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Community Action for a Renewed Environment

# CARE Program



Quarterly Highlights — February 2007



**Cerro Gordo CARE Grantee Naomi Bienfang with EPA Region 7's Kathleen Fenton**

## New CARