MIDWEST ASSET BUILDING CONFERENCE

November 13-14, 2019
Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago - Detroit Branch

Agenda

Wednesday, November 13, 2019

8:15am-9:00am	***Registration & Continental Breakfast***
9:00am-10:00am	***Keynote: Leveraging Cultural Capital Equitably*** **Speaker**: Queen Quet **Presentation Summary**: Queen Quet, Chieftess and Head-of-State for the Gullah/Geechee Nation, is a global expert in cultural continuation and community engagement. Her discussion will unpack how the expertise within communities that are considered to be "marginalized," "underserved," and "underrepresented" is often devalued, which leads to the loss of indigenous communities' trust for western power structures. She will share how communities can make their voices heard and empower themselves through meaningful and culturally significant engagement to leverage cultural, spiritual, and economic capital to empower communities and allow them to become self-sustaining.
10:00am-10:10am	**Break**
10:10am-11:10am	**Fintech + Asset Building: How Fintech Policy and Programs can Impact Financial Well-Being** **Speaker**: Harrison Schaefer, Jody Chong **Presentation Summary**: Financial technology (or "fintech") is changing the financial services landscape with more and more companies pivoting toward technology and apps to deliver financial products while moving

away from brick and mortar, face-to-face consumer experiences. These technologies offer scalable options for more consumers and could potentially increase access to people often excluded from the mainstream financial system. However, fintech's rapid proliferation makes it difficult for policymakers to effectively regulate this space and protect consumers.

This year, Heartland Alliance's Policy and Asset Building Teams led efforts to better understand the fintech regulatory landscape as well as introduce fintech into existing asset building programs. Join this session to learn how to be mindful of consumer privacy and security with fintech, how to properly vet fintech products when incorporating into financial empowerment programs, and how to advocate to protect your community from predatory fintech products.

Become a Small Business Hero: Connecting Businesses with the Credit They Deserve
Speaker: George Cook
Presentation Summary: Connecting businesses with the right financial resources is imperative to building a vibrant Main Street. Furthermore, borrowing decisions by local businesses can determine whether wealth is being built in your community or exported. Do you know how to ensure that the businesses in your area are making sound financing decisions? In this session, we'll cover the full landscape of alternative financing options available to today's small businesses, including crowdfunding, nonprofit lending, and online lending. Step into the shoes of a Main Street business owner and try to fund your business's next growth project!

Executing a Successful Municipal Earned Income Tax Credit Campaign
Speakers: Gabrielle Thomas, Megan Thibos, Victoria Kovari and Jaime Lavin
Presentation Summary: In 2017, Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan initiated a project designed to make more Detroiters aware of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), expand access to free tax preparation assistance, and support taxpayers to maximize the value of their tax credits. This panel will share the methods to plan and execute a successful city-led EITC campaign. These methods would benefit civic and community leaders, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) programs, virtual VITA intake partners and funders interested in making a significant community financial impact.

11:10am-11:20am **Break**

11:20am-12:20pm ***Financially Fit Cities: Placed-Based Asset Building and How Cities Can Lead These Initiatives***

Speakers: David Rothstein, Patrick Hain, Amber Paxton and Shama Mounzer

Presentation Summary: Looking for new allies when starting or expanding your asset-building work? Learn how cities can help. A distinguished group of panelists will help you understand the current state of the field as it relates to city involvement, present examples of what cities are doing in the space and offer helpful tips so you can engage your city on topics that are important to your community. Two examples, Bank On and Financial Empowerment Centers, will be discussed as ways that cities are working with CDCs to implement place-based asset building strategies.

Bridging Access to a Clean Energy Economy

Speaker: Sylvia Ewing, Briana Parker and Jeanine Otte

Presentation Information: The clean energy economy can provide asset building opportunities for people who are underserved. Attendees will learn how the Future Energy Jobs Act legislation was activated in Illinois. Elevate Energy and partners provide job training and employment to serve returning citizens, participants in the foster care system and in what has been defined as economic justice communities. This panel will also discuss the evolution of the Clean Energy Jobs Accelerator, how it brings partners together and how to tailor a training curriculum for underserved, diverse contractors to be able to navigate and succeed in growing energy efficiency and solar marketplace. Learn more about the work and the policies to make this sector accessible to all.

Affordable and Sustainable Homeownership – Single Family Lease Purchase

Speakers: Charles Turner, Lucius Vassar and Kevin Nowak

Presentation Information: Within the City of Detroit, over 1,200 single family homes were built through the low income housing tax credit (LIHTC) program. Most of these homes were intended to serve as homeownership opportunities for Detroit's low income families, but, due to a number of factors, most of the project sponsors and families are not prepared to fulfill that homeownership promise. Cinnaire, CHN Housing Partners and Opportunity Resource Fund will describe their unique pilot program and their proven best practices for making homeownership through the LIHTC program a reality.

12:20pm-1:50pm

Keynote - Forget the Racial Wealth Gap, It's About the Plunder
Speakers: Anne Price
Presentation Summary: Racial wealth inequality is gaining renewed attention as calls to close the racial wealth gap have become a key platform issue for a number of 2020 presidential candidates and other progressive constituencies. The energy of this political moment provides a unique opportunity to evaluate how we have historically framed the racial wealth gap and to consider areas deemed peripheral to conversations about racial wealth inequality: corporate power, public goods, and greater democratization. Anne will share why we must extend beyond the goal of closing the racial wealth gap and concentrate on its root causes. She will discuss a new framework and a set of solutions that builds organizing power to address racial wealth inequality and gendered racism.

1:50pm-2:00pm

Break

2:00pm-3:00pm

Native Youth Futures
Speaker: John Gwinn
Presentation Information: Native Youth Futures is a program of MIGIZI , a non-profit agency serving the Minneapolis American Indian community for over 40 years. This particular project is coming to an end after seven years of signing up over 100 low-income urban American Indian teens for college savings accounts. This session will discuss the results of the program and converse about how to keep initiatives like this going in the wake of no more federal AFI funding.

Updates in the Credit Industry
Speaker: Melinda Croes
Presentation Summary: Credit reporting and scoring is constantly evolving to adapt to changes in consumer protection laws, consumer and economic patterns, and the business needs of lending institutions. Recent developments in the credit industry, in particular the implementation of new consumer protections, policy changes, and the growing use of alternative and "consumer-permissioned" data, may impact the credit reports and scores of consumers engaged in financial coaching and counseling. This session will explore the ways that these changes will impact consumers, and best practices for financial coaches and counselors working with clients to establish and improve their credit.

Financial Wellness in the Workplace
Speaker: Jennifer McClain, Sarai Garza, Shawnita Meeky
Presentation Summary: Did you know:

- According to research conducted by the Center for Financial Services Innovation, 56% of U.S workers are financially unhealthy;
- Employees cite debt, saving for retirement, family expenses, (including children's education and elderly care for parents) basic living expenses and medical expenses as major financial challenges; and
- 3 out of 4 workers living pay check to paycheck?

These statistics point to the need for opportunities for employees to be provided services geared toward financial wellness. During this workshop LISC Chicago and OAI, Inc. will discuss the programs they have created to work with employers on financial wellness for their employees. You will hear about how they identified the need, their successes and challenges with implementation along with their plans for the future.

3:00pm-3:10pm **Break**

3:10pm-4:10pm ***Stopping the Debt Spiral - Parent-Led Efforts to Address Debt in Challenged Communities***

Speaker: Tracy Occomy and Rosazlia Grillier

Presentation Information: During this session, COFI representatives will talk about *Stopping the Debt Spiral*, a report about debt in challenged communities throughout Illinois. Presenters will share the report findings, talk about the process of interviewing other parents and discuss the many ways in which parents are addressing the 'spiral effect' of negative consequences of debt. Participants will learn about parent-led efforts to address debt such as: Chicago parents partnering with City officials to transform the municipal debt system, including drivers license suspensions and payment plans for tickets; East St. Louis parents fighting against public housing fees and fines and statewide efforts to address high utility bills and scams.

Ohio's Breakthrough Payday Loan Reform

Speaker: Gabe Kravitz, Nate Coffman, Danielle Sydnor, and Rev. Carl Ruby

Presentation Information: In 2018, Ohio passed the Fairness in Lending Act to make small loans safer for consumers while maintaining widespread access to credit. The reform is saving payday loan borrowers more than $75 million annually. A broad-based statewide coalition of faith, community, business leaders and local governments came together to make it happen. Leaders from the coalition will share key strategies, moments and lessons learned from the campaign. The Pew Charitable Trusts consumer finance project will present data and analysis from Ohio and how their new law compares to other states in the Midwest.

Using Volunteers in Financial Coaching Programs
Speaker: Claudia Holt
Presentation Information: Volunteers are the heart and soul of VITA programs, and they could be the heart and soul of a financial coaching program as well. Throughout our years of experience in skill-based volunteering and financial capability, Prepare + Prosper has created a robust volunteer-delivered financial coaching program. In this session, we'll discuss the pros and cons of using volunteers to provide coaching and think about creative ways to incorporate volunteer coaches into programs in order to boost results and increase capacity.

4:30pm-6:30pm ***Reception***

Join us following the sessions on Wednesday for a networking reception at the Detroit City Clubhouse. Complimentary hors d' oeuvres and drinks will be provided!
Location: 3401 E Lafayette St, Detroit, MI 48207

Thursday, November 14, 2019

8:30am-9:00am **Registration & Continental Breakfast**

9:00am-10:00am **Panel Discussion: The State of Predatory Lending in the Midwest**
Speakers: Tom Feltner, Jessica AcMoody, Nate Coffman, Jody Chong, and Logan Charlesworth
Presentation Summary: Every year, state legislators receive a barrage of legislative requests to expand payday lending through the weakening of consumer protections. Particularly vulnerable to these expansions of predatory financial products and practices are low-income individuals and families, who are prominently from communities of color. Each year, coalitions of partners activate to defend protections and curb expansion in the Midwest region. Recently, these coalitions have taken proactive steps to reduce triple-digit interest rates, with the purpose of effectively eliminating predatory lending in their respective states. During this session, we will hear from those partners that are on the ground pushing back against these expansions, dissect their strategies, highlight successes, learn from setbacks and help to further the fight through shared practices, and activating new partners in their fight.

10:00am-10:10am **Break**

10:10am-11:40am ***Building a Community-Supported CSA Program***

Speakers: Shira Markoff, Phil Maurizi, Muneer Karcher-Ramos, and Whitney Anderson - Harrell

Presentation Summary: This session will explore how to build community-wide initiatives, focusing on Children's Savings Account (CSA) programs. From having an inclusive design process that incorporates a wide range of stakeholders to developing extensive partnerships with local nonprofits, businesses, and funders, the speakers will discuss how they made community engagement and support an integral part of their CSA programs. They will also discuss challenges they have experienced in creating and maintaining community engagement; give insights into roles that community organizations can play in supporting CSA programs; and provide advice for organizations and localities that want to create a CSA initiative with broad community support.

Partnering with Financial Institutions

Speaker: Claudia Holt, Anne Leland Clark

Presentation Information: Financially underserved households spend an average of $1,100 to $2,400 annually on fees and interest alone. Access to quality, low-fee financial products is a crucial part of achieving long-term financial capability among low and moderate income populations. Through strategic partnerships with local banks and credit unions, Prepare + Prosper is able to offer a variety of low-barrier banking products to our customers and the greater community. During this session, speakers will share their experience working with financial institutions and discuss strategies and practices that attendees can bring back to their own asset-building work.

Re(Fresh): Protecting Assets, Reducing Debt, & Enhancing Equity Through Bankruptcy

Speaker: Kulsum Amej, and Kari Beyer

Presentation Summary: This session will situate bankruptcy as part of the broader landscape of asset-building, debt-reduction, and anti-poverty work. This will include conversations on the distinct racial and geographical inequities shaping bankruptcies and identify connections to the racial wealth gap. Additional conversation will include basic legal framework of bankruptcy, including the process, system, and logistics. The panel will share practical tips for assessing who should and shouldn't file for bankruptcy, how to avoid an unsuccessful bankruptcy, and tools for finding reputable resources and support.

11:40am-11:50am **Break**

11:50am-12:50pm ***Trusted Connectors: Building Immigrant-Inclusive Asset Building***

Initiatives
Speaker: Steven Tobocman, Raquel Garcia, MD Abdul Muhit.
Session Sponsored by: New Economy Initiative
Presentation Summary: Asset building programs have much to offer New Americans, but too often immigrants are disconnected from the opportunities that exist in the nonprofit and public sectors. Learn how working with "trusted connectors" can boost the outcomes of your tax preparation, financial literacy, homeownership, IDA, banking, and entrepreneurship asset-building programs.

Communications Boot Camp: Exploring Best Practices with an Expert
Speaker: Sylvia Ewing
Presentation Information: This session provides an overview of effective internal communication, impactful external communications and how to find your personal style whatever your role and experience level. Topics covered include: communication plans and crisis communication; presentations for staff, board, and funders; generating mission driven enthusiasm and building community; and self reflection and self assessment. Bring your problems and ideas!

Designing Inclusive Neighborhoods: A Conversation With Community Development and Design Leaders
Speakers: Bonnie Fahoome, Derric Scott, Michael Guthrie, Mike Smith and Sarida Scott
Presentation Summary: The panel discussion will cover a variety of design-driven strategies for neighborhoods that range widely in scale, budget, and tactics, address available resources and challenges to gaining investment, and share ideas for the future. Participants will leave the session with a better idea of best practices in inclusive design for neighborhoods and how to access resources and partners to support design investment in their own communities.

12:50-1:00 **Break**

1:00-2:30 **Closing Ceremony**