

Frederick County has a population of 222,938, of which 84 percent are white, 8.3 percent are African American and 5.2 percent are Latino or Hispanic of any race.⁶⁸ An important demographic change in the Frederick County has been the arrival of a significant number of Latinos. Many Latinos migrated up Interstate 270 because of the booming construction and retail service industries in the county. Hence, the number of the Latin grocery stores increased on the so-called Golden Mile of shopping.⁶⁹ The school system budget for language interpreters also grew by \$1 million in 2005-2007. The number of the foreign-born residents in Frederick more than tripled in 2000-2006 by increasing from 7,800 to 19,000.⁷⁰

Although Maryland is the richest state in the U.S. with a median household income of \$65,144 in 2006⁷¹, an estimated 275,000 workers earn at or near the minimum wage, and thus constitute the working poor.⁷² Maryland's economy is largely dependent on service sector. Due to this booming service economy, Latino day laborers have become a vital part of the economy in Maryland. A study conducted in 2004 in the greater Washington D.C. region (including Maryland) found that 67 percent of the day laborers working in the region came from Central America and 12 percent from South America. According to the study, these day laborers, who are primarily working for construction contractors, subcontractors, or private companies, constitute a population vulnerable to exploitation and abuse by their employers.

There is also an important discrepancy between different counties in Maryland. While Prince George's County and Montgomery County are two of the wealthiest counties in the nation, Baltimore City is characterized by high levels of poverty. As one of our interviewees mentioned, for purposes of alliance building, "Baltimore is a tougher nut to crack because of the great levels of poverty."⁷³ As of 2004, over 90% of all of the jobs in Baltimore City were in the service sector.⁷⁴ These jobs are dominated by African Americans. To illustrate, in 1990, African Americans comprised 59% of the City of Baltimore's population yet were disproportionately employed in low wage service jobs; over seventy percent of these workers were African American.⁷⁵ In contrast, the U.S. Department of Commerce Minority Business Development Agency reported that in 2002 Baltimore County was home to 12,076 minority business firms, with 7,384 of them being African American.⁷⁶

MIRA and the Mississippi Workers' Center

As one of the most diverse states across the country, Mississippi is a prime location for advocacy work. According to 2006 estimates, Mississippi has a population of approximately 2,910,540 individuals.⁷⁷ More

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ "Immigrant Proposal Divides Frederick" *Washington Post*, October 8, 2007

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ U.S. Census Bureau Statistics, available at <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/ranks/rank33.htm>

⁷² Equality Works, p.10

⁷³ Interview with Elbridge James, former president of Montgomery Chapter of NAACP and Director of Advocacy for the State Council of the NAACP, on August 6, 2008.

⁷⁴ "A Brief Economic History of Modern Baltimore." *From Putting Baltimore's People First: Keys to Responsible Economic Development of Our City* (2004). <http://www.nathanielturner.com/robertmooreand1199union3.htm>

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Minority Business Development Agency, U.S. Department of Commerce. http://www.mbda.gov/?bucket_id=927&portal_document_download=true&download_cid=6240&name=Baltimore+County.pdf&legacy_flag=false.

⁷⁷ Mississippi QuickFacts. U.S. Census Bureau. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/28000.html>

than 40,000 of these individuals are foreign-born.⁷⁸ Also contributing to the Mississippi's diversity is its minority population. Thirty-seven percent of the population is black and 1.8 percent of the population is Latino.⁷⁹ The Latino figure may seem small but it is often disputed as a true count of the population. It may very well be the case that the majority of the state's Latino population is undocumented.

With these varying immigrant and ethnic groups, Mississippi may be on track to become a majority-minority state. Overall, the Pew Research Center estimates there are may be as many as 50,000 undocumented immigrants living in Mississippi, an increase from 5,000 in 1990.⁸⁰ MIRA puts the number closer to 200,000.⁸¹

Two periods in Mississippi immigrant history have marked their presence. The first occurred during the 1990's when indigenous Mexican and Central American immigrants arrived in large numbers after a law was passed permitting casino development. Most came to work on catfish farms, chicken plants, for the construction industry, or on casinos on the Gulf Coast. Many completed their work and then stayed in the United States. The second wave of immigrants seeking work has been continual. There is a growing Puerto Rican population hired by contractors looking to fill quotas. These contractors are wary of hiring undocumented workers and therefore often seek Puerto Ricans as alternatives.

Aside from ethnic background, Mississippi is also notably marked by the growth in poverty that has occurred in the state over time. After the Civil War in the 1850s, Mississippi was one of the wealthiest states in the U.S., but by 2007, Mississippi was one of the poorest states in the country with more than 19 percent of its residents living in poverty.⁸² The national average is much lower at 12.7 percent.⁸³ In addition, the 2005 personal per capita income of Mississippi ranked 50th in the U.S.⁸⁴ The devastation caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita has contributed to these figures and worsened existing poverty conditions in and around Mississippi. The Gulf Coast area was once the wealthiest region in the state prior to Katrina's destruction.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Jackson, Mississippi unemployment rate was 5.4 percent in May 2008.⁸⁵ Median household income in Jackson in 1999 was \$30,414;⁸⁶ the median income in the state as of 2004 was slightly higher (\$34,278).⁸⁷ While 19.9 percent of the state's population lived below poverty in 1999, 23.5 percent of Jackson residents did so.⁸⁸

The Bureau of Labor Statistics also estimates that the unemployment rate in June 2008 in the Gulfport-Biloxi area was at 6.5 percent.⁸⁹ In 1999, it was estimated that the median household income in Biloxi was \$31,106, and 14.6 percent of the population lived below poverty.⁹⁰

Hence, the alliance efforts of MIRA and Mississippi Workers' Center need to be considered in this demographic and economic context. There is a significant African American population with a long history of civil rights struggles and an increasing influx of Latino immigrants in the last decade. Moreover, increasing poverty, increasing unemployment, and the adverse effects of the hurricanes Katrina and Rita make the economic issues primarily salient for African Americans and the immigrant community.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Rupp, Leah. "Barbour OKs Illegal-Worker Bill." *The Clarion Ledger* 18 Mar. 2008.

