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**VIBRANT PITTSBURGH AND URBAN AFFAIRS FOUNDATION
AWARD \$50,000 IN GRANTS**

Sixteen grant projects aim to strengthen Pittsburgh through collaboration and diversity

PITTSBURGH – March 20, 2015 – Vibrant Pittsburgh and the Urban Affairs Foundation of the Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh announced the recipients of this year's Civic Inclusion & Engagement Fund grants. The fund is a joint venture of the two groups, which seek to strengthen the Pittsburgh region by supporting and engaging its diverse communities.

For the second consecutive year, each organization committed \$25,000 to create the \$50,000 Civic Inclusion & Engagement Fund. Eligible applicants were affinity groups, nonprofit organizations and employer resource groups. Eligible projects had to create opportunities for civic engagement — which included improving knowledge, skills and motivation — and be collaborative.

Eight community leaders, nominated by Vibrant Pittsburgh and the Federation, allocated the \$50,000 to 16 projects. Each project involves organizations that represent or benefit a diverse, underserved or minority population.

Among the region's populations reflected or served by the 16 projects are African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, LGBTQ communities, people with disabilities, refugees, the people of North Braddock and residents of the upper Ohio Valley.

"The diversity represented by project partners is as broad and interesting as the diversity of populations within the Pittsburgh region," said Melanie Harrington, CEO of Vibrant Pittsburgh. "The list of organizations involved in Civic Inclusion & Engagement Fund projects was incredibly eclectic. The potential for synergy that results from bringing these groups together is fantastic and ultimately critical to the long-term competitiveness of our region."

Individual grant awards ranged from \$900 to \$5,900.

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“We call the awards mini-grants,” said Skip Grinberg, chair of the Community Relations Council. “They aren’t large, but they can be the spark that allows people to collaborate and share strengths. Every community has strengths. By using them, the community benefits itself and the region.”

In 2015, Civic Inclusion & Engagement Fund mini-grants will fund these projects:

- *Listening for a Change*, whose goal is to solicit the input of students at Pittsburgh Milliones 6–12, a university preparatory school in the Hill District, about preparing homogenous communities for diverse global interaction. A partnership of Amizade Global Service-Learning, Global Solutions Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Milliones 6–12, Hill District Education Council.
- *Greater Pittsburgh Coalition Against Violence — Youth Summits*, which will give youth in Pittsburgh Public Schools the chance to create solutions to neighborhood violence and communicate their solutions to peers. A partnership of Black Political Empowerment Project, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Voices Against Violence, Ceasefire PA, Black Women for Positive Change, Teen Bloc Youth (A+ Schools), Black Male Leadership Institute, We Promise, As One Youth (Harvard Fellows Project).
- *Navigating Pittsburgh/Navegando Pittsburgh Summit*, a bilingual event that will offer newcomers and others information about participating in, contributing to and succeeding in the Pittsburgh region. A partnership of Casa San José, Latin American Cultural Union, YWCA, Café Con Leche, Carlow University, PNC Bank, La Rumba Production, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Global Pittsburgh, Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council, Allegheny County DHS Immigrants and Internationals Initiative.
- *Pittsburgh Chinese Cultural Festival*, an event to build awareness and appreciation of Pittsburgh’s Chinese community. A partnership of the Chinese Association for Science and Technology, Pittsburgh Chapter; Pittsburgh Chinese Restaurant Association; Pittsburgh Chinese School; Pittsburgh Academy of Chinese Culture and Language; Chinese Students & Scholars Association, University of Pittsburgh; Chinese Students & Scholars Association, Carnegie Mellon University; Yanlai Dance Academy; Win-Win Kung Fu Culture Center; University Center for International Studies, Confucius Center, University of Pittsburgh; Greater Pittsburgh Sichuan-Chongqing Association.
- *UAC 2015 Organizational Events*, which will allow new-immigrant communities, especially immigrants from Africa, to share culture and learn about health literacy, leadership, entrepreneurship, home ownership and other topics as they interact with the larger Pittsburgh population. A partnership of Christian Evangelic Economic Development and Union of African Communities.

