

SINA

Summer 2010

The Character of a Neighborhood

School and Colonial Streets are quiet streets close to the Learning Corridor's quality educational facilities, Boys & Girls Club, HART in The Aetna Center for Families, and other community amenities. Despite these streets' intrinsic assets, they struggled for many years - burdened by deserted and derelict multi-family buildings that attracted rodents, drug activity, and crime, and detracted from the neighborhood's prospects. Today, SINA is turning these once blighted properties into brand new affordable homeownership opportunities, and, new house by new house, helping this once precarious neighborhood realize its potential.

The homes are being constructed as part of the fourth and final phase of SINA's Cityscape Homes project, which will include a total of 17 single and two-family houses. Through the initiative SINA will develop nearly 50% of the available real estate on the two streets - making a major impact on the neighborhood's appearance and character.

In the summer of 2010, SINA completed four new duplexes on School Street, which were then sold to first time homebuyers who earn less than 120% of the Area Median Income. One of the newest homeowners relocated to School Street for just that - the schools. He wanted to live where his three sons could walk to a quality education.

"The wonderful thing is that we are finishing homes and selling them in this market," said SINA's Executive Director Luis Caban.

Cityscape Homes Phase IV first launched with two houses built on Colonial Street in 2007. The remaining houses are scheduled to be complete by 2012.



HALF THE WHEELS DOUBLE THE CONTACT



In the Southside, and throughout Hartford, two little wheels can make a big impact on public safety. Police bicycle patrols provide numerous advantages. They offer stealth and mobility, enabling officers to move quickly through crowds or access short cuts in pursuits. Their visible presence makes officers more approachable, increasing contact and trust with the community. In fact, one study conducted

in 2006 revealed that two-wheel bike patrols can result in over twice as much contact with the public compared with four-wheeled automobile patrols.

As part of their commitment to public safety in the Southside, SINA and the Connecticut Children's Medical Center teamed up to equip the Southeast Command Zone 8 with a new state-of-the art police bicycle. The bike, a Specialized Stump Jumper that has two-wheel disc brakes, upgraded handlebars, improved riser bars, and many other features was presented to the district on August 11, 2010 at CT Children's and will be stored on Maple Avenue. The donation met a specific need for the station, which previously had only three bikes. Since officers ride in pairs, the fourth bicycle enables the zone to deploy two simultaneous patrols.

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It's when I sit down to writing this periodic message to you for SINA Reports that I realize why I love my job. Not many people can say the work they do helps the people they love with health care, educational, safety and housing services. The pages of this newsletter reveal the varied and significant work done by our staff, our community, our partners, and the residents of the Southside.

When one more bicycle was needed to complete a police patrol we were able to provide it. As our community needed housing redevelopment to make Colonial and School Streets viable we were able to make the finances work. Recognizing the value of a program that can help our community grapple with the issue of obesity through healthy eating options is something we couldn't ignore. Most importantly recognizing the people who volunteer to make our neighborhood better is something we're proud to do every year. I want to personally congratulate this year's winners including: Sylvia Garcia, Evelyn Figueroa-Lewis, Hartford Peacebuilders, and the Ivan A. Backer Scholarship winners.

As you read this newsletter and peruse through our website www.sinainc.org, please keep in mind that we are here for you the partners and members of the Southside community. With that in mind, we are always open to hearing from you about the important issues facing this community. Your ideas are valuable to us. You may have the unique input we need to take this community to the next level. Thanks again for joining us on our journey and we look forward to more accomplishments that, as we said, bring us great satisfaction and fulfillment.



Luis C. Cabán

Luis C. Cabán
Executive Director

CEO Tour

The Chief Executive Officers from SINA's member institutions and the Melville Charitable Trust were Luis Cabán's guests recently during an SUV tour through Hartford's Frog Hollow neighborhood to get a first-hand look at SINA projects; projects the members institutions were instrumental in having accomplished. Robert Hohler of the Melville Charitable Trust wanted to see if SINA is an organization the Trust may want to partner with. Dr. James Jones from Trinity College, Martin Gavin of the Connecticut Children's Medical Center and Elliot Joseph of Hartford Hospital all got a chance to see the fruits of their community investments.

The tour, which started in the morning at the corner of Allen Place and Washington Street to view 4 newly constructed and one rehabilitated home, included 11 different stops. The subsequent stops on Madison Avenue, Broad Street, Broad Gate, Jefferson, President's Corner, School Street, Colonial Street, Zion Street, and Park Street to name a few included Cityscape Homes and Apartments, fruit & vegetable gardens, future development sites, the Learning Corridor, Boys and Girls Club, single-family homes, retail districts, and ended at Firebox, a local restaurant. The trip was topped off with live viewing of the taping of a new health oriented Latino food TV show which both hospital participants are helping to sponsor.

Cabán says the participants were pleasantly surprised and impressed with the physical results of SINA's hard work and now have a much better appreciation for SINA's activities and vision.

Ivan A. Backer Scholarship

The SINA/Ivan A. Backer Scholarship program was established in 1997 in honor of Ivan A. Backer, who served as president of SINA for nearly 20 years and was one of the driving forces behind the revival of Hartford's Southside neighborhood. The recipients – Bulkeley High School seniors - are selected based on service to the community, school, and family, as well as for academic achievement.



Pictured left to right: Luis C. Cabán, Saida Cooke, Ivan A. Backer, Ceilena Ann Gurahoo and Alison Giuliano.

The 2010 Scholarship recipients are Saida Cooke, who will attend University of Connecticut and plans to pursue a career as a pharmacist; Sefedin Begic, who will study Business/Education at University of Hartford; and Ceilena Ann Gurahoo who is enrolled at Saint Joseph College with the intent to pursue a career as a pharmacist.

“Winning the Ivan Backer Scholarship brought me one step closer towards achieving my dream.” - Ceilena

Reaching Higher

SINA congratulates the winners of its 2010 REACH Awards. The Awards - which include Neighborhood Service Award and the Ivan A. Backer Scholarship - are organized by SINA's REACH committee whose mission is to develop, support and recognize individuals who positively contribute to the growth of the Hartford community.

The award recipients were honored at the Fourth Annual REACH Awards Ceremony on June 3, 2010 at The Lyceum.

Institutional Award



Paul Kapustinski, Connecticut Children's Medical Center. Paul Kapustinski, an RN, helps sick or injured children at the Emergency Department of the Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

Outside of work, he trades his stethoscope for a ladle, and volunteers weekly serving meals at the Hartford Rescue Mission. Paul's quiet dedication has inspired nearly 35 employees - ranging from doctors and nurses to support staff and even former employees - to join him in lending a helping hand.

Evelyn Figueroa-Lewis



Evelyn Figueroa-Lewis has a long history of helping improve her Sheldon/Charter Oak neighborhood. Evelyn worked with CSS/CON to secure a Hope VI federal grant. Evelyn and CSS/CON also made themselves available to assist families with personal issues and problems.

Hartford Peacebuilders



A small organization that is making a big impact on Hartford streets preventing and reducing violence through interventions and mediation. The group regularly steps in harm's way to defuse a volatile situation. The team works towards creating peaceful solutions. Hartford Peacebuilders also runs an eight-week life skills course for high-risk youth - helping them develop anger management and conflict resolution skills.

Sylvia Garcia

Sylvia Garcia signed up to help monitor the McDonough School cafeteria's breakfast program. She also volunteered to lead Hartford's first Walking School Bus leading a line of young walkers to school. Sylvia is also involved in the school's PTO, volunteers in the front office, and runs the school store. "Sylvia is one of those really friendly, really outgoing people who have the drive to make something she believes in work.



Her type of spirit is great for the school and great for the community," said Luis A. Rivera, Program Coordinator at CCMC's Injury Prevention Center and the one who nominated Sylvia for the Neighborhood Service Award.



**SOUTHSIDE INSTITUTIONS
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Tradicional Pero Saludable

Arroz con pollo – a classic dish of Spain and Latin America - loaded with flavor and protein, but, unfortunately, also packed with salt and fat. Many traditional Latino dishes are high in sodium, saturated fat, and other hidden dangers that can increase the risk of obesity and weight-related diseases such as Type 2 Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease, Hypertension and Cancer. But there is an alternative! The same meal, with a few small modifications – such as omitting the Chorizo - can provide all the taste and tradition, with less than half the fat. To help spread the word, SINA is showing people first hand, how to make healthier versions of popular Latino dishes - with a new cooking show called *Revolución de Nutrición*.

The show, produced in partnership with El Show de Analeh and Billings Forge Community Works, premiered on Univision on August 14. The featured meal: Arroz con Pollo, of course.

For SINA, forging into the field of nutrition education made sense, especially with the health focus of two of its member institutions – Hartford Hospital and Connecticut Children’s Medical Center – who both help sponsor the production.

“Health and nutrition is a pressing issue in the community,” said Luis. “We wanted to create a way to help people eat healthier.”

Today, more than ever, the implications of poor diets cannot be ignored. Obesity is on the rise, especially among children. According to the Center for Disease Control, obesity rates for children have more than doubled in just five years, increasing from 5-6% to 14-18%! In addition to poor health, obesity has economic consequences as well: increased health care costs and decreased productivity.

“The power to change this is in education. We need to educate the public on what healthy meals are and how to incorporate the changes to make a long term commitment to healthy lifestyles,” said Susan Deane, MSN, RN, CNE. A registered nurse and nutrition teacher, Susan serves as the show’s nutrition consultant.

In addition to cooking demonstrations led by Chef Julie Carrion in the Billings Forge Community Works kitchen, the show features nutrition advice from experts such as Dr. Ramon Jimenez, a Hartford Hospital physician. In upcoming episodes, the show will feature meals from various Latino countries, but whatever the dish may be, the overall message remains - “eat well and live better” - not through restrictive diets, but rather with smart and savvy eating habits, such as portion control, variety, moderation and healthier alternatives.

SINA’s mission is to work cooperatively with the community to develop leadership and improve the economic, physical and social characteristics of Hartford’s Frog Hollow, Barry Square and South Green Neighborhoods.

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