



# Promise Neighborhoods: A Planning How-To Guide

## *Initial Guidance for Organizations Interested in Replicating the Harlem Children's Zone Model*

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### SUMMARY

Promise Neighborhoods is an Obama administration initiative to replicate the Harlem Children's Zone nonprofit model in 20 cities across the country.<sup>2</sup> Assuming funding is approved by Congress, the administration is expected to consider applications after October 1, 2009, the beginning of the fiscal year.

This paper provides an introduction and technical information for community leaders seeking Promise Neighborhoods funding. Utilizing information obtained from local leaders in communities across the country, this document shares details regarding:

- **Identifying a Neighborhood:** Determining and researching relevant characteristics for potential neighborhoods;
- **Politics of Implementation:** Managing regional and local coalitions to galvanize support and ensure successful rollout;
- **Programmatic Strategy:** Identifying services to be provided within the chosen community;
- **Organization and Leadership Strategy:** Important criteria for identifying executive directors and management teams; and
- **Funding:** Identifying appropriate revenue streams from various sectors.

This paper represents initial guidance that will be revised in subsequent updates. Additionally, readers can find more details on the paper's contents on UNCA's "Building Neighborhoods" blog ([www.unca-acf.org](http://www.unca-acf.org)) or by subscribing to UNCA's Promise Neighborhoods email list.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Harlem Children's Zone and Children's Zone are both registered trademarks of Harlem Children's Zone, Inc.

<sup>3</sup> To subscribe to UNCA's Promise Neighborhoods email list, email [plester@unca.org](mailto:plester@unca.org) with "Promise Neighborhoods Email List" in the subject line.

## INTRODUCTION

The Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) is a New York City-based nonprofit that has developed a holistic approach to intergenerational poverty. In a 2007 campaign speech, President Barack Obama publicly praised the organization, calling it an "all-encompassing, all-hands-on-deck anti-poverty effort that is literally saving a generation of children in a neighborhood where they were never supposed to have a chance."<sup>4</sup> He went on to pledge that his administration, as part of its plan to combat urban poverty, would replicate the program in twenty cities across the country.

This paper provides guidance to local organizations wishing to apply to become Promise Neighborhoods. Over the years, as the HCZ model has gained national attention, local groups in many cities have launched their own independent efforts. These efforts provide a fruitful source of lessons learned and potential best practices.

## IDENTIFYING A NEIGHBORHOOD

The first step in the planning process is to choose a neighborhood. This choice, including both the location and size of the neighborhood, is likely to be influenced by a number of factors, including a variety of social indicators and existing assets in the community. In addition to demonstrating a need for integrated services, planners seeking Promise Neighborhoods funding will need to identify existing educational and human services institutions in the area to serve as partners.

Demonstrated capacity to collect data and accountability will probably weigh heavily in Promise Neighborhood selections. Perhaps instructive for Promise Neighborhoods applicants, for other educational programs, the U.S. Department of Education has also encouraged program administrators to develop "experimental evaluation methods" to collect and evaluate data.<sup>5</sup>

While a number of social indicators are important, childhood poverty rates will probably be paramount and are expected to be a common element of each Promise Neighborhood that is eventually selected. For consideration as a Promise Neighborhood, an area will probably need to have a minimum childhood poverty rate of 40%, or at least 30% in locations with additional indicators highlighting neighborhood issues such as high crime rates and low academic achievement.<sup>6</sup>

Poverty statistics are available from the U.S. Census Bureau and are searchable via the American FactFinder tool on the Bureau's website.<sup>7</sup> This database contains detailed socioeconomic data from the decennial census, the Economic Census, the American Community Survey, and annual economic surveys. Some of the available data is available at the city block level, including data on housing, employment, education, and poverty. On the site, users can identify a specific region of interest and generate custom data tables on specific variables.

