May 2nd, 10am
Sugar City - Arts Collaborative
1239 Niagara Street, Buffalo, NY

Free and open to all!

A celebration of Citizen Planners and Champions planning a change in their communities

A program empowering citizens to create change.
“Never doubt the ability of a small group of committed citizens to change the world, in fact, it’s the only thing that ever has.” - Anthropologist, Margaret Mead.

The Citizen Planning School is an innovative citizen-centered learning program designed to empower residents from across Erie and Niagara counties to become agents for sustainable change in their local communities. Over the past few months, Citizen Planners participated in learning sessions with academic experts, planning practitioners, community leaders, and fellow citizens to explore key issues in planning and sustainability and gain skills and tools to get more involved in the planning process.

In this booklet, you will find the work of our “Champions for Change,” an advanced program of the Citizen Planning School that offered detailed training and one-on-one technical support. Our Champions were among the 60+ citizens who participated in the Citizen Planning School. But they took their commitment one step further by spending countless hours working with planners and graduate students at the UB Regional Institute to develop project ideas for practical, positive impact to make sustainability a regional reality.

The projects of our Champions range in scale, focus, and impact but they are practical and do-able, and little by little, step-by-step, they can add up to a big change toward a more sustainable region. The second Citizen Planning School Idea Summit was convened to celebrate these ideas and the people who have committed themselves to making them a reality.

As we conclude the second year of the One Region Forward Citizen Planning School, we are excited to see new group of Champions initiate projects and return Champions refine the work they started last year. It is inspiring to support these leaders as they work towards change tailored to the needs of their communities.

The second year of the Citizen Planning School brought with it exciting partnerships with Dig Buffalo, Open Buffalo and the Department of Media Studies at the University at Buffalo. In addition, this year’s Champions worked closely with student technical advisors from a service-learning course at UB’s School of Architecture and Planning. Both, Champions and students learned from one another as they developed a variety of concepts into ideas for action across a broad range of topic areas.

The Citizen Planning School is part of what we hope will be a broad movement to implement the regional plan for sustainable development created by the One Region Forward effort. Making the change we need to be more sustainable won’t come in one fell swoop. It will be made piece by piece over the long haul by citizens determined to make their communities better. It will also be made by citizens who learn about the issues and develop the capacity to get good things done.

Join me in celebrating the second class of the Citizen Planning School and Champions for Change. We look forward to welcoming our third class in the spring of 2016. In the meantime, we hope that you enjoy today’s event and look forward to future collaborations with you.

Warmest Regards,

Robert G. Shibley FAIA, AICP
Professor and Dean
University at Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning
Director, Citizen Planning School
Acknowledgments

One Region Forward, in partnership with the University at Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning, held the first ever Citizen Planning School for citizens of Erie and Niagara counties. Free and open to the public, the Citizen Planning School imparts practical knowledge and arms citizens with tools and resources that they can use to implement sustainable change in their neighborhoods and communities. The Citizen Planning School would not have been possible without the contributions of the organizations listed here. Individuals from these organizations donated their time as speakers and panelists to share their experiences and insight with our citizen planners on the long road to turning ideas into action.

Citizen Planning School Team

Robert G. Shibley, FAIA, AICP
Dean, University at Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning
Director, UB Regional Institute

Bart J. Roberts, AICP
One Region Forward Project Manager, UB Regional Institute

Cristina Delgado
Citizen Planning School Coordinator, UB Regional Institute

Smitha Gopalakrishnan
Graduate Assistant, University at Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning

Brenda Stynes
Information Designer

Darren Cotton
Associate Planner

Speakers and Panelists

Aaron Bartley, JD - PUSH Buffalo
Sean Burkholder, MLA - Department of Architecture, University at Buffalo
Dan Carosa - Sugar City Arts Collaborative
Brian Conley - UB Regional Institute
Darren Cotton - University Heights Tool Library
Jenn Cribbs – US Department of Housing and Urban Development
Cristina Delgado - UB Regional Institute
Kelly Dixon, AICP - Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC)
Jessica Edwards – Dig Buffalo
Ron Fraser - Small Town Civics Website
Melissa Fratello – Grassroots Garden of Buffalo
Nate Gulley - Open Buffalo
David Hahn Baker - I-O Consultants
Maryam Khojasteh, MUP - Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab, University at Buffalo
Jason Knight - Department of Geography and Planning, Buffalo State College
Jessica Kozlowski-Russell- Sustainability Office, University at Buffalo
Joseph Kurtz –University Heights Tool Library
Nadine Marrero, AICP - City of Buffalo
Della Miller – Champions For Change
Nicholas Rajkovich, PhD, AIA - Department of Architecture, University at Buffalo
Bart Roberts, AICP - UB Regional Institute
Ashley Smith - Elmwood Village Association
Laurie Stillwell - Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper
Johanna Walczyk - Local Initiatives Support Corporation – Buffalo (LISC)

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UB Department of Media Studies

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UB Student Technical Advisor Team

Nathan Aldrich
Matthew Austin
Lewis Bondor
Shen Hao Chang
Kyle Fecik
Bill Frantz
Eric Hammer
Samantha Herberger
Mark Hitchcock
Zhuoxing Jiang

Jinhe Liu
Trevor Maciejewski
Nicole McMahon
Sahar Mirzaei
Sara Mirzarasoolzadeh
Shaobo Niu
Jake Palant
Cody Stern
Vivek Thanumalayan
Xin Wang

Special thanks to Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus for making the shared space and resources at d!g available to our Champions as they work on their ideas and build partnerships with other civic entrepreneurs.

Special thanks to UB Department of Media Studies for providing media equipment to record our sessions.
During the second year of the Citizen Planning School, our “Champions for Change” worked through a planning process to nurture an idea for making sustainable change in their local community. With assistance from the professionals and graduate students from UB’s School of Architecture and Planning, the Champions spent countless hours over a three month period conducting research, forming partnerships, and identifying necessary steps and actions to move their idea forward.

Planning is rarely a linear process, and each champion project went through numerous revisions and scope adjustments to align with their goals and capacity to get it done. Therefore, all the projects presented in this booklet are at different stages of development. This collection of projects are varied in focus area and scale, but they share a very important common denominator - they have a passionate Champion to drive it forward. We look forward to seeing where they go in the future.

**IDEA**
Crafting good ideas is rarely effortless. Rather, it involves shaping and reshaping, based on continuously emerging data, case studies, and meetings with stakeholders, among other factors. The projects included in this section are the result of turning a good concept into a viable, exciting, and meaningful idea and are prime to be mapped out via a plan.

| Erie County Southtowns Farmer’s Market Vendor/Buyer Spatial Study | pg. 5 |
| Neighbor 2 Neighbor | pg. 6 |

**PLAN**
It is tempting to spring into action after crafting a great idea, but doing so without creating a plan first risks experiencing a disorganized and ineffective implementation process. The projects in this section are developing well-thought and practical plans for action.

| The Hub @ Martha Chaney Bishop Community Center | pg. 7 |
| Outreach Strategy for My Little Literacy Leaders Tutoring Service | pg. 8 |
| The Coalition of Positively Charged People | pg. 9 |
| The Elm Hub | pg. 10 |
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**ACTION**
These projects are ready to be put into action. They started with great ideas, many of which were cultivated before the Champion program, and received assistance in creating practical road maps for action. Many of these projects are in the early stages of getting implemented and may benefit from additional resources, partnerships and support.

| Rediscover History Main Street (Return Champion Project) | pg. 14 |
| Taking the “It Takes A Village Organization” to the Next Level (Return Champion Project) | pg. 15 |
Erie County Southtowns Farmer’s Market Vendor Buyer Spatial Study

MY IDEA FOR CHANGE

The Farmers Market Vendor Buyer Spatial Study aims to work with Southtowns high school students to learn more about Erie County Food Systems through social research and community engagement techniques. The study would survey vendors and consumers of six pre-identified farmer’s markets. This study not only provides students with additional skills, but also creates a better understanding of the relationship along the rural-suburban fringe of Southern Erie County between market growers and consumers. This project will also increase awareness of the Citizen Planning School in the Southtowns.

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN

Students would conduct person-to-person surveys of growers and consumers at the six operating farmers markets located in the Towns of Holland and Colden, and the villages of East Aurora, Orchard Park, Springville and Hamburg.

Planning a Change

ACTIONS TO MOVE IT FORWARD

- Engage & partner with local high schools
- Design survey
- Recruit and train students
- Conduct study

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

- Best practice research, partnerships

FUNDING RANGE

$0-$500 for study expenses

STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

IDEA

About the Champion...

Ron Fraser
fraserr@erols.com

Ron is a Southtowns resident and the Site Administrator for Small Town Civics website. The Website provides a forum to constructively identify ways to improve small town governance. Ron is also, past chair of the Town of Colden Hydrofracking Committee and past chair of the Town of Colden’s Environmental Board. Ron is also a 2015 Champion for Change. Ron has a Master of Regional Planning degree and a PhD in Public policy.
Neighborhood 2 Neighbor
Subscription based services for elderly residents

MY IDEA FOR CHANGE

My project aims to serve people of retired age to acquire services from home by creating a subscription based service that provides personal support for the elderly in order to build a stronger community, provide jobs for young adults, and increase the level of care for the elderly in their own homes. The program is subscription based, implementing teens and young adults to provide help and services to the elderly at their own convenience. A yearly subscription gives a person access to young people from the community, who are willing to provide services such as transportation, housework, and even just general company. This program is a great way to build a stronger community, by providing jobs for young adults and services for the elderly, from right in their own homes.

This project uses the app NextDoor, like a listserv for social listing of lost pets, babysitting needs, leaf raking, requests for good service providers, walking clubs etc. In addition, Neighborhood 2 Neighbor would host small quarterly “neighbor events” at a local church to build community.

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN

Clarence Center, NY.

Planning a Change

ACTIONS TO MOVE IT FORWARD

Gather demographic information from Town Hall
Ask for church participation/meeting space/presentations
Develop an advertisement
Develop a web page

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

Volunteers, Clients, Partnerships

FUNDING RANGE

$0-$500 for coordinating expenses

STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

IDEA  PLAN  ACTION

About the Champion...

Sue Tannehill is an adjunct faculty member at the University of Buffalo. She is married and has two children now 20 and 16. Sue enjoys having roots in her neighborhood after her early nomadic existence. She has a home now in Northern Clarence and it is the 22nd place she has lived in her life. She has lived there for 24 years. This country neighborhood has gone from widely scattered older homes, along two mile long country roads to the development of dozens of new, larger homes being placed on these same roads.
MY IDEA FOR CHANGE

My project aims to serve youth in Buffalo and Lackawanna to positively change their lives by providing a safe location that offers opportunities to increase their education and gain life skills. I believe that education and positive recreational opportunities will help youth grow up to be productive citizens that want to give back to their community. My inspiration comes from my personal life transformation from having an at-risk mindset to becoming a person resolved to give back. This transformation was enabled by caring, supportive people and the influence of the now demolished Friendship House. The Hub will also act as a meeting space for other organizations doing work in the community without a permanent home.

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN

The Hub honors the legacy of my grandparents who were the previous owners of the building as well as community “elders.” Eugene Bishop, my grandfather, worked long, grueling hours at Bethlehem Steel’s coke ovens to care for his family and support the business. While his wife, Martha Chaney Bishop, extended herself to the community at a time when the community pulled together to raise its children and teach them how to succeed in a divided world. 145 Steelewanna was the home of their tavern, The Du-Drop-Inn, a once prominent soul food, blues establishment that catered to Bethlehem Steel workers and the local community.

The Hub @ Martha Chaney Bishop Community Center is needed in the community because the decline of the industrial core brought social and economic instability, which has resulted in neighborhood blight and the dissolution of the social fabric which once held the community together. We need a place for youth to pursue education and positive social life. We need a place where youth can develop their potential and find the support they need to become the next generation of leaders in our community.

ACTIONS TO MOVE IT FORWARD

Finish renovations
Develop programming and schedule
Finalize volunteer rooster
Finalize center operation details

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

Funding, Partnerships, Volunteers, Marketing, Grant writing assistance

FUNDING RANGE

$50,000 - $75,000 for building renovation costs

About the Champion...

LaShanen is founder and President of MOC, a community hub in Lackawanna, New York. Inspired by his own transformation and the impact that the bygone Friendship House had on his life, LaShanen’s dream of bringing transformation and new life to the youth of that same community is coming together. LaShanen’s contacts across the spectrum of nonprofits, local businesses, community leaders and sports figures have endorsed his plans to change lives and provide opportunity where there is none. These highly experienced volunteers have already come forward to assist in the programming such as for tutoring, mentoring, sports, arts, music and camping events. Currently, LaShanen is getting ready to present his idea to the community and launch initial programming in July. He is also busy planning fundraising events in order to get the HUB @ The Martha Chaney Bishop Community Center off the ground.
BUFFALO, NY

Outreach Strategy for My Little Literacy Leaders Tutoring Service

MY IDEA FOR CHANGE

My project aims to serve the youth of Buffalo’s East Side by ensuring their needs are met and the foundation of My Little Literacy Leaders Tutoring Service remain sustainable. This will be done by developing a marketing strategy to publicize the program, seek new funding sources, and develop a recruitment strategy for volunteer mentors, in order to provide an alternative resource for youth support outside the capacity of traditional after school learning programs.

My Little Literacy Leaders Tutoring is an after school youth tutoring service that seeks to foster a learning environment conducive to youth learning through MLLLTS’ 3 ‘PPP’s recipe for teaching (Purpose, Passion, and Patience). The project is expected to assist the program outreach and expansion for the duration of 1 year. Phases include assessing organizational capacity to identify program needs, connecting with schools and neighborhood organizations to gain program visibility, exploring program sponsorship, and recruiting and training volunteer mentors to ensure students receive the best academic, emotional and social support. The expected short term goal is to reach out to at least 3 schools, recruit and train at least 5 volunteer mentors, and reach a target number of student enrollment at 25.

This program seeks to help the local community by providing an alternative resource for youth support outside the capacity of traditional after school learning programs. This includes the need for academic, emotional (address needs to support healthy minds) and social support (establishing confidence).

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN

The tutoring service is located at 3610 Main Street and serves students residing in Buffalo’s East Side neighborhoods.

Planning a Change

ACTIONS TO MOVE IT FORWARD

Assess Organizational Capacity
Program Outreach
Recruit and Train Volunteers
Seek Financial Support
Increase Student Enrollment and Retention

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

Funding, Partnerships

FUNDING RANGE

$10,000 to $20,000 to support expansion into a larger facility

STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

IDEA PLAN ACTION

About the Champion....

Valerie Lenese Edwards was born and raised in Buffalo New York and is also a current resident. Presently employed with the Buffalo Public School District (in many capacities) for over 10 years, Valerie has gained the trust and has made a positive impact on children at the elementary level. With the ongoing support of her husband, children, parents and siblings, Valerie has managed to achieve an AA in Early Childhood Education, BA in Social Science (Magna Cum Laude) and MAED (Reading Literacy) all while balancing the role as wife, mother, and working full time. As of May of 2014, Valerie began fulfilling her purpose by becoming the Founder/Executive Director of My Little Literacy Leaders Tutoring Service. MLLLTS’ focus is on meeting the emotional, social, and academic needs of children beginning at 5 years of age, through MLLLTS’ 3 Ps recipe for teaching Purpose, Passion, and Patience. Without purpose there is no destiny, without passion there is no security, and without patience there is no positive outcome for our children to become scholars, successful in society, and active engaging adults within their community.
The Coalition of Positively Charged People
A Coalition to Enable Household Battery Recycling

MY IDEA FOR CHANGE

My project aims to serve the residents of Erie County to change the way that people dispose of single-use household batteries by establishing a comprehensive battery recycling program in which people will have a convenient and free way to recycle their batteries. Batteries should be recycled in the cleanest, most environmentally responsible way, while recovering a maximum amount of what makes up the batteries (like zinc, steel, manganese). Then finally, the recovered components should be reused. The battery-recycling program should be a clean waste stream, a closed loop system.

Today, there is a lack of adequate infrastructure for disposal of alkaline batteries. This project will entail the proper set up of a system and resources for appropriate disposal and recycling methods. In order to address many of the issues that this project poses: legislation, recycling facility, collection locations and upcycling possibilities, I will conduct a series of conversations. These conversations will be with groups such as staff from the Science Museum, Zoo, UB professors, Scouts, Amherst Waste & Recycling Committee and Buffalo environmental groups. From these I will create a “Coalition of Positively Charged People”, who will create the Erie County Household Battery Recycling system.

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN

This project would ideally start in Erie County and spread throughout the state as we create the infrastructure for battery recycling.

Planning a Change

ACTIONS TO MOVE IT FORWARD
Create a website
Create digital and conventional presentation
Apply for grants
Make presentations
Build a coalition

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN
Website, Program Funding, Partnerships, Volunteers

FUNDING RANGE
$1,000 - $5,000 for outreach campaign expenses

STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

About the Champion...

Cynthia is on the Waste and Recycling Committee for the Town of Amherst. Active in Scouting, she taught the “Sustainability” merit badge to Boy Scouts, and recently completed Cub Scout Leadership as Webelos Den Leader and Assistant Pack Leader. Cynthia is trained as a Preservation Librarian and Archivist, and has established library preservation programs at Union Theological Seminary in New York City and the research library in the Museum of Modern Art. Continuing her passion for libraries, for several years Cynthia organized parent volunteers for the library program at Heim Elementary school. She recently created an “Archives: Secrets Revealed” workshop for students.

Cynthia Frame-Endres
1positivelycharged@gmail.com
The Elm Hub

BUFFALO, NY

MY IDEA FOR CHANGE

My project aims to enhance Utica Heights through the restoration of the historic Elm landscape initiated by its earliest resident, William Hodge. Hodge, who established Buffalo's first nursery was instrumental in the expansion of the Elm tree in Buffalo. I believe that this neighborhood beautification project, steeped in historic significance, would help to create a new perspective and vision of the neighborhood. The Elm landscape would strengthen community pride, and create an environment ripe for aesthetic and spiritual contemplation.

I was inspired to pursue this project because I see our neighborhood as a place reflective of the “American Dream.” My parents were (more or less) orphans who discovered love and built a remarkable life. This experience of the American dream was passed down to me. Moreover, I believe that this dream, is represented by William Hodge as well as with other inspirational neighborhood residents such as William West (artist); Robert Traynham Coles (architect); Cecil Brown (politician); Rev. Hemphill (Model Cities developer) and Garfield Hinton (journalist). The elm trees would not only represent the historic legacy of Hodge, but also the strength of will and intuition - two key features of the American Dream. The elms would be a beautiful complement to the cityscape of East Utica and would help residents and visitors alike to identify the area as one of opportunity and prosperity.

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN

This project takes place along the historic Hodge tree nursery site encompassing East Utica Street from Main to Masten.

Planning a Change

ACTIONS TO MOVE IT FORWARD

Planning research
Partnership building
Funding source identification and application

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

Funding, Architect/designer, Volunteers Researchers (academics, historians, etc.), Partners

FUNDING RANGE

$5,000 - $10,000 to fund a designer or plan-design studio at UB School of Architecture and Planning

About the Champion...

Pamella Lomax, a native of Buffalo, New York is a graduate of the American University in Washington, DC. Upon completion of an undergraduate degree from the School of Public Affairs, she enhanced her knowledge base by working directly for industry experts and leaders in academia, finance and health care.

In 2012, having celebrated ownership of a 53-year-old, familial enterprise, located on East Utica Street in Buffalo, NY, Pamella founded and launched the Utica Heights Block Club. Since its inception, the organization has consistently engaged the community by reaching out and providing resourcefulness.

Pamella Lomax
uhbc@mail.com
NIAGARA FALLS, NY

Niagara Falls Core Neighborhood Symposium

MY IDEA FOR CHANGE

We are organizing residents, associations and stakeholders in the Core Neighborhood Planning District to bring awareness of the impact this blighted area has on neighborhoods throughout the city.

We are planning a neighborhood symposium involving community and stakeholders to lay the groundwork for a 5-year review of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. Our goal is to encourage the creation of neighborhood improvement districts which will act as a catalyst for addressing the issue of blight. We hope to create a positive, ongoing interaction and collaboration between government and citizens. This symposium will take place at the Niagara Arts and Cultural Center (NACC), 1201 Pine Ave., Niagara Falls, NY on Thursday, May 14th, 6:00 PM.

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN

The Core Neighborhood should be one of the most distinctive neighborhoods in Niagara Falls. As one of the City’s oldest neighborhoods it has a remarkable palette of history, opportunities, potential and challenges. Current conditions in the Core Neighborhoods are at a critical level as the issue of unaddressed blight and quality of life issues, has had a negative impact on neighborhoods throughout the city.

About the Champions...

The Memorial Park Block Club brings together new and long term homeowners in the neighborhood to create community awareness on the impact of blight and quality of life issues in the Core Neighborhood and the city of Niagara Falls. Neighborhood residents were instrumental in the emergence of Block Clubs in the late 1980’s and today, we continue to be the driving force behind the struggle to maintain the integrity of what is left in the Core Neighborhoods. We believe that the Memorial Park Neighborhood represents what is best about the City of Niagara Falls. As one of Niagara Falls oldest neighborhoods, the Memorial Park Neighborhood has the potential to be a beautiful, historic urban backdrop to tourism and economic development for both visitors, and residents alike.

Memorial Park Block Club
memorialparkblockclub@yahoo.com
BUFFALO, NY

Market on Michigan (MOM): Shipping Container Mall & Small Business Incubator - “We Do Business in a Box!”

OUR IDEA FOR CHANGE

The mission of the container mall (Market on Michigan) is to create and stimulate economic opportunity, by minimizing barriers to entry for new entrepreneurs. The market will ultimately provide those living, visiting and working on the eastside of Buffalo, a destination that promotes economic development, community building, and neighborhood beautification.

The Market on Michigan is a sustainable mixed use business incubator that takes storage containers and retrofits them to meet the qualifications of a commercial kitchen, vendor spaces, and rental space. The market will use solar energy to offset the expense of electricity and the vendors will be encouraged to use the latest technology to reduce the cost of heating, cooling and security. Vendors will be encouraged to use local farmers and businesses for all their needs. The market will also grow produce for sale to the public and market vendors. There is no other Buffalo project that is using storage containers as a twenty four hour multi-functional space that serves as a community meeting place, a small mall, and provides entertainment and educational programming.

The Market’s three objectives are:

- Provides low cost rental space and business support to vendors.
- Provides food and retail to an underserved area in the city, which is trying to attract businesses that serve residents, tourist and students with healthy low cost food options and needed services.
- Provides nutritional education, wellness programming and positive social interaction to a diverse population of varying economic background

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN

The Market on Main will be located on a vacant site in the Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor in Buffalo, NY. Our hope is that the market will become a destination for residents and visitors who want to experience unique and affordable food and retail vendors as well as attend cultural events designed to celebrate the diversity of the Corridor and Buffalo at large.

Planning a Change

ACTIONS TO MOVE IT FORWARD

- Launch a community engagement campaign
- Write a business plan
- Seek funding and support

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

- Funding
- Site in the Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor
- Architectural and urban design support
- Business plan development

FUNDING RANGE

$225,00–$250,00 to support design services and develop container mall

STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

One Region Forward

HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

Market on Michigan (MOM):

Shipping Container Mall & Small Business Incubator - “We Do Business in a Box!”

About the Champions...

Della Miller’s extensive career began in high school as a foodservice worker. She later went on to found two community food and garden co-ops thru Vista/Peace Corps, developed and directed a 1 year pilot nutrition education campaign on the west side of Buffalo and received funding for five more years extending the program to New York State region I & II. She also managed and monitored 20+ licensed food service facilities in Erie County.

Growing up in Harlem during the 1950’s and 60’s, Gail was exposed to many legendary civil rights leaders who taught her about the use of non-violence to inspire social change. Since then, Gail has organized countless cultural and educational activities that have caused social change both in New York City and Buffalo. Her accomplishments include co-founding the University at Buffalo’s Black Student Union, serving on the first Juneteenth Committee, and co-editing Buffalo’s first Black owned magazine, Buffalo After Dark. Gail was also co-owner of Watu Sokoni (also known as “The People’s Market”), and co-founder of the Center for Positive thought (also known as the “Black Dance Workshop”).

Della Miller & Gail Wells

Foodlink716@gmail.com | wellsgv7@gmail.com
BUFFALO, NY
East Parade Circle
Beautification Project

MY IDEA FOR CHANGE

I am organizing community residents from the East Side of Buffalo to
achieve the creation of a respite area by designing, planning, and engaging
Buffalo community members, local officials, and businesses to build a first
of its kind green/blue infrastructure respite area in East Parade Circle to
become the model for the State of NY. Redesign of Parade Circle should be
context sensitive in order to maintain social, historic and cultural relevancy
to the surrounding neighborhood and park users. The East Parade Circle Beautification Pilot Project supports future
community investment through environmentally sustainable community-
Based beautification efforts. This project features a rain garden to reduce
run-off from burdening our over-taxed sewers and the Green Bus Hub to
serve as green public and non-motorized transportation hub.

I believe this project would improve the built environment while creating a
socially and culturally relevant place that elevates the perception of Buffalo’s
East Side. Through investment in the built environment and in the people
who live, work and play in there, we can attract private investments to turn
the tide of economic decline in the neighborhood.

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN

The site of this project is E. Parade Circle on Buffalo’s East Side adjacent to
MLK Jr. Park. This project is needed because a small investment in sustainable
infrastructure - bus stop and rain garden - has the potential to show a large
investment in the neighborhood and the people who live there. The East Side
has seen significant decline in its built environment and a project like this
could serve as signal that things are changing for the better.

Planning a Change

ACTIONS TO MOVE IT FORWARD

Host a design charrette with residents and partners
Build partnerships with site stewards
Work with a designer
Search for funding opportunities

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

Funding, Partnerships, Landscape Design Assistance

FUNDING RANGE

$5,000 - $10,000 to fund a designer
or a design studio at UB School of Architecture and Planning

STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

IDEA PLAN ACTION

About the Champion...

Paul Pérez
perepc26@gmail.com

Paul empowers, engages, and educates communities to become vibrant, self-
Sustaining places that support well-being and opportunity for all. He fuels the
passion for this work with his experience of being born and raised in the South
Bronx, NY, where he witnessed first hand, the social inequities, violence, and
poverty that plagued his beloved community. Paul’s work is strengthened by the
blessings from his friends, family, and community members who believe in him
and enable him to do this work. This support network has helped him define what
he believes is his purpose - to become a changemaker. Paul hopes to help create
positive change in all the communities in which he is blessed to work and hopes
the East Parade Circle Project will get the ball rolling here in Buffalo.
Rediscover History Main Street

WILLIAMSVILLE, NY

MY IDEA FOR CHANGE

The mission of this project is to make Main Street in the historic Village of Williamsville more pedestrian-friendly and appealing by making the history of the Village more apparent on this street.

Main Street in the Village of Williamsville could be made more walkable and attractive for pedestrians. Furthermore, one way to make Main Street more appealing is to highlight the historical significance of certain sites on the street. This could potentially increase the tourism appeal of the Village of Williamsville, stimulate economic development, and promote more environmentally friendly and healthy modes of transportation. The Village of Williamsville is already conducting efforts to identify Village landmarks, as well as make Main Street more appealing through its “Picture Main Street” initiative. An initiative to combine and bolster these efforts is needed, though.

This project will entail placing signs in front of historical landmarks on Main Street in the historic Village of Williamsville, in order to increase the walkability of this street, as well as communicate the history of the Village more effectively. The Village of Williamsville has been identifying Village landmarks, as well as improving its Main Street through the “Picture Main Street” initiative. This project will involve strengthening and combining both of these efforts by advocating for and installing historical signs on Main Street as a strategy to both recognize the Village’s history as well as make Main Street more enticing for pedestrians.

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN

This project is based on the philosophy that a pedestrian-friendly Main Street that highlights the historical significance of an area will increase the quality of life, sustainability, and tourism revenue of that area. Ultimately, this project aims to realize the vision of a walkable, attractive Main Street in Williamsville that both residents and tourists want to walk on and to learn about the history of the Village.

Planning a Change

ACTIONS TO MOVE IT FORWARD

Develop walking tour
Develop grant proposal
Set-up crowd funding event

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

Funding, Partnerships, Volunteers, Grant Writing Assistance, Graphic Design and Sign Expertise

FUNDING RANGE

$10,000 - $50,000 for the creation of permanent historic markers and tour materials

STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

IDEA PLAN ACTION

About the Champion...

Mary Ellen Haefner has been a member of the Education Committee of Preservation Buffalo Niagara since 2011. Recently she contributed to developing the organization’s 2014 tour schedule as well as its professional development program. Through the Champions for Change program, Mary Ellen is leveraging her knowledge of the history of Williamsville in order to establish markers in front of historical landmarks on the Village’s Main Street. The goal of the project is to create a more appealing and pedestrian-friendly Main Street in Williamsville through making the Village’s history more apparent. She is collaborating with members of Williamsville’s Picture Main Street initiative, the Village’s Community Development office, the Village’s Historic Preservation Commission, and other key stakeholders to implement this project.

Mary Ellen Haefner
Preservation Buffalo Niagara
meme35315@gmail.com
My project aims to serve under-educated residents within the community who are reentering the workforce from prison to provide technical skills by turning my organization, It Takes a Village, into a 501C3 organization and move into a permanent building to increase our productivity.

It Takes a Village (ITAV) seeks to take people on a path from Apathy to Activity so that they can change their lives. This vision is founded in the philosophy that it is necessary to look at the whole person - mind, body and spirit - and how their past may have shaped their present. ITAV helps participants recover or cope with past hurt, distorted core values, poverty, and the resulting toll on their mental health. The goal is to help them develop the motivation, pride and relationships to learn how to become self-sufficient, healthy, and productive citizens. Participants in ITAV’s program are active participants who are engaged in creating their own road to a brighter future. We believe everyone deserves a chance to overcome their past and become the person they were meant to become.

The goal of this project is to prepare to create an application for ITAV so that it can transition to an official 501c3 nonprofit organization. Through the process of creating the framework for organizational growth we hope to identify short-term goals and strategies to reach those goals. The outcome of this project would be materials to help prepare for future funding applications as well as the completion of a 501c3 application as a goal.

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN
The training center is now in Amherst. The service area is expected to cover the whole county with collaboration and partnerships with other organization satellite organizations.

Planning a Change

**ACTIONS TO MOVE IT FORWARD**
- Complete the application for 501c3 Status
- Launch 2015 programs
- Recruit participants

**RESOURCES NEEDED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN**
- Funding, Facilities, and Partnerships

**FUNDING RANGE**
- $10,000 - $15,000 for legal assistance

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**About the Champion...**

Beverly Newkirk is founder and Executive Director of “It Takes a Village,” a community action organization aimed towards promoting the mental, physical, and spiritual well-being of inner city residents of all ages, and thus empowering them to become productive citizens. In addition, Beverly is involved with community organizations such as the Coalition for Economic Justice and the Partnership for the Public Good. Beverly joined the Champions for Change program to receive guidance on how to apply for “It Takes a Village” to become a 501C3 non-profit, and thus receive funding. Additional funds will allow her organization to expand its already impressive reach and continue to improve the lives of hundreds of Buffalo residents.
**Citizen Planning School**

The Citizen Planning School is a partnership between One Region Forward and UB’s School of Architecture & Planning.

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How do we create a more sustainable Buffalo Niagara through citizen-driven change?

**Registration Opens**

January 2015

- Residents of Erie and Niagara County
- Register as Citizen Planners
- Citizen Planners get practical tools and knowledge in planning for sustainable communities.

**March - April 2015**

- **Learning Sessions**
  - Citizens learn first hand from those working in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors.
  - Panel discussions focus on two-way learning.
  - Citizen Planners and Champions network with others who are active in their communities.
  - Toolkits offer additional resources, funding opportunities, and related planning efforts.

**May 2015**

- **Workshops & Technical Assistance**
  - Champions receive additional training from UB’s School of Architecture and Planning to turn ideas for their communities into plans of action.

**Spring 2015**

- **Class of 2016**
  - Join our interest list!

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A more sustainable region can begin with the smallest changes in our neighborhoods and communities...

One Region Forward is a regional sustainability initiative working in Erie and Niagara Counties to find more sustainable ways to build communities, grow our economy, travel, produce food, and meet the challenges of climate change.

Collaboration will be key to creating a more sustainable Buffalo Niagara, and One Region Forward is working to ensure that change happens from the ground up.

The Citizen Planning School is a part of the initiative’s implementation and will help arm citizens with the information, resources, and tools necessary to become agents for change in their communities.

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2 COUNTIES
64 MUNICIPALITIES

Niagara County
Erie County

ONE REGION