

# Diversity and Civic Leadership Program

## Year-end performance summary

FY 2010-11

July 2010 through June 2011

Organization: Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization

**GOAL: Community Involvement**, Increase the number and diversity of people who are involved and volunteer in their communities and neighborhoods.

1. Examples of developing culturally appropriate strategies to bring constituency together to build community identity, understanding of existing City governance structures, and/or skills to analyze City power dynamics.
  - **Staff:** Several part time staff employed to serve multiple constituencies: Pei-ru Wang, Oleg Kubrakov, and Abdiasis Mohamed. They also staff IRCO's health outreach effort and are versed on community resources and programs.
  - **Their strategy:** "Long-term community involvement in a comprehensive way." When outreaching to community regarding civic engagement issues, staff also try their best to address community concerns. Advocate for change as well as providing information and referral on immediate needs: (rental assistance, free health insurance/applications for children). IRCO's role is to be responsible liaison between the city and communities.
  - DCL Steering Committee: Participate in these meetings.
  - **ENGAGE Gathering Forums:** (Need more explanation on what it is) IRCO's leadership training program for immigrants and refugees to do something for their community, know the structure of public agencies and various other info, advocate for communities. Curriculum developed in part by Shaping Our Future conference priorities – see below. Used popular education model - Dinamica – social learning games to break down/equalize power dynamics and develop trust amongst participants. Used listening sessions where government and professional guests listened to community members. Participants report they were less afraid of approaching government staff now.
  - **Shaping Our Future: Community Needs Assessment Conference:** Gathering of over 200 immigrants and refugees, 30 volunteers. Gathered info to guide IRCO's future efforts. Top issues identified: Housing, education, mental & physical health, employment, business development. (**GET REPORT MARCH 2011.**)
  - **Attending community meetings:** DCL staff attend numerous community meetings to recruit community members for civic engagement efforts and for developing trust and rapport.

- **Portland Plan:** Convened their diverse communities to discuss Phase III. Involved in Portland Plan Fair held at IRCO. Worked with BPS staff to incorporate attending the fair as part of ENGAGE training workshop. See #7.
- **African Youth Council:** Convened meeting at Africa House on civic leadership training. See more under #7.
- **Asian Youth Leadership group:** Convened three workshops at David Douglas. Topics – Develop goals and visions for long term planning.
- **Safe Routes to Schools:** Organizing parents and students to increase walkability and bikability to Floyd Light Middle School and Ron Russell school, with PBOT. See more #8.
- **New culturally appropriate strategies:** In the 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr IRCO describes using different culturally appropriate communication strategies. For advanced members now using Twitter, Facebook, Google docs, text messaging to get the word out. For non-advanced constituencies staff are attending community meetings. After recruitment they convene meetings of various groups to work together to build a single and strong community voice.
- **Public Involvement Advisory Council presentation:** Organized a meeting for people to learn about this ONI program and its work. Afifa also explained how the City works, roles of various bureaus. Participants provided input on how best to work with IRCO communities. (*Get notes from Afifa.*) Attended by 23.

2. Have you convened any gatherings/meetings or events to accomplish this goal/program function? If so, how many gatherings/meetings? Attendance?

- Engage: 1<sup>st</sup> session – 62 people.
- Engage: 2<sup>nd</sup> session – 22 people
- Engage: 3<sup>rd</sup> session – 17 people
- Engage: 4, 5, 6, 7<sup>th</sup> sessions – 46 total
- African Youth Council – 1 session, ? how many people
- Asian Youth Leadership group: 3 sessions, ? how many people
- Portland Plan Fair at IRCO: 18 people
- PIAC presentation: 23 people

**GOAL: Capacity Building,** Strengthen neighborhood and community capacity to build identity, skills, relationships and partnerships.

### **Communications**

3. Describe the methods of communication currently used to outreach to your group.

- Face to face meetings most effective
- Emails to participants in ENGAGE, IRCO staff and mutual assistance groups. Many of those individuals forward info to their own lists.
- IRCO website, posting important community events
- Ethnic newspapers (Asian Reporter and others) to post community events

- Phone calls and phone trees for immediate response needs.
- Staff attending meetings and community forums of the many mutual assistance group meetings, at churches, celebrations, etc.
- 140 IRCO fulltime staff represent 60 ethnic groups, helps spread info

4. How many people are receiving these communications on a regular basis?

- 200 contacts in their database
- Trained leaders spread the word through their own affiliations.
- 140 IRCO fulltime staff

5. Describe one example of how one of these communication strategies is supporting your community building and livability efforts, fostering dialogue on policy issues, or publicizing opportunities for involvement with the City?

- **One-on-one face to face and/or phone conversations:** Only way community leaders feel respected and valued. Those with less English proficiency prefer NOT to read lengthy emails/texts. Prefer “heart to heart” conversations and Q&A to understand why public involvement opportunities are important. Example: Send out email for a BAC opening. People call them and staff have a phone or face-to-face conversation to mentor them for serving on the committee.
- **Role as gatekeepers:** IRCO doesn’t just forward emails. Staff see themselves as gatekeepers. Staff try to understand and find out more information before they share with the communities because they hold community trust. IRCO DCL staff share info and reports from Coalition of Communities of Color, DHS, County and City budgets, etc. with community contacts and encourage them to participate in public involvement opportunities.
- **New culturally appropriate strategies:** See #1. Describes in 4<sup>th</sup> qtr now using twitter, facebook, google docs, text messaging. But several quarters they say they have no plans to develop these communication strategies. See #6 below.

6. Are there plans to develop/implement any new communications strategies?

- Starting to explore Facebook, my space, twitter to reach youth. But don’t plan to develop any time soon.

### **Leadership development**

7. As a result of this project describe one method to develop leadership opportunities for your constituents to become effective advocates on City public involvement initiatives and/or initiatives by your organization to achieve economic and social equity? How many people have participated?

- **ENGAGE Gathering Forums:** *(Need more explanation on what it is)* IRCO's leadership training program.
  - **1<sup>st</sup> session:** Focus on identifying and prioritizing critical community issues and developed the ENGAGE curriculum topics. *(What are key issues?)* 52 volunteers and 10 staff participated.
  - **2<sup>nd</sup> session:** Have a Voice in Local Governments
  - **3<sup>rd</sup> session:** Addressing Health Issues in the Community.
  - **4<sup>th</sup> session:** Grant writing
  - **5<sup>th</sup> session:** Advocacy skills
  - **6<sup>th</sup> session:** Addressing Economic & Small Business Development
  - **7<sup>th</sup> session:** Community Organizing and Leadership
  - Used popular education model - Dinamica – social learning games to break down/equalize power dynamics and develop trust amongst participants.
- **African Youth Council:** Convened meeting at Africa House on civic leadership training. Topics – How African Youth can voice their priorities to City Council, ways to get involved, budget process time lines, where public resources come from and who provides different services.
- **Asian Youth Leadership group:** Convened three workshops at David Douglas. Topics – Develop goals and visions for long term planning.
- **Portland Plan Fair:** Involved in Portland Plan Fair held at IRCO. Worked with BPS staff to incorporate attending the fair as part of ENGAGE training workshop. Participants went through Fair and went back to classroom to discuss how welcome the fair was to immigrant/refugee communities. Gave feedback to BPS.
- **Public Involvement Advisory Council presentation:** Organized a meeting for people to learn about this ONI program and its work. *(See #1 above.)*

## Partnerships and Collaborations

8. Describe a new or update on a collaboration or partnership developed as a result of this project with other community organization(s), neighborhood and/or business association(s) where there may be opportunities to work on common community and neighborhood livability issues?

- **ENGAGE:** Partners/speakers - ONI, City of Beaverton(Mediation and Economic Development), Metro, Multnomah County (Civic Involvement office and Community Capacitation Center), Multnomah and Washington County Health Depts, Oregon Dept of Health (Mental Health, Multicultural Health), Coalition of Community Clinics, Providence, East Portland Action Plan, PDC,
- **DCL partnerships:** Continues to work with other four groups (NAYA, CIO, Latino Network, Urban League)
- **Communities of Color Coalition:**
- **Multnomah County's Community Putting Prevention to Work – Civic Engagement Workgroup:** Collaboration with 25 other grantees (PBOT, BPS, City of Gresham, Catholic Charities, Urban League, NAYA, Community Health Partnerships, etc.)

- **Safe Routes to Schools:** Organizing parents and students to increase walkability and bikability to Floyd Light Middle School and Ron Russell school, with Portland Bureau of Transportation. Partnering with Catholic Charities' El Programa Hispano, East Portland Action Plan, East Portland Neighborhood Office, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. Partnership with DCL program made outside foundation support possible.
- **Metro:** No description.

**GOAL: Public Impact,** Increase community and neighborhood impact on public decisions.

### **Representation on City advisory committees**

9. How many people have participated on city advisory committees, boards, commissions?
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr – 5 IRCO staff on committees
  - **Water Bureau BAC:** Grace Bayley
  - **Parks and Recreation BAC:** Robert Wong and Pei-ru Wang
  - **Portland Housing BAC:** Abdiasis Mohamed
  - **PDC Gateway Redevelopment and Neighborhood Park CAC:** Pei-ru Wang
  - **ONI BAC:** Oleg Kubrakov
  - **Local school boards, PTAs:** Several African immigrants recruited (*DID ANY OF THESE VOLUNTEERS GO THROUGH ENGAGE TRAININGS?*)
  - **Public Involvement Advisory Council (ONI):** Abdiasis Mohamed
  - **East Portland Action Plan committees:** 3 people
  - **Gang Violence Task Force:** 4 people
  - **Cable office digital inclusion project:** Abdiasis Mohamed
  - **Parks and Recreation Sullivan's Gulch bike trail advisory committee:** 1 person
  - **Gateway Initiatives:** Some communities involved?
  - **Portland Plan Citizen Involvement Committee:** 1 person

### **Culturally appropriate public involvement models**

10. Please describe any opportunities this quarter you have had to engage with City public involvement efforts. What have been some of the successes or challenges in engaging in this process?
  - **Good examples:** Portland Housing Bureau and Parks and Recreation make extra effort to make us feel welcomed, have separate phone or face-to-face communications to develop trusting relationships. Parks staff also checked in

with DCL staff when beginning Sullivan's Gulch trail project regarding outreach to serve on advisory committee. Assisted Parks in designing presentation for ESL individuals. Due to this extra effort a Pacific Islander staff person submitted an interest form to be on committee.

- **Challenging examples:** Water Bureau – treats new participants as anyone who is savvy in this sort of meeting. IRCO rep expressed frustration in having to learn info on her own, not feeling welcomed.
- **PDC Community Economic Development Community Forum:** 5 IRCO staff.
- **Portland Housing Bureau**
- Parks and Recreation
- **Portland Plan:** Convened their diverse communities to discuss Phase III.
- **PIAC:** Aside from attending meetings building close contact with PIAC staff to learn more about City initiatives/projects related to public involvement processes.
- **Portland Bureau of Transportation:** Appreciate outreach work of Matt Wickstrom. No other description.