One example of effective data collection is in Minneapolis, where a coalition of local community leaders is developing the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ), located in the city's northern region. Prior to rollout, the coalition conducted research on key social indicators such as youth poverty rates and test scores to

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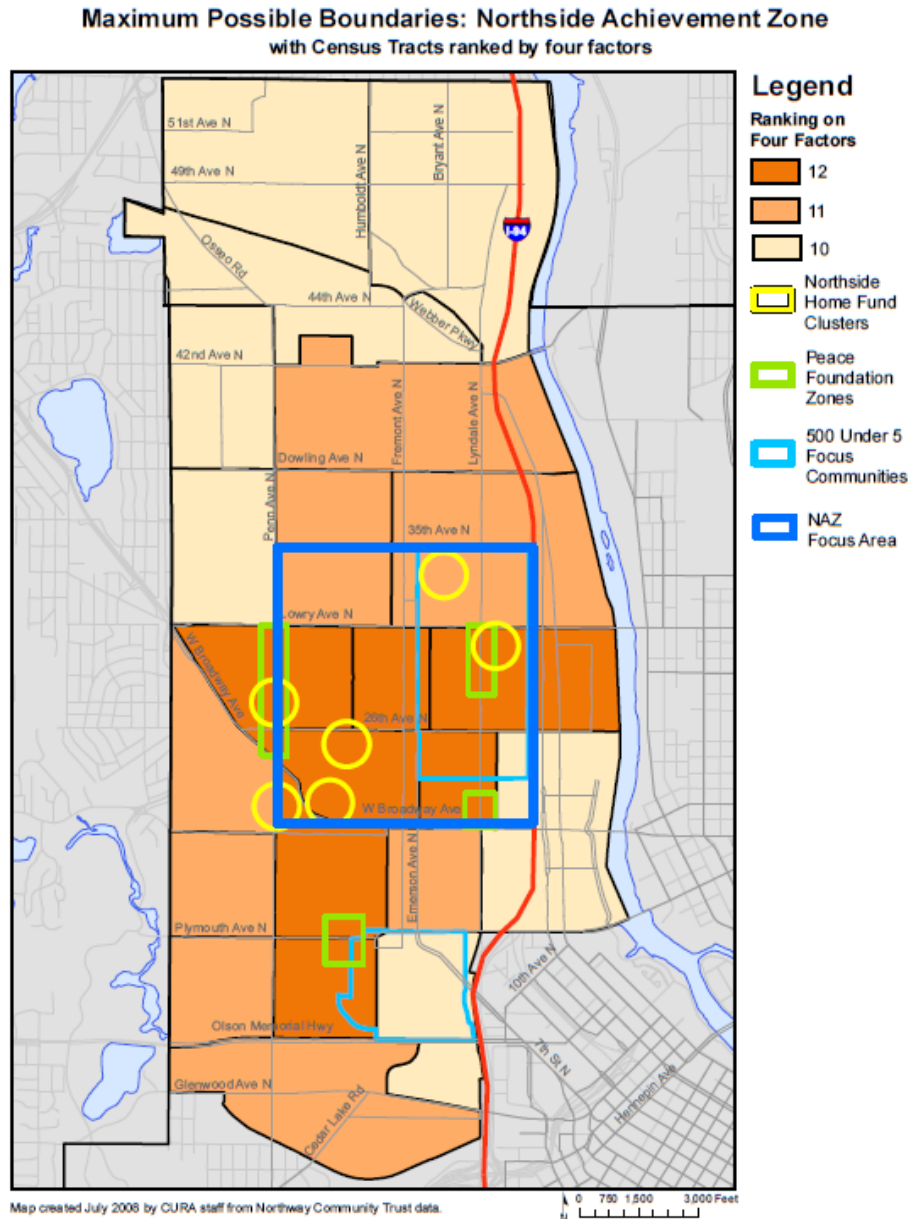
<sup>4</sup> "Remarks of Senator Barack Obama: Changing the Odds for Urban America," July 18, 2007. Available online at: [http://www.barackobama.com/2007/07/18/remarks\\_of\\_senator\\_barack\\_obam\\_19.php](http://www.barackobama.com/2007/07/18/remarks_of_senator_barack_obam_19.php).

