



KOCO CHRONICLE

**VOL. 9, ISSUE 1
SPRING 2009**

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**Upcoming
Events:**

Springfield Advocacy Day
April 23, 2009
State Capitol

LSC Budget Training
May 9, 2009
Dyett Academic Center

Hunger Walk
June 20, 2009
Montrose Harbor

Ujima Day Camp
Starts July 6, 2009
Kennicott Park

Senior Health Fair
July 16, 2009
King Center

Olympic Meeting
July 30, 2009
King Center

For more information
contact (773) 548-7500

OLYMPICS 2016: DON'T YOU DESERVE MORE?

During the last year, the Kenwood Oakland Community Organization (KOCO) has worked closely as a part of the Communities for an Equitable Olympics (CEO) 2016 Coalition to ensure that provisions are in place to protect our communities in the event that Chicago is selected to host the Olympics in 2016.

Since our first community meeting in January 2007, regarding the Olympics plans, KOCO has vigilantly worked to secure a legally binding commitment that includes affordable housing at the Olympic Site, affordable housing, construction apprenticeship positions, and increased opportunities for minority business owners.

The CEO 2016 Coalition organized community forums, held meetings with elected officials and Chicago 2016 (official organizing body for Chicago's Olympic bid), staged demonstrations and protests, held press conferences, and commissioned a poll.

These efforts have resulted in an agreement by the City of Chicago to support our recommendations for: 30% of

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KOCO Lead Organizer, Shannon Bennett at City Hall Press Conference



Concerned community residents listening intently during CEO Meeting

GROW YOUR OWN TEACHER (GYO) RALLY DAY

This February, the Kenwood Oakland Community Organization (KOCO) boarded buses headed for Springfield, IL. The purpose for the trip was to show support for the Grow Your Own (GYO) Teachers Program. The GYO program is a program designed to improve teacher quality by reducing the teacher turnover rate in hard to staff schools. Teacher candidates receive state aid to cover tuition fees and books, that aren't covered by the Pell Grant. Upon obtaining the teaching certificate, GYO Teacher Candidates must teach in hard to staff community schools for 5 years. KOCO partners with Enlace Chicago, Malcolm X College, Illinois State University and Chicago Public Schools for this amazing program.

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A Special Tribute

This edition of the KOCO Chronicle is in loving memory of Willie Welch who made his transition on May 30, 2009. He was a long time supporter of KOCO and our Senior Health Fairs. He and the Willie Welch Orchestra provided the beautiful jazz sounds at each Senior Health Fair since 2001 when they began! He loved music and graciously shared it with KOCO and many others. He will never be forgotten!



Willie Welch and a guest at KOCO's Fundraiser

KOCO Leader Speaks Out

With Chicago competing for the 2016 Olympic Bid, Kathryn Madkins, a KOCO leader, is very concerned about being forced to move out of the community due to spiraling costs. She is currently raising her children, working full-time, and enrolled in college to become a teacher in the community. She wants to make sure that if Chicago wins the 2016 Olympic Games that long-term residents like her and her neighbors also win. Ms. Madkins says, "If the Olympics come to our neighborhoods, we want our elected officials to guarantee that we will remain in our neighborhoods and that our housing is affordable."

KOCO has been working in partnership with elected officials

for several months to develop an Olympic Community Benefits Ordinance to protect the rights of local residents and local communities. "In these financially uncertain times, this ordinance provides some piece of mind because it ensures affordable housing, living wage jobs and support for minority contractors. These benefits will only improve Chicago's chance of winning the bid, but ensure victory in 2016 for all residents of Chicago. "

"If Chicago has any chance of winning the gold in 2016, we believe that every member of city council and Mayor Daley must sign on to support the Olympic Community Benefits Ordinance!"

Olympics 2016

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the housing units in the Olympic Village to be made affordable for people earning less than \$45,000 a year; 10% of the construction labor to go to apprenticeships from the neighborhoods most-affected by the development plans; and

25% of all of the contracts will go to minority-owned businesses, and 5% to go to women-owned businesses. Though CEO and KOCO have made some strides in ensuring that provisions are in place to protect the community, the work is not over. If you would like to find out more information about how you can get involved contact Mr. Bennett, KOCO's lead organizer, at 773.548.7500.

LOOKING for Summer Activities for your kids?

Check out the Ujima Leadership Day Camp!

Field Trips - Arts & Crafts - Academic Enrichment
Structured Recreational Activities - Workshops
FUN!!

Starts in July Register your child today!

Ujima Leadership Day Camp operates from July through August from 8:30 AM—5:30 PM, Monday through Friday

Contact Jonathan Projansky @ (773) 548-7500 for more details



KOCO Leader, Kenya Jackson at City Hall Press Conference

GROW YOUR OWN TEACHER (GYO) RALLY DAY

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The Grow Your Own Teachers program held the rally on Wednesday, February 18 in the Capitol Rotunda. Over 200 people from across the state attended to show support for the program. The purpose of the rally was to provide an opportunity for GYO candidates from around the state to celebrate together, thank the legislature for their support of Grow Your Own, and to hear from legislators and other colleagues. Lastly, the purpose of the rally was to enable GYO candidates to meet their own legislators, thank them in person, and make the case for the funds needed in 2010.