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- *A (Micro) History of World Economics, Danced*, which will result in the performance — by selected professionals and local amateurs, including a choir and people with disabilities — of a danced history of economics localized for Pittsburgh. A partnership of City of Asylum Pittsburgh, Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, Creative Citizen Studios, City Theatre, Three Rivers Center for Independent Living, Pittsburgh Area Accessibility Meetup Group, Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Blind & Vision Rehabilitation Services, Pressley Ridge School for the Deaf, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Judith Barricella (Allegheny County ADA Coordinator).
- *Living Out Loud 2*, a project that creates opportunities for education and civic engagement regarding bullying against LGBT youth. A partnership of Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network, Pittsburgh Chapter; Garden of Peace Project; Pittsburgh Vogue Knights.
- *ESL Civic Engagement Program*, which will expand citizenship education and train civics tutors. A partnership of the Literacy Council of Southwestern Pennsylvania and Intermediate Unit 1.
- *English Language Accelerator*, a program that will help 9th- and 10th-graders who are recent immigrants master English. A partnership of Manchester Craftsmen's Guild Youth & Arts, Jewish Family & Children's Service of Pittsburgh, Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh.
- *Recycle Park Learn & Build Sessions*, which will use the rebuilding of a local park as a means of empowering the North Braddock community. A partnership of North Braddock Cares, Inc.; Braddock Carnegie Library; Transformazium; Carnegie Museum of Art.
- *World Refugee Day Celebration*, an opportunity for Pittsburgh to celebrate the benefits that refugees bring to a population while attracting a broad spectrum of attendees. A partnership of Northern Area Multi-Service Center; Jewish Family & Children's Service of Pittsburgh; Acculturation for Justice, Access, and Peace Outreach.
- *Somali Bantu Young Leaders Circle*, which will use soccer as a means to increase community engagement, improve health and social well-being and engage youth. A partnership of the Somali Bantu Community Association/Pittsburgh, Jewish Family & Children's Service of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Soccer In The Community, Keep It Real/University of Pittsburgh.
- *Youth Mentoring Program*, which will offer workshops on career planning and financial literacy to refugee youth. A partnership of South Hills Interfaith Ministries, Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania, Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania.
- *Community Building Through the Arts*, a project to provide residents and artists of West Oakland, Oak Hill and others a venue for creative expression and dialogue on social justice. A partnership of The Corner, a program of Friendship Community Church; Housing Opportunities Unlimited; and Ujamaa Collective.

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- *Harvest & Create*, a program that teaches the basic skills of ceramics, gardening and cooking to develop connectedness and community stewardship. A partnership of Union Project, Open Door Church/Garfield Farms, Obama Academy's Food Revolution Club, Urban League Charter School, Fulton Academy, Sunnyside Academy and several restaurants — Legume, NaCl: Salt of the Earth, Bar Marco.
- *2015 Upper Ohio Valley Multicultural Festival*, which will highlight the cultural diversity of Wheeling, W.Va. A partnership of YWCA Wheeling, Ohio Valley Black Heritage Festival Committee, Jackson Hewitt Tax Service.

Both Vibrant Pittsburgh and the Urban Affairs Foundation of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh support a growing and vibrant Pittsburgh through direct programming and by funding agencies and groups that promote the well-being of individuals, neighborhoods and regional community.

About Vibrant Pittsburgh

Vibrant Pittsburgh is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the growth and economic competitiveness of the Pittsburgh region by engaging the region's employers, attracting, retaining and elevating a diverse talent pool, and positioning the region nationally and internationally as an inclusive and welcoming place for people of all backgrounds. Learn more at **www.vibrantpittsburgh.org**.

About Urban Affairs Foundation and Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh

The Urban Affairs Foundation promotes the involvement of Jewish organizations and individuals in urban concerns. The Community Relations Council (CRC) engages in public policy activities to promote social and economic justice for all, build amicable relationships among diverse community groups and enlist support on behalf of Israel. CRC is part of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, a member agency of The Jewish Federations of North America. The Federation raises and allocates funds to build community locally, in Israel and around the world. With the vision of a thriving, vibrant and engaged Jewish community, the Federation aims to carry out its work in the context of cooperation and inclusiveness. Learn more at **www.jfedpgh.org**.

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