<sup>5</sup> Lisbeth B. Schorr, "Innovative Reforms Require Innovative Scorekeeping," *Education Week* (August 26, 2009.) Available online at: <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/08/26/01schorr.h29.html?tkn=YMZF04PCo66bH8y5jN7eA194fTBkkOsHOPS8>.

<sup>6</sup> PolicyLink and Harlem Children's Zone, "Promise Neighborhoods: Recommendations for a National Children's Anti-Poverty Program Inspired by the Harlem Children's Zone." Available online at: [http://www.acy.org/upimages/HCZ\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.acy.org/upimages/HCZ_Plan.pdf). Attendees at the meeting included Geoffrey Canada and Kate Shoemaker of Harlem Children's Zone, Angela Glover Blackwell and Judith Bell, PolicyLink, and Sterling Speirn of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

<sup>7</sup> The database is located online at: [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en).

evaluate the need for programming. In addition to consulting federal data, the group also collected data on existing services and youth quality of life indicators from local agencies. Using both sets of data, and after assessing existing resources, the coalition chose the following area as their target neighborhood:<sup>8</sup>



The choice of educational attainment as a primary data point for the NAZ is instructive. As noted earlier, Promise Neighborhoods is housed within the U.S. Department of Education. Education and educational programming will almost certainly be central to any neighborhoods that are selected. It will be important for applicants to gather data on indicators such as test scores, educational attainment, and literacy. Some relevant statistics include local, state, and federal standardized test scores, achievement disparities between groups, and graduation rates. In Minneapolis specifically, planners obtained this data from

<sup>8</sup> More information on the strategic plan and partners behind the Northside Achievement Zone can be found at: <http://northsideachievement.org/downloads>.

Minneapolis Public Schools' Basic Skills Test, and they plan on using ACT and SAT scores to measure educational success.<sup>9</sup>

In Minneapolis, the group also identified youth violence rates, incarceration rates, unemployment rates, and other variables.<sup>10</sup> During the initial research phase, the Minneapolis group was fortunate enough to have access to numerous data sets compiled by a local university.<sup>11</sup> The University of Minnesota's Office for Business and Community Economic Development conducted a study that utilized data from the county, local public schools, and nonprofits.<sup>12</sup> The report detailed health and wellness indicators for youth of the Northside area, with statistics on physical/mental health, poverty, and crime.<sup>13</sup> The health data was critical for evaluating the prevalence and need for enhanced healthcare options for local youth.

Crime is another important measure to evaluate when identifying a neighborhood. Working with the local police department, the NAZ collected data on incidences of violent crime, including homicide, assault, robbery, and other offenses. Reduction in crime is one way to measure short-term neighborhood-wide impact. As this example shows, data collection does not necessarily need to be solely the responsibility of the anchor organization since appropriate partner organizations can be tapped to collaborate and share existing data.

Additional data that can be considered for program launch include:<sup>14</sup>

- Social indicators such as teen pregnancy, vandalism, and juvenile delinquency;
- Local school attendance numbers;
- Existing local services;
- Usage of these services by the target population; and
- Local opinions of existing services.

Given the importance of data collection when selecting a target neighborhood, census tract boundaries may play an important role in determining its boundaries. Data is also available by zip codes and congressional district. Choosing neighborhood boundaries that do not easily conform to such already existing boundaries may make data collection more challenging. For those who do not wish to be limited by such boundaries, however, there are other options. One alternative is Geographic Information Systems (GIS), a method that allows researchers to capture data from unorthodox target areas.<sup>15</sup>

Researchers can also administer neighborhood surveys or conduct focus groups with families in the zone. (To maximize candidness, comfort level and accessibility, it is preferable that data collectors have significant experience with the target neighborhoods.) For example, operating in Orlando, the Parramore Kidz Zone conducted outreach by sending community volunteers out into the neighborhood to canvas for data. Adhering to data sharing agreements protecting the anonymity of respondents, this team administered household surveys developed by external consultants from the Health Council of East Central Florida.<sup>16</sup> Respondents, children aged 11-18, were asked to provide information on their home life, personal goals, and other quality-of-life indicators to inform the planning process for the program.

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<sup>9</sup> "Northside Achievement Zone Operating Plan: Third Quarter 2009." Available online at: <http://northsideachievement.org/wp-content/uploads/steering/NAZ-Operating-Plan-8-31-09.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> The full study is available online at: <http://www.unpmn.org/>.

<sup>13</sup> "North Minneapolis Asset Mapping and Indicators for 2006: A preliminary assessment of economic, health and educational assets and indicators in North Minneapolis." University of Minnesota Office for Business and Community Economic Development. September 2006. Available online at: [http://www.unpmn.org/pdf/asset\\_mapping\\_06/assets2006report.pdf](http://www.unpmn.org/pdf/asset_mapping_06/assets2006report.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> Phone call with Anne Long, Executive Director, Plymouth Christian Youth Center, 8/6/09.

<sup>15</sup> GIS technology can provide information for thousands of data indicators, and the software gives users the capacity to plot user-created data and the ability to isolate unique, individualized regions for data evaluation.

<sup>16</sup> Phone call with Lisa Early, Director of Families, Parks and Recreation for the City of Orlando, 7/30/09.

A final point of consideration when choosing a neighborhood is size. After identifying a specific 24 block area in a strategic central location, the HCZ expanded in phases before reaching its current size—almost 100 city blocks Central Harlem.<sup>17</sup> This strategy of scaling up has allowed the organization to provide a comprehensive array of services without extending itself beyond capacity. This suggests that the geographic location of the zone in relation to other neighborhoods should be an important consideration. Beginning with smaller, centrally-located neighborhoods, with plans to increase size and increasing operations into adjacent blocks, will allow programs to use their resources effectively and expand their work on a realistic timeline.

## **POLITICS OF IMPLEMENTATION**

Once one or more potential neighborhoods have been identified, the next step is to identify and reach out to potential collaborating organizations in the community. Examples of such organizations include neighborhood centers, schools, health clinics, religious institutions, human service agencies, and corporate entities. Leaders hoping to launch a Promise Neighborhood can increase organizational capacity by capitalizing on such existing infrastructure.

In Pittsburgh, leaders identified a number of key stakeholders to participate in the steering committee for the Homewood Children's Village, a local effort based on the HCZ. The committee, which has over two dozen members, includes representatives from the local public school system, police department, city council, multiple private foundations and other local nonprofit organizations.<sup>18</sup>

Another example is the Parkside Promise Neighborhood, based in Northeast Washington, DC, which conducted extensive research before identifying partners. Prior to contacting these organizations, the group worked to identify best-in-class service providers in relevant focus areas.<sup>19</sup> An important factor in choosing partner organizations for the Parkside effort was the capacity or willingness to collect and share data, both during the initial area evaluation and result measurement phases. The Parkside group encouraged the sharing of information when appropriate and assessed the need for their services based on the data its partners brought to the table.

Beyond organizational support, Promise Neighborhood applicants should also enlist the support of elected officials in both local and state government. In most cities, the program would be difficult to champion without the support of the mayor, city council, and school board.

For example, an effort in West Palm Beach, Florida may be instructive for other cities with unique political dynamics. While the City Commissioner has attempted to replicate the Harlem Children's Zone model through what she has called the West Palm Beach Family Zone, her political differences with the mayor have been reported to be a potential obstacle for the program's success. Because the mayor has expressed an interest in learning more about the program, it appears that the tension between the alleged political rivals has not hampered the initiative's process. However, advocates for the program will probably want to monitor this situation with great interest, as it could significantly affect the launch of the program.

State legislators can also play an important role in this process, as evidenced by the recent success of the Miami Children's Initiative. After the state legislature officially designated the effort a Florida Children's Initiative, the program was set to receive funding through a unique local-state partnership.<sup>20</sup> Along with the Orlando-based Parramore Kidz Zone, the initiative has obtained planning grants from the Ounce of

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<sup>17</sup> Harlem Children's Zone, "Harlem Children's Zone History," Available online at: <http://hcz.org/what-is-hcz/history>.

<sup>18</sup> Phone call with Aliya Davis, Urban District Vice President, YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh, 8/26/09.

<sup>19</sup> Meeting with Norma Barfield, Chief Development and Marketing Officer, Cesar Chavez Public Charter Schools for Public Policy, 8/20/09.

<sup>20</sup> "Governor Crist Signs Legislation to Create Children's Zones in Underserved Florida Communities June 6, 2008." Press Release. Available at: <http://www.flgov.com/release/10048>.

Prevention Fund, an organization tasked by the state to review and approve requests from local initiatives.<sup>21</sup>

The local school district is another important entity that should be represented on Promise Neighborhood steering committees. In the aforementioned Homewood Children's Village project, the Pittsburgh School Superintendent has been a lead organizer for the effort and continues to play an influential role in the project.<sup>22</sup> While public schools may not necessarily be the only educational providers represented in these groups, their cooperation will almost certainly be pivotal, and their resources and leadership can serve as important components of any successful effort.

Finally, private funders will almost certainly play an important role in the success of most Promise Neighborhoods. Community foundations and local United Ways can and should be brought to the table. Another potential source of donors is wealthy individuals, many of whom may serve on boards of participating organizations. Another innovative approach that one local initiative used was securing funds and in-kind contributions from a local professional sports team. The Parramore Kidz Zone has received significant financial support from its hometown Orlando Magic of the National Basketball Association. It has also received grants and donations from the NBA franchise's Community Relations Office and individual players.<sup>23</sup> More details on funding will be discussed later in this paper.

## PROGRAMMATIC STRATEGY

Once the neighborhoods have been chosen and participating organizations identified, planners should identify what services will be provided to program participants. While the chosen services will reflect local needs, and thus vary from city to city, there are certain common program elements that are likely to be present in all cities. Those include core programs such as early childhood development, K-12 education, and after-school programming. These elements were included in the Harlem Children's Zone, and constitute key ingredients in the Zone's cradle-to-college pipeline.

Early intervention is a critical factor for effective education. Numerous studies have shown that childhood development in children ages 0-5 plays a large role in shaping their future scholastic abilities. This involvement is also statistically proven to reduce crime rates in poverty stricken areas.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the impact of educational intervention increases the earlier in a child's life it is implemented.<sup>25</sup> Research has indicated that students who demonstrate advanced skills early on are more likely to outpace their peers in reading proficiency later on.<sup>26</sup> The resulting achievement gap is most apparent when viewed along socioeconomic lines, as wealthier children tend to demonstrate stronger reading skills compared to their poorer counterparts.<sup>27</sup>

These principles have informed the philosophy behind the Harlem Children's Zone's Baby College, a program that teaches child rearing skills to new parents in the Zone. Held in nine-week cycles, the program caters to expecting parents and parents with children under age three.<sup>28</sup> These courses focus on ways that parents can help prepare their children for success out of school, addressing issues such as verbal communication, corporal punishment, and positive reinforcement. Other HCZ early childhood

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<sup>21</sup> Ounce of Prevention Fund, "Florida Children's Initiative Overview & Designation Process." Available online at: [http://www.ounce.org/children/childrens\\_initiative\\_designation.pdf](http://www.ounce.org/children/childrens_initiative_designation.pdf).

<sup>22</sup> Phone call with Aliya Davis, Urban District Vice President, YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh, 8/26/09.

<sup>23</sup> Patrick Lester, "Kidz Zones and the NBA," *UNCA Building Neighborhoods Blog*, Available online at: <http://unca-acf.org/?p=118>.

<sup>24</sup> Chicago Policy Research Team. "Chicago Promise: A Policy Report on Reinventing the Harlem Children's Zone," (May 2009), 17. Available online at: <http://cppt.uchicago.edu/reports/CPRTExecSumChicagoPromise.pdf>.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Economist James Heckman has noted the importance of long-term disparities between children of different verbal skills in what researchers have termed the Matthew effect; Paul Tough, *Whatever It Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2008), p. 207-208.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.



programs include Harlem Gems, a pre-school program with extended school hours, and The Three Year Old Journey, an effort geared towards parents of future Promise Academy students.<sup>29</sup>

The Zone continues its cradle-to-college approach with its network of Promise Academy charter schools. Because the schools cannot accommodate all students living in the Zone, prospective students are selected for the program in kindergarten via lottery at the opening of each academic year. With an extended school day and school year, the free academies aim to promote a culture of achievement with local youth. The schools instill a “no excuses” mentality among staff by providing additional resources to nurture individual and academic growth. For example, in addition to offering extensive tutoring and extra help programs, the academies also house medical, dental, and mental health care services for students.<sup>30</sup>

The Harlem Children’s Zone also offers after-school programming free of charge for children of all ages. These include projects on health and nutrition, fitness, leadership development, arts, media, and job training. These programs are also accessible to students that may attend school elsewhere.

These strategies were developed in response to specific issues in Harlem. Leaders seeking to replicate the model in other places should take individualized approaches tailored to the needs of their target area. For example, in Detroit, the Focus: HOPE organization plans to complement its education focus with an emphasis on economic revitalization through housing development.<sup>31</sup> Past empowerment initiatives have increased residential flight from certain Detroit neighborhoods, so planners hope this new effort will enhance the quality of life in the area enough to retain residents who gain economic mobility. The Detroit plan also includes community gardens and health care initiatives.

After partner organizations have been identified and a strategy developed, some thought should be given to recruitment of parents and children. An important component of the Harlem Children’s Zone community outreach was a door-to-door campaign that gave HCZ representatives personal contact with potential program participants.<sup>32</sup> This allowed the program to reach a much larger percentage of the neighborhoods, a key factor in tipping neighborhoods in a positive direction.<sup>33</sup>

## ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP STRATEGY

The eventual success of local initiatives will likely depend heavily on organizational decisions made early on. From the outset, planners of Promise Neighborhoods should identify a single anchor organization to lead the effort.<sup>34</sup> This could be an existing 501(c)(3) organization or a new nonprofit specifically dedicated to the initiative. Either way, effectively administered Promise Neighborhoods should have boards comprised of individuals from the private sector in addition to neighborhood leaders. This will provide both financial support and accountability while maintaining transparency with community residents and families served by the program.

It is critical for sites to select one central leader to provide a coherent message and image to the community. This importance has been underscored by the difficulties facing local efforts that have appointed multiple leaders to their top position. An effort in Jacksonville appointed two board chairs, a CEO, and a project director who all have shared responsibility in setting the agenda for the

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<sup>29</sup> Harlem Children’s Zone. “The Harlem Children’s Zone Project,” Available online at: <http://hcz.org/programs/the-hcz-project>.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Sheri Begin-Welch, “Nonprofit’s hope: Make neighborhood a place to call home, not a place to flee,” *Crain’s Detroit Business*, August 23, 2009. Available online at: <http://www.crainsdetroit.com/article/20090823/FREE/308239917#>.

<sup>32</sup> Tough, 58-60.

<sup>33</sup> For further information about the Promise Neighborhood initiative and UNCA and Alliance recommendations for the program see: Patrick Lester, “Tipping Neighborhoods to Success,” May 13, 2009, [http://www.alliance1.org/Public\\_Policy/Neighborhoods/Tipping\\_neighborhoods.pdf](http://www.alliance1.org/Public_Policy/Neighborhoods/Tipping_neighborhoods.pdf).

<sup>34</sup> For more background on anchor institutions as they relate to community development, see: Ira Harkavy, “Anchor Institutions as Partners in Building Successful Communities and Local Economies” in *Retooling HUD for a Catalytic Federal Government: A Report to Secretary Shaun Donovan*. Penn Institute for Urban Research, 2009.

organization.<sup>35</sup> Without a single individual at the helm, an organization may experience more difficulty developing a comprehensive strategic plan that is both coherent and realistic for key stakeholders.

The best example of strong leadership is HCZ's Geoffrey Canada. Raised near Harlem in the streets of South Bronx, Canada brings a degree of street-level knowledge, credibility and experience that have served him well in Upper Manhattan. Additionally, as a graduate of prestigious Bowdoin College and Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, he has the academic credentials and corporate connections that provide his organization with significant Wall Street support.<sup>36</sup> That background provided him with one of his most valuable connections, hedge fund billionaire Stanley Druckenmiller, who was once a college classmate of Canada's and now serves as the chair of the HCZ Board of Trustees. He has personally contributed millions to the organization. Other prominent connections include NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg and school Chancellor Joel Klein, both of whom support his vision and programming for the Zone.<sup>37</sup>

While the HCZ's leadership serves as a strong model for others hoping to replicate its success, lessons can also be learned from challenges faced by other leaders doing similar work. In Rochester, New York, a local group spearheading the Rochester Surround Care Community Organization (RSCCO) faced initial leadership obstacles that significantly impaired its effectiveness. After receiving public criticism for a slow planning process and ambitious, unfeasible target region, the organization came under fire for selecting a controversial executive director.

In the opinion of her critics, this former teacher's resume lacked "the substance her advocates tout."<sup>38</sup> In the face of inadequate funding to compensate staff, alleged lack of community support, and alleged conflict with board members, the leader abruptly resigned less than a year after her appointment.<sup>39</sup> While there were a number of contributing factors beyond the executive director's control, if any of the statements made about this leader were true, many of the organizational difficulties could have been addressed by a better connected and possibly more capable leader at the helm.

## FUNDING

While authorizing language has yet to be signed into law, President Obama has publicly announced that the federal government would provide half of the funding for Promise Neighborhoods.<sup>40</sup> In addition to allocated funding from the federal government, it will be critical for leaders of Promise Neighborhoods to obtain capital from a diverse range of other sources. Due to the unique interdisciplinary nature of the initiative, there are a variety of options that can sustain groups, even those unable to obtain federal dollars.

There are already a few programs based on Harlem's Children's Zone that have successfully secured funding at the state level. This support has been distributed in the form of startup funding and planning grants from governor's offices and state legislatures. In Rochester, NY, for example, startup funding for the aforementioned RSCCO was obtained directly from the governor's office.<sup>41</sup> A Miami program also received state funding after being designated a Florida Children's Initiative. This occurred after the state

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<sup>35</sup> "Success Zone: Where's the plan?" Editorial, *The Florida Times-Union*, August 22, 2009. Available online at: [http://www.jacksonville.com/opinion/editorials/2009-08-21/story/success\\_zone\\_wheres\\_the\\_plan](http://www.jacksonville.com/opinion/editorials/2009-08-21/story/success_zone_wheres_the_plan).

<sup>36</sup> Tough, 11.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. 6.

<sup>38</sup> Aaron W. Wicks, "The Rochester Children's Zone: Queen Mother to the Rescue," *The Smugtown Beacon*, July 6, 2008. Available online at: <http://www.smugtownbeacon.com/news.php?viewStory=126>.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> The other half would need to come from other sources, with philanthropies and businesses offering matching funds; "Remarks of Senator Barack Obama: Changing the Odds for Urban America," July 18, 2007. Available online at: [http://www.barackobama.com/2007/07/18/remarks\\_of\\_senator\\_barack\\_obam\\_19.php](http://www.barackobama.com/2007/07/18/remarks_of_senator_barack_obam_19.php).

<sup>41</sup> Tim Louis Macaluso, "CITY: Northeast residents want to change life for neighborhood children," *Rochester City Newspaper*, <http://www.rochestercitynewspaper.com/news/articles/CITY:+Northeast+residents+want+to+change+life+for+neighborhood+children/print/>.



legislature assigned a fund with the responsibility of reviewing and approving local grant requests from local coalitions working on similar efforts.<sup>42</sup> These arrangements are obviously unique in each state, however there are existing examples that can offer guidance to other groups.

While public money will be vital, private capital will also be important. A key to the Harlem Children's Zone's success was its shift in revenue streams from predominantly government-based to corporate and foundational-based support. When commenting on his shift in funding, Geoffrey Canada said, "the reason we needed private money is there was up and down with the public dollars, and every year a drama... we could never get anything up running long enough to say we have an impact."<sup>43</sup> By increasing funding from private dollars, Promise Neighborhoods can avoid the risks associated with dependency on less flexible and perhaps less dependable public sources.

Community foundations can serve as a strong source of private funding and have already demonstrated a commitment to similar programs in some cities. The aforementioned project in Detroit received support from the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, which awarded a grant towards the costs of a trip to the HCZ for Focus: HOPE executives, the Neighborhood Service Organization and the Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corp.<sup>44</sup> Some initiatives have even worked with professional sports teams through their corporate community relations offices. The NBA's Orlando Magic organization has supported the Orlando's Parramore Kidz Zone in a number of ways, including funding construction, providing grants, and donating vehicles.<sup>45</sup> The Harlem Children's Zone has also done extensive work to solicit individuals giving from wealthy individuals and other givers.

## CONCLUSION

As existing efforts have demonstrated, it is feasible to replicate the Harlem Children's Zone without federal funding if the appropriate resources and partners are brought to the table. Given the number of potential funders, successful implementation does not depend solely on official recognition as a Promise Neighborhood. Moreover, if the U.S. Department of Education determines that the first wave of Promise Neighborhoods is successful, it seems likely that a subsequent round of federal grants will be distributed, allowing expansion of federal funding beyond the first twenty cities that are chosen. These developments could result in a proliferation of the Harlem Children's Zone model across the country, capitalizing on and continuing the momentum that has grown in recent years.

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## About the Alliance for Children and Families and United Neighborhood Centers of America

The Alliance for Children and Families, a nonprofit association, was formed by the 1998 merger of Family Service America and the National Association of Homes and Services for Children. The Alliance represents over 370 nonprofit organizations across the nation that provide services and economic empowerment to children and families. Alliance agencies cover a wide spectrum of providers, including a diversity of faith-based organizations and nonsectarian agencies. Together, these organizations deliver

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<sup>42</sup> Ounce of Prevention Fund, "Florida Children's Initiative Overview & Designation Process." Available online at: [http://www.ounce.org/children/childrens\\_initiative\\_designation.pdf](http://www.ounce.org/children/childrens_initiative_designation.pdf).

<sup>43</sup> The Bridgespan Group, Inc., "Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ): Transforming the organization while scaling up in a tightly defined local service area," 2005, p. 9-10. Available online at: <http://www.bridgespan.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=1120>.

<sup>44</sup> Sheri Begin-Welch, "Nonprofit's hope: Make neighborhood a place to call home, not a place to flee," *Crain's Detroit Business*, August 23, 2009. Available online at: <http://www.crainsdetroit.com/article/20090823/FREE/308239917#>.

<sup>45</sup> Orlando Magic Office of Community Relations, "Orlando Magic Assists with Parramore Home Renovation," October 10, 2008. Available online at: [http://www.amwaycenter.com/press\\_room/press\\_releases/orlando\\_magic\\_assists\\_with\\_parramore\\_home\\_renovation/](http://www.amwaycenter.com/press_room/press_releases/orlando_magic_assists_with_parramore_home_renovation/).

more than \$2 billion annually in services to more than 8 million people in nearly 6,700 communities across the United States. More information about the Alliance is available at [www.alliance1.org](http://www.alliance1.org).

United Neighborhood Centers of America (UNCA) is a voluntary, nonprofit, national organization with neighborhood-based member agencies throughout the United States. Formerly known as the National Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers, it was founded in 1911 by Jane Addams and other pioneers of the settlement movement. UNCA members build neighborhoods with neighbors. More information about UNCA is available at [www.unca.org](http://www.unca.org).

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