

# INITIATIVES

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ICAs Around the Globe

### Message from the CEO



Ted Wysocki, CEO

*"In every great struggle humanity has undertaken, the march towards progress has included both successes and setbacks. And*

*the struggle to protect and save the Earth's ecological system is no exception.*

*Today, I am as optimistic and resolved as ever that we will solve the climate crisis. Our collective efforts are dependent not on politics or ideology — or elections — but on our commitment to each other, to the health of our planet and to a sustainable future for all.... We must fight for the future we all believe in. Now, more than ever, our planet needs us — and I'm inspired by the knowledge that we'll take the path forward together."*

- Al Gore, Founder & Chairman, The Climate Reality Project, 09/09/2016

In 1976, the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) launched a Bicentennial Commission approved initiative to convene Town Meetings across the US, creating one of the most comprehensive data sets of community aspirations and hopes for the future.

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### Accelerating the National Conversation about Climate Change

ICA's Technology of Participation (ToP®) facilitation methods bring a legacy of tools for groups that foster participation, engagement, collaboration and effective action. ICA utilized these methods to launch Town Meetings '76. Those local efforts engaged citizens in considering issues and opportunities before them as they sought to improve and develop their towns and communities. In a bold experiment catalyzing engagement, collaboration, and action, ICA conducted over 5,000 meetings.

To celebrate this legacy of community action and the value of ToP methods, trained facilitators, ICA staff, and colleagues in the ToP network organized events in seven cities as part of a national collaboration to accelerate climate action. Facilitators partnered with local organizations to design and implement sessions which addressed critical issues in those areas. Over 40 collaborators organized this initiative, and many of the facilitators and organizations are planning on continuing the work with their new partners. In the following summaries a main ToP facilitator or organizer is listed but we thank all that participated.

**Milwaukee Greenway Workshop, Milwaukee, WI.** (Amy Murphy): 35 local stakeholders and activists currently working on the expansion of city greenways and storm water management met to share insights on project opportunities and challenges, strategized how to collaborate, and formed teams to move forward.

**Accelerate Climate Action Community Forum, Denver, CO.** (Sunny Walker): 40 residents from 17 Denver Metro neighborhoods came together to consider how local citizens could join in the effort to slow the worst effects of climate change. This event partnered with Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods (CHUN), ICA-USA and Wartburg College West.

**Alliance for Sustainability Planning for Resilient Cities Workshop, Twin Cities, MN.** (Rachel Hefte): 140 staff, elected leaders, and commission and community volunteers from 38 metro cities met to explore ways to develop sustainability vision statements, goals and strategies for implementation. Peers from other communities also gathered to explore how to advocate for their city to include energy, adaptation, transportation/land use, health/equity themes in city planning.



Minneapolis, Oct 24th



Denver, Oct 22nd



Milwaukee, Oct 18th

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## MESSAGE FROM CEO CONTINUED...

Many of these original documents are still accessible in ICA's extensive archives.

This past year, our Archives Team worked with Dominican University Library Science graduate students to explore the community challenges and project proposals that were developed in nine states during the Town Meetings 40 years ago. I first found the results surprising, but then I remembered that this was the post-Watergate Presidential Election Year. What I find disturbing is how relevant these findings are for today's politics and this year's Presidential Election.

- Finding #1 was the gap between government and citizens fostered by poor communication between citizens & government.
- Finding #2 was the lack of citizen and community involvement and the extensiveness of public apathy.
- Finding #3 was no appreciation for diversity amidst racism.
- Finding #4 was the challenge of planning for long-term development when confronted with few public services, aging infrastructure, loss of resources, and not enough jobs.

The core of ICA's methods from its founding has been to engage in conversations that build consensus on action for solutions. Whether it was the Bicentennial Town Meetings or this past month's Accelerating Climate Action Initiative, this process is a powerful one. It is also essential to the spirit of our democracy if we are to trust government to represent its citizens.

There are more connections between ICA's past and the current challenges our country is facing. On October 3rd, Ladonna Bravebull Allard urged the UN to halt the Dakota Access Pipeline as the Standing Rock Sioux continue to protect their sacred waters and land. Ladonna is the daughter of Frank Brave Bull, who mentored Doug Druckenmiller (former ICA Board Chair and active member of ICA's Archives Team). Frank was one of the key supporters of ICA's Human Development Project, Inyan Wakagapi, in Cannonball ND. I am confident as we move forward in the next year, as our Archives Team reviews the Band of 24 and we compare it to where those communities are now, we will see more clearly the impact of ICA's work.