Many legislators came to the rally to speak to the candidates personally. One prominent law maker, House Speaker Mike Madigan, stopped by and said a few words to the crowd. KOCO's teacher candidates also got a chance to participate in policy advocacy while in Springfield. They were able to meet with State Senate Kwame Raoul, State Rep. Will Burns, State Rep. Eddie Washington, State Rep. Esther Golar and State Rep. Art Turner.

The Grow Your Own statewide initiative is made up of 16 GYO partnerships. Eight partnerships are in Chicago, and the other eight are in other high-need areas around the state of Illinois.

There are over 500 teacher candidates statewide, 85 percent of whom are people of color — people who will make excellent teachers, but who have been previously unable to afford to attend college. The partnerships include 16 community organizations, 8 public universities, 4 private colleges or universities, 12 community colleges, 23 school districts, and 2 labor unions.

We were all pleased that Governor Pat Quinn proclaimed February 18, 2009 as GYO Day! If you are interested in getting some additional information about GYO, please contact Rod Wilson, GYO Coordinator at (773) 548-7500.



GYO Participants with Illinois State University Representative Angelia Roberts-Watkins, State Senator Kwame Raoul and State Representative Will Burns (l-r) in Springfield, Illinois

GCFD HUNGER WALK!

Join us as we Stand Up
Against Hunger at the
Chicago Greater Chicago
Food Depository's Hunger
Walk

June 20, 2009

9 AM - 12 noon

Meet us @ KOCO's Office
1005 E. 43rd Street
@ 8 AM

***Your attendance and
donations support our
Emergency Food Program***

KOCO Annual Fundraiser



KOCO Case Manager Felena Bunn,
Jazz Vocalist Joan Collaso with
KOCO Executive Director
Jay Travis



Ms. Lee, KOCO Board Treasurer and
Board Honoree with Anna Ramos,
KOCO Bookkeeper and Outstanding
Achievement Award Recipient

Kenwood Oakland Community Organization

1005 East 43rd Street, Chicago – Illinois, 60653 (773) 548-7500

THE MISSION STATEMENT

Through the sustained engagement of low-income and working families, KOCO develops multi-generational leaders who impact the decision-making process and public policies, improving the quality of life in our local communities.

THE VISION

KOCO develops new generations of African American leadership that will build stable, viable, and just communities where opportunity is not denied based on race or economic status.

HISTORY

KOCO has been an instrument for grassroots democracy in the North Kenwood and Oakland communities for over forty years. Founded by religious and community leaders in the 1960's, KOCO facilitated organizing campaigns that increased the resources and services available to families and residents. Today KOCO continues its work as a vehicle and voice to low-income and working families.

CAPACITY

The staff of KOCO is comprised of energetic, compassionate, and competent human service professionals. Areas of expertise include:

- Community Organizing
- Program Development and Coordination
- Youth Organizing
- Emergency Referral

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

KOCO is governed by a dynamic Board of Directors which sets the policy of the organization. The direction of the organization is overseen by the Executive Director, who organizes its vision. Staff members and volunteers are responsible for implementing the day-to-day operations that interface with the community.

KOCO Programs & Activities

Community Organizing - KOCO works with community residents to not only understand what their concerns are, but to facilitate the creation of strategies to address community issues. This work has resulted in the formation of tenant councils, community action groups, and youth and parent groups.

Leadership Development - KOCO's leadership development programs for adults and youth include: parent groups, tenant councils, local school council training, teacher training courses, and youth development programs during school hours, after school, and on weekends

Food Assistance - KOCO provides emergency food assistance for over 300 people per month. In addition, we provide emergency referral and linkages services for housing, crisis intervention, employment, etc.

Employment & Training - KOCO's Employment Training Program is a resource for community members seeking employment and training opportunities. KOCO assists participants in learning the skills necessary to become employed and more self-sufficient.

Political Education and Voter Registration - Residents learn how local, national, and international issues impact their daily lives in political education sessions. KOCO also sponsors voter registration sessions, and registers hundreds of people to vote annually.

KOCO STAFF

Jhatayn Travis – Executive Director

Shannon Bennett – Lead Organizer

Brian Malone – Employment and Training Program Coordinator

Jonathan Projansky – Youth Development Coordinator

Jitu Aaron Brown – Education Organizer

Rod Wilson – Grow Your Own and BAN Coordinator

Marcus Holder – Youth Organizer

Jovan Harrison – Housing Organizer

Anna Rawson-Ramos – Bookkeeper

Felena Bunn – Case Manager