



Claretian Associates, together with the Spanish Coalition for Housing, the City of Chicago Department of Environment (DOE), and The Field Museum, have developed and launched the South Chicago Retrofit Project (SCRP). Building off neighborhood level research conducted by The Field Museum on behalf of the DOE, the SCRP is a two-year pilot program that aims to support the energy efficiency goals of the Chicago Climate Action Plan (CCAP) by working with and through community-based organizations.

SCRP Pilot’s three core motivations are to:

- Increase energy Efficient Retrofits in Chicago through coordinated outreach
- Offer and promote multiple services at once
- Develop community partnerships to drive local CCAP leadership

Claretian Associates leads this outreach effort with support from Spanish Coalition for Housing along with a community committee of more than a dozen locally-based partner organizations working as project collaborators and implementers. They increase residential participation in energy efficiency programs by acting as a conduit for service providers to channel program information through the South Chicago Retrofit Project’s community partner network increasing residential participation. This network of trusted community-based organizations develops messages and programs that link energy efficiency to a range of local concerns.

Claretian Associates coordinates the variety of outreach initiatives that community partners develop utilizing community assets like: engaged youth, cross cultural diversity and existing awareness of green practices. By co-promoting energy efficiency and other service (health, foreclosure prevention, or youth development, for example) programs together, this comprehensive outreach seeks to encourage community uptake in services available to residents.

In addition to Claretian Associates, Spanish Coalition for Housing, and Dept. of Environment representatives, a project advisor from The Field Museum and an independent evaluator advise form the planning team for this project.

Structure and Timeline

This two year pilot project tests the potential to increase participation in residential energy efficiency programs through saturating one community—South Chicago—with resources and information through innovative community-based outreach strategies.

Two main strategies to be tested are working through organizational networks and using a block-by-block approach. Through these two main strategies outreach partners can adapt and leverage existing initiatives or develop creative new initiatives to connect with community residents:

Organizational Network Strategy

- Work through existing networks for outreach and streamline service delivery
- Utilize SCRCP branding for community recognition
- Build organizational capacity to achieve overall CCAP/ SCRCP goals
- Leverage relationships and resources

Block-by-Block Strategy

- Work with key institutions such as block clubs and churches to target blocks directly
- Utilize SCRCP branding for community recognition
- Collect and share residents’ feedback with service providers
- Gain focused measurable data on needs and services

Connecting to the Community

- ✔ Service providers and City partners work with Valentina Gamboa-Turner, the Claretian Associates Community Service Director, to connect their programs and materials with local community partners conducting outreach activities.
- ✔ Claretian Associates and project planning team will solicit proposals and disperse funding for community based outreach efforts on a rolling basis. Through Fall of 2012 there will be multiple waves of outreach activities through which to promote services.
- ✔ Efforts are coordinated under one branding tool so that residents become familiar with our initiative. This tool will be utilized for both the organizational network strategy and the block-by-block strategy.
- ✔ Service providers and city partners work with the SCRП Community Service Director (Claretian Associates) and the active Community Steering Committee to ensure the service information is update and work in the community is targeted and coordinated.

These targeted efforts will propel us to meet our designated SCRП goals:

1. Increase number of residential retrofits. Shooting for 1200 retrofits by 2012!
2. Increase awareness of energy efficiency and other CCAP strategies among residents and organizations (=create energy efficiency “buzz” in the community)
3. Increase local organizations’ capacity to promote energy efficiency and climate action work
4. Achieve significant co-benefits that improve quality of life for residents

Interested in getting involved?

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