For our current staff to continue ICA's legacy "to build a just and equitable society in harmony with Planet Earth," we all must engage locally, nationally, and internationally. Climate Action cannot wait for the 2020 Elections. It's time to reawaken, hear the call, and demonstrate the possible – now, more than ever.



You can read Ted's monthly blog post at:  
<https://u2cando49.wordpress.com/>

## BOARD MEMBER PROFILE: Bob Rafos

### When did you first encounter the ICA?

I first encountered the ICA in 1967 when I was encouraged to attend a course. It really addressed me as I was very involved with the Civil Rights movement. I saw a way at that time to become more deeply involved in social justice. In 1969 our family joined the staff of The Ecumenical Institute (EI)/ICA and continued for the next 20 years.



### What is your current role with the ICA? Also, what do you plan to do after leaving the board?

At the end of December of this year I will retire after six years as a Director. I have played a key role in financial matters and fund raising. I hope to continue working on the GreenRise development project with ICA. I will continue to be involved on boards or as an advisor for several Canadian non-profit organizations. I am looking forward to our first great grandchildren and more time with my extended family.

### What are your favorite things about the ICA?

What I like about ICA is the rich history of pioneering in social justice and spiritual renewal. ICA is not afraid to be engaged in the critical issues of our time, especially today's involvement with climate change and the environment. Of course, along the journey with ICA I have been deeply impacted by wonderful colleagues who have inspired, nurtured, and supported me. For all of you, I am forever grateful.

### An interesting fact about you?

I have had four very rich and diverse careers. After post-graduate work I spent ten years as a research chemist for an oil company, Standard Oil of Ohio. The next 20 years as a community development practitioner working in over 20 countries. The next 15 years as a partner and managing director of Northwater Capital Management, an investment management company. Finally, since retiring from Northwater, as a volunteer and Board member for a number of non-profit charitable organizations in Canada. The photo is me presenting a check for \$25,000 from Northwater to the CEO of Save the Children Canada, while I was Vice-Chair of the Save Board.

The following is an excerpt of Bob Rafos' thoughtful closing reflection given at Bob's last face-to-face board meeting on September 18th.

"We are facing the greatest threat of our time: Climate Change. Our role now is as it was before:

- Be a source of awakening.
- Sound the call to commitment; and
- Demonstrate what is possible.

Using ICA's GreenRise building as a symbol of service and sustainability, we must outreach to others working on climate action."

## Planning in Uptown's Coastal Zone

In 2015, following a successful five year effort for ICA to re-engage in programming throughout Chicago, ICA began an effort to re-invest programmatically in its local neighborhood, Uptown. ICA has directed its local programming towards connecting residents to build relationships with one another and other organizations and live more sustainable lifestyles.

This year ICA's programming delved a bit deeper and connected residents and local organizations to collectively develop a community planning process to bring awareness and action to Uptown's unique, fragile, and beautiful coastal zone. The planning process was made possible by [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) (NOAA) and the [Illinois Department of Natural Resources](#) (IDNR) Coastal Management Program.



Coastal Zone Community Planning Sessions

The pre-planning phase involved meeting one-on-one with over a dozen stakeholders at the local, citywide, and statewide level. With this key stakeholder input, the program team designed sessions following the arc of [ToP Strategic Planning](#) process, and adapted it to fit within four two-hour long sessions. Outreach materials were created and disseminated throughout Uptown, drawing in residents and local organizations to the planning sessions.

These sessions generated three areas of interest for working groups.

- **Promoting Sustainability in and through Projects and Programs:** There are a number of existing projects and developments in the Uptown area that could benefit from engagement with residents and a sustainability lens.
- **Connecting Organizations to Encourage Community Sustainability:** Uptown is rich in community organizations doing great work, and this group aims to identify and connect those groups to foster collaborations.
- **Creating Ways to Access Nature:** Uptown's existing green space continues to be in competition with development. This group aims to increase the visibility of green spaces to generate support to care for and improve Uptown's nature areas.

Following the completion of the planning process, the participants decided to celebrate the plan with a potluck dinner and invited additional residents to join one of three working groups to implement the plan in 2017. ICA received additional funding from NOAA and IDNR for 2017 and will begin educational programming about Uptown's Coastal Zone and how the lakefront's assets are related to a variety of fields ranging from mental health professionals to architects. ICA will organize a series of eight experiential-learning sessions focused on eight different interest areas, and will create a toolkit of strategies to connect the relevance of the Coastal Zone to any field.

## EcoCharrette Stirs Interest in Historic GreenRise Renovation

ICA staff have been thinking critically on how to ensure the future of ICA GreenRise, ICA's historic, 8-story Uptown building. In addition to immediate concerns, such as completing an intensive replacement and repair of the plumbing system, there have been great strides to finalize a plan to sustainably renovate and restore the building to its original grandeur.

In 2012, ICA committed to [Retrofit Chicago's](#) goal to reduce energy usage by 20% by 2017; we exceeded that goal by reducing 23% in just four years, leading to the recognition of GreenRise as a member of the [Retrofit Chicago Mayor's Leadership Circle](#) for Outstanding Energy Efficiency Achievement. ICA has positioned the GreenRise as an innovative and successful sustainable learning laboratory and nonprofit service center, thus the renovation and restoration project has drawn a lot of interest and eagerness to participate from professionals across Chicago.



Retrofit Chicago's Mayor Circle Award

On Oct. 25th, 25 people attended the ICA GreenRise EcoCharrette to strategize goals and discuss how sustainably renovating the GreenRise can improve the quality of life for people who live, work, and receive services in the building.

Some of the most probing questions of the day were:

- What is the long-range plan for the building?
- What is the best use of resources? Highest Performance?
- How do you get the most out of the space available?
- How do we use the design to generate revenue?

Although the specific details and timeline of the project are being refined, the EcoCharrette generated a framework for rethinking how the GreenRise deals with its water, windows (for daylighting and circulation), building envelope, and an infrastructure modernization for thermal comfort.

[Farr Associates Architecture](#), organizers of the EcoCharrette, intentionally used a format that stressed an integrated design process that included the client, architect and engineers in order to ensure maximum buy-in to the project from the start. Technical experts on the project included Farr Associates, [dbHMS](#) (plumbing and electric engineers), [BTL Architects](#), and building enclosure specialists. The charrette also involved GreenRise experts from members of the ICA staff, residents, and volunteers. Bringing such diverse stakeholders together created a set of ideas that when implemented, will foster a holistic, environmentally friendly, beautifully restored, comfortable and functional community space.



Participants at EcoCharrette

# Elevating Leadership in Chicago Sustainability

ICA has been organizing the Chicago Sustainability Leaders Network (CSLN) since October of 2013. The CSLN embarked on two new journeys this fall.

Internally, network members worked together to develop a formal membership structure. The intent of the structure is to provide support and clarity for current members and allow new interested parties to plug into the work of the network more easily. Starting in the spring, CSLN organizers conducted outreach to seasoned and new members, as well as community leaders who have experience in organizing networks, for input and suggestions on the most effective structure to serve the diverse network.

The formalized structure has three levels of membership: Core, Ally, and Grasstops. Each level of membership is equal to the amount of time and energy invested; the benefits received directly correlate to the investment made. Members self-select the amount of time and energy they see themselves contributing to the network and choose a corresponding membership level. Network organizers intend to use this membership structure as they continue outreach to new members and improve it as more feedback is received.



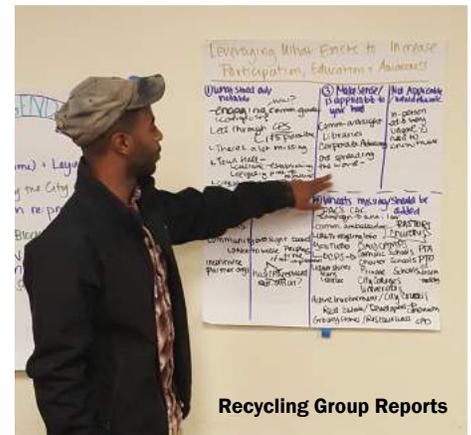
Nov. 2 Recycling Launch

Externally, the network's policy working group organized and delivered on their first tangible project in the 'in-between space,' aiming to reflect the voice of local residents and grassroots organizations in City policy. The CSLN policy team and the City of Chicago's Chief Sustainability Officer, Chris Wheat, laid the groundwork for and clarified the project through several round table discussions.

CSLN was invited and contracted to host four public meetings across Chicago to get community ideas on ways to improve Chicago's recycling, more specifically on how to reduce recycling contamination rates. The meetings educated attendees on the current reality of recycling and prompted them to share creative solutions to mitigate barriers they face to recycling. Meeting attendees produced many innovative ideas that are being processed to share with the City. The meetings also prompted some press coverage including articles in a few local newspapers, a radio segment on WGN, and a video segment on Chicago Tonight, WTTW.

City staff intend to review the ideas with members of the CSLN's policy team and begin implementing applicable ones to help improve Chicago's Recycling Program. Network members consider this project a positive one and are looking forward to exploring new opportunities through this partnership.

To read more about the work and members of the Chicago Sustainability Leaders Network or the recycling initiative please visit [www.accelerate77.net/csln](http://www.accelerate77.net/csln).



Recycling Group Reports



CSLN Shared Leaders Facilitated Group Discussions at Recycling Meetings



Sustainable September Bike Ride



CSLN Networking Event



Recycling Consensus Workshop



## LET'S TALK TRASH: RECYCLING IN CHICAGO

HEAR THE DATA, SHARE YOUR IDEAS & LEARN FROM OTHERS!

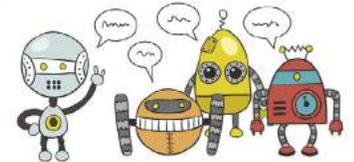
RECYCLING IN CHICAGO CAN BE HARD. LET'S CHANGE THAT.



The Chicago Sustainability Leaders Network (CSLN) will be hosting 3 regional gatherings this November.

Participants will be encouraged to brainstorm creative solutions to reduce contamination in Chicago's blue bins and contribute actionable ideas to support better citywide recycling practices.

Everyone is invited - Come Out!



SOUTH

WEST

NORTH

Part of the Recycling Series Flyer

## National Gatherings, continued

### Phoenix Community Gathering 2016

(Neighborhoods Connect Town Hall Series Pilot), Phoenix, AZ. (Courtney Lonergan): 100+ multi-generational leaders and policymakers explored emerging solutions about the Muslim Reform Movement, police and neighborhood connections, and inspiring environmentally conscious citizens.

Youth as Facilitative Leaders Workshop, Chicago, IL. (Seva Gandhi): 15 Bronzeville community teens and other Chicago youth engaged in collaborative thinking and dialogue about how to activate their passions into constructive action.

### Leveraging Our Leadership for Powerful

Climate Action, Austin, TX. (Lynda Baker): 23 stakeholders of organizations working locally and nationally on climate action met to collaborate as leaders of climate advocacy, justice, and innovation to accelerate inclusive solutions locally, regionally and globally.

### Tucson Emerging 2030 District Action Planning Session, Tucson, AZ. (Linda Ellinor):

22 participants strategized how to increase participation of residents and tap into the existing commitment of a 50% reduction in energy use, water use, and transportation emissions by the year 2030.

### Climate Justice Allyship Building, Chicago, IL. (Caitlin Sarro):

60 residents and organizations gathered to identify actionable steps they could take to support each other and have greater collective impact around climate justice in Chicago. This event was organized with 350 Chicago and ThoughtWorks.

In addition to helping the local initiatives, these meetings have produced a wealth of information on using ToP methods for climate change action of various scales and diversity. This series was a valuable learning opportunity that strengthened relationships and laid the ground for future collaborations.



Chicago, Oct 29th



Austin, Nov 1st



Phoenix, Oct 26th



Tucson, Nov 11th

“ It seemed a ‘soup-to-nuts’ variety of fabulous events; each meeting [feeding] needs that participants had. - Sunny Walker (Colorado) ”



Chicago, Nov 17th

## ICA Network Activated Around the Globe

This year has been extremely productive for ICAs around the globe, both in terms of work in their own countries as well as with other ICAs to move forward to the work of ICA-International (ICAI).

### Regional Meetings

Each region of the world's ICAs (East Africa, West Africa, Europe, Asia/Australia, N/S America) came together across five separate meetings in 2016. These regional conferences allowed local ICAs to look at ways to better collaborate, broaden, and deepen ICA's social change work. ICA-USA was represented at three of the five meetings.



