

Summer 2012

SINA-Hartford Public Schools' Citywide Science Fair

On May 16, young scientists from Hartford Public Schools filled the halls of the Annie Fisher/STEM Magnet School with their experiments at the 21st Annual Citywide Science Fair.

Dozens of physicians, educators, and business professionals volunteered their time to encourage young minds. As judges, they walked through the project displays and listened to oral presentations.

SINA's contributions included recruiting and registering judges, supplying award gift cards, and presenting the Dr. Quinton Quark Slapstick Science Show.

Projects ranged from Dwight-Bellizzi School's Samary Nieves and Jay-Neill Ramos' "How Soap Bubbles Work" to a demonstration of how germs are spread through sneezes using confetti and balloons. Two budding scientists from Sanchez School, Miguel Rosario and Onil Carrion said that the experiment was "interesting" and would help them in their future careers. "I want to be a doctor...and a cop," Carrion said.

Winners were announced at the Awards Presentation Ceremony held at the Connecticut Science Center, by Dr. Sandra Inga, the Hartford Public Schools Director of Science. The event featured speeches from Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent Hartford Public Schools, Jason Rojas, co-chair SINA REACH Committee, and a Keynote address from Dr. Cato T. Laurencin, distinguished Professor University of Connecticut School of Medicine. After the reception, students explored the galleries and watched a presentation of "Dinosaurs Unearthed."



Hartford Leaders Celebrate SINA Executive Director Luis Cabán

Over 75 people gathered at the Hartford Hospital's Education and Resource Center to honor retiring SINA Executive Director Luis Cabán.

In attendance were state representatives Kelvin Roldán and Jason Rojas, and representatives from

the SINA member institutions including Jane Baird SINA Board Chairwoman and Director of Government Relations at Connecticut Children's Medical Center, Jeffrey Flaks Hartford Hospital CEO, and James Jones, Trinity College President.

In recognition of his tireless service, Cabán received city and state proclamations. Mayor Pedro E. Segarra proclaimed it to be Luis Cabán Day in Hartford. *Continued on page 2*



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Hartford Leaders Celebrate SINA Executive Director Luis Cabán *Continued from page 1*

As SINA Executive Director, Cabán was responsible for the overall affairs of SINA and its various subsidiary and affiliated business entities. He was responsible for implementing SINA policies, representing its interests before the public and for maintaining cooperative relations with community partners, government leaders and the private sector.

"I fell in love with SINA's work when developing its strategic plan," Cabán said.

He developed the Cityscape strategic plan in 1996 which encompasses housing, community safety, economic and workforce development and community life and education. He was also key in the development of the nationally acclaimed \$110 million Learning Corridor.

"It's been a wonderful trek for me," Luis said. "It's been a wonderful opportunity with an incredible board of directors."

Luis closed his speech with a poem he wrote to his staff.

In retirement, Cabán looks forward to spending time with his wife Maria, his two sons and two grandsons.

There Once Was a Man From the Bronx

By Luis C. Cabán

*A man from the Bronx, a heart for community in hand
An avid desire for opportunity he sought to afford
He searched throughout valleys and glens in our land
Finding promise, "me quedo," made a home in Hartford*

*A vision of learning and living, nice homes and a job
Against claims no peace can be had, just isn't fair
This can't be done, a skeptic, the voice of a snob
But many still come, they settle, and yes, they dare*

*Strong families required for healthy towns
The SINA Family, strong character and demeanor
Forges forward, believing there are no bounds
As catalyst, as follower, helper, or leader*

*Farewells are tough, but change is inevitable
We thank goodness for those who trekked along
Delivering and caring, assuring the task bearable
Never waver; for there's a place for all to belong*

*The budget protector who fights like a bear
Our housing director so detailed and savvy
The latest edition with heart and no fear
Take care of our flank, there's never a quarry*

*The tenured madam, with dedication so clear
Rattling my days with, "Don't even dare"
Resourceful and caring, no choice but endear
She'd make it all happen, a breath of fresh air
I will forever be grateful and will miss you guys dearly.*

Introducing Cathy J. Cohen, SINA's Interim Executive Director

SINA's Board of Directors named Cathy J. Cohen as the organization's Interim Executive Director. Cohen filled the position held by Luis C. Cabán, following his May 1 retirement. The Board is engaged in a search for a permanent executive director.

Cohen has over 20 years of experience in organizational management, strategic planning, marketing consulting, writing, and technical editing. She has held senior management positions in hospitals and healthcare provider groups and has worked with a wide range of nonprofit organizations to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency. Ms. Cohen works closely with Third Sector New England, a Boston-based organization that provides management and leadership resources to nonprofits throughout New England. She has held similar positions over the past five years, primarily in the greater Hartford area, including eight months as interim director at Immaculate Conception Shelter and Housing Corporation.

GROWING COMMUNITY

Two organizations are taking the initiative to develop the vacant lots in the Frog Hollow and Behind the Rocks neighborhoods while feeding and supporting the community.



On July 6, 2011, SINA offered vacant lots on Zion Street to Summer of Solutions Hartford, and work started immediately to clean the area and establish el Jardín de Zion Street. The garden has over 60 beds cared for by community members and became a "safe space" for children and neighbors.

"We want to help build up the local food system and provide sustainable urban food production," said Jennifer Roach, Program Leader of Summer of Solutions Hartford. "We want the gardens to be community spaces." *Continued on page 3*



Growing Community *Continued from page 2*

Among the activities were weekly potlucks, an open mic night, art activities and a free summer camp. In 2012, they expanded the community programming, building additional gardens and starting a farm stand at the Billings Forge Farmers' Market.

Another nonprofit organization developing vacant lots is the Hartford Food System, which creates a sustainable, equitable and healthy food environment. More than a garden, the staff and volunteers of the Grow Hartford program use the lots as urban farms growing thousands of pounds of organic fruits and vegetables. Most of the produce is donated to social service agencies, but a portion is offered to low-income households through a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) membership. A CSA is a partnership between a farm and supporters who purchase a "share" of the harvest for the year, in exchange for a healthy supply of fresh produce.

"There is a lot of enthusiasm from the neighborhood," said Hartford Food Systems Executive Director Martha Page. "They have an interest and a connection."

"People say it is much better than a vacant lot," said Urban Farmer Rodger Phillips. "Neighbors pick up garbage and police the sites. If we weren't there, they would not be as debris free, so the



community has an interest in keeping them looking good."

For More information:

Hartford Food System

www.hartfordfood.org

Grand Aspirations:

www.Grandaspirations.org

Summer of Solutions:

www.Soshartford.wordpress.com

Twitter: @SosHartford

The 6th Annual REACH Awards

On May 29th, members of the Hartford community gathered at the Hartford Hospital Education Resource Center for the SINA 6th Annual REACH Awards Ceremony. REACH stands for "Recognition, Education, Achievement, and Community Health."

The event was emceed by Steve Balcanoff of the Connecticut Children's Medical Center and featured Hartford Hospital CEO Jeffrey Flaks and SINA Executive Committee Member Yvette Melendez.



Ivan A. Backer Scholarship

In honor of Ivan A. Backer, three scholarships were awarded to Bulkeley High School seniors continuing their education in an accredited 4-year postsecondary program. Selected based on academic achievement and community service; the awardees are Stephen Naing, Marie Angely Rosa and Jamal Nixon.

Richardson Brancato Scholarship

Rhama Khadeer

Planning to attend Capital Community College, Rhama Khadeer was awarded a scholarship donated by Thomas C. Richardson, Vice President of Strategic Planning at Connecticut Children's Medical Center to pursue her career as a Pediatrician.

Neighborhood Service Awardees

Nilda Fernandez

As a social worker for UConn and the Connecticut Children's Medical Center, Fernandez assists individuals infected with or affected by HIV. She provides case management and social support to her client families and takes a community approach to outreach and prevention.

Gary and Karen O'Maxfield

The O'Maxfields led the creation of the Fairfield Avenue Neighborhood Association (FANA), achieving a listing on the National Historic Register.

Rosa Plaza

As Director of Human Resources at Our Piece of the Pie, Plaza trains youth in job readiness skills. In addition to her work in youth development, she is devoted to social justice and community organizing.

Hartford Hospital's Institutional Award

Ana Maria Reyes-Scott

Ana Maria Reyes-Scott inspires her colleagues and children with her community service projects such as a backpack drive, running a Holiday dinner basket drive for outpatients, preparing home-cooked meals for homeless shelters and serving as the captain of Hartford Hospital's team for the Great American Clean Up.



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COLONIAL STREET BEFORE AND AFTER

Just a few years ago, Colonial Street was a “vacant wasteland,” but with the construction of these homes neighborhood redevelopment is nearly complete. With eight houses built, two houses sold, three houses under contract, and two foundations laid for the final houses to be completed in the fall, the impact is clear. The three-bedroom homes have drawn mixed income families exploring the possibilities of homeownership.

“There has been a robust response,” said SINA Director of Real Estate Development Dean Iaiennaro. “The street looks great.”

In addition to the physical and social improvements the homes made in the neighborhood, the economic benefits assist the community at large as the homes generate an additional \$892,170 in revenue at the state, local, and city level.



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.

Interim Executive Director: *Cathy J. Cohen*

Executive Assistant: *Ivette Quiros*

Fiscal Officer: *Keith Hedman*

Internet & Graphic Arts Assistant: *Linda Valentin*

Real Estate Development Director: *Dean Iaiennaro*

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