<http://www.cofcc.org/chapters/mississippi/index.php>

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² <http://www.statemaster.com/state/MS-mississippi> & <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/28000.html>

⁸³ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/28000.html>

⁸⁴ http://www.statemaster.com/graph/eco_per_inc_percap-economy-personal-income-per-capita

⁸⁵ http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ms_jackson_msa.htm

⁸⁶ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/28/2836000.html>

⁸⁷ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/28000.html>

⁸⁸ www.fedstats.gov, US Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, HUD.

⁸⁹ <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/metro.pdf>

⁹⁰ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/28/2806220.html>

APPENDIX B: ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE INVOLVED IN THE INFANT MORTALITY REDUCTION INITIATIVE (FY 2008)

Abundant Life	Hunts Point Multi-Service Center
African Services Committee	Jewish Board of Family and Children Services
Alianza Dominicana	Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center
Bedford Stuyvesant Family Health Center	Literacy Assistance Center - Baby Basics Program
Bronx Health Link	Lower East Side Family Union
Brooklyn Comprehensive Perinatal Care Council Inc.	March of Dimes - New York Division
Brownsville Youth Association	MIC Women's Health Center (MHRA)
CAMBA	Montefiore School Health Program (Bronx) - PS/MS 95, IS 216, & 217
Caribbean Women's Health Association	Morris Heights Health Center
Citizens Advice Bureau	Mount Sinai (Manhattan) - Bayard Rustin
Clergy United for Community Empowerment	New Dimensions in Care
Community Health Care Network	New York Presbyterian Hospital (SBHC Reprod. Health)
ETR Associates (pilot sex education evaluation)	North Queens Health Coalition
Federation of County Networks	Northern Manhattan Perinatal Partnership
For A Better Bronx	Organization of African Coalition Services/Christ the Rock
Forestdale Inc.	Planned Parenthood of New York City
Fort Greene SNAP	Queens Comprehensive Perinatal Network
Fund for the City of New York	SCO - Family of Services (Brooklyn NFP)
Good Shepherd Services	St. Barnabas Hospital
Greater Southern Brooklyn Health Coalition	The Ryan Center
Haitian Americans United for Progress	Urban Health Plan (Bronx -James Monroe)
Haitian Women's Program/Diaspora Community Services	Visiting Nurse Service
Healthy Families of Staten Island	WHEDCO
Hope Gardens/ Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Center	

Source: http://www.nycouncil.info/tempissues/Schedule_c_Oct172007.pdf pages 56-58

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEWEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Effie Alexander	South Suburban Action Conference
Jenny Arwade	Albany Park Neighborhood Council
Rev. David Bigsby	South Suburban Action Conference
Jo Ann Bowman	Oregon Action
Bill Chandler	Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance
Vicky Cintra	Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance
Terrence Courtney	Atlanta Jobs with Justice
Amy DeHuff	Gulf Coast Equity and Inclusion Campaign
Carolina Delgado	South Florida Jobs with Justice
Guy Djoken	NAACP
Lisa Duran	Rights for All People
Sarita Gupta	Jobs with Justice
Joyce Hall	Federation of County Networks
Ponsella Hardaway	MOSES
Mónica Hernández	Highlander Research and Education Center
Dushaw Hockett	Center for Community Change
Kayse Jama	Center for Intercultural Organizing
Elbridge James	NAACP
Saru Jayaraman	Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York
James Johnson	Colorado Progressive Coalition
Joyce Johnson	Beloved Community Center
Leroy Johnson	Southern Echo
María Lisa Johnson	Latino Network
Rev. Nelson Johnson	Beloved Community Center
Nunu Kidane	Black Alliance for Just Immigration
Mike Kruglik	South Suburban Action Conference
Mona Langston	Brown Power Base Project
Gerald Lenoir	Black Alliance for Just Immigration
Sara Mersha	Direct Action for Rights and Equality
Kim Nichols	African Services Committee
Rami Nashashibi	Inner-city Muslim Action Network
Dan Petegorsky	Western States Center
Kim Propeack	CASA de Maryland
Alejandro Queral	Northwest Constitutional Rights Center
Rev. Kelvin Sauls	Black Alliance for Just Immigration
Sushma Seth	Miami Workers' Center
Juan Soto	Pilsen Neighbors Community Council
Celina Su	Assistant Professor at the City University at New York
Kathy Sykes	Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance
Bakary Tandia	African Services Committee
Gustavo Torres	CASA de Maryland
Eric Ward	Center for New Community
Rev. Patricia Watkins	TARGET Area Development Corporation
June White Dillard	NAACP
Janvieve Williams Comrie	U.S. Human Rights Network
Leah Wise	Southeast Regional Economic Justice Network

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A university-wide interdisciplinary research institute, the Kirwan Institute generates and supports innovative analyses of the dynamics that underlie racial marginality and undermine full and fair democratic practices in the United States and throughout the global community. Its work informs policies and practices to produce equitable change.

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