European Gathering 2016

### ToP Global & IAF Partnership

ICAI and the International Association of Facilitators (IAF) have come together to form a working group consisting of three members/facilitators from each organization. The intent of the group is to explore ways the organizations can collaborate and support one another. Both organizations would like to collaborate in areas of conferences, events, complementary certification, and training endorsements.

In the coming months the team hopes to:

- Implement and uphold their common, core values;
- Launch and follow through on other initiatives that pertain to both groups' work;
- Discover other areas of collaboration, promotion, and research beneficial for both organizations.

### ICAI New Members & Board Updates

The regional meetings have impacted local ICAs and allowed ICAI to broaden its network by welcoming four new associate members. The current network has 24 statutory and 7 associate member ICAs. Two new associate members, Support for Community Response (SCR) and Nairobi Community Organisation Consultants (NCOC) of Kenya, are from the African Region, Holistic Child Development India (HCD India) is from the Asia/Pacific Region, and Focus Homini of Poland is from our European/MENA region. These organizations were inspired to join the ICAI community after attending a regional gathering.

Liseth Lorenzo was elected to serve as ICAI Board President and two new board members will be joining from Chile and India. ICA-USA staff member Seva Gandhi will continue on as Board Treasurer for two additional years.

INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS  
 4750 N. SHERIDAN ROAD  
 CHICAGO, IL 60640

UPCOMING EVENTS

**TOP NETWORK ANNUAL GATHERING**  
**JAN 13-16, 2017**  
**FORT LAUDERDALE, FL**  
 TICKETS STILL AVAILABLE AT  
[WWW.TOP-NETWORK.ORG](http://WWW.TOP-NETWORK.ORG)

**GLOBAL ARCHIVES SPRING SOJOURN**  
**MAR 12-18, 2017**  
**ICA GREENRISE, CHICAGO**  
**FOCUS: DEVELOPING A WORLD**  
**CLASS WEBSITE FOR THE ICA**  
**GLOBAL ARCHIVES**  
 RSVP/QUESTIONS: WENDELL REFIOR  
 AT [WENDELLREFIOR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:WENDELLREFIOR@GMAIL.COM)



ECUMENICAL  
 INSTITUTE  
 1962



FIFTH CITY  
 CHICAGO  
 1964



MOWANJUM  
 AUSTRALIA  
 1969



SOCIAL PROCESS  
 RESEARCH  
 1971



INSTITUTE OF  
 CULTURAL AFFAIRS  
 1972



THOSE WHO  
 CARE  
 1974



TOWN  
 MEETING  
 1976



INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION  
 OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
 1984



TOP  
 NETWORK  
 1990's



SUSTAINABLE  
 COMMUNITIES  
 2000



GREENRISE  
 CHICAGO  
 2010's

## A NOTE FROM THE BOARD

### ACCELERATING THE POSSIBLE

To address the urgency of today's environmental crisis, a comprehensive, multiple-dimensional intervention at all levels of society is essential. For decades, ICA has refined its methods to facilitate collaboration between and within governments and communities here in the US and in all 24 time zones across the globe.

Engagement of communities to pursue local actions is a prerequisite for the cultural paradigm shift necessary to change behavior and impact climate change. Using ICA's Technology of Participation (ToP) facilitation methodology, we are able to harness the energy and wisdom of a group to build consensus and create and implement action plans. Now more than ever, it is vital that we continue to strive towards making connections to inspire new ideas and practices through peer sharing, build consensus in the midst of conflicts, and activate passion into action.

Photos: ICA GreenRise was the Midwest Host Site for the 2016 Integrated Network for Social Sustainability Conference. ICA engaged a local, national, and international audience on seven focus areas of sustainability using the Permaculture Flower design.



As you plan for your end of the year donations, please consider giving to the ICA. There are several unfunded initiatives that prove vital for our future impact:

- Expanding the capacity of ICA's Chicago Sustainability work;
- Furthering access to our Global Archives;
- Sustaining future capital improvements to the ICA GreenRise; and
- Collaborating with communities locally, nationally and internationally.

To donate either use the donation envelope enclosed in this Initiatives or donate by mail to "ICA-USA" at 4750 N. Sheridan Rd. Chicago, IL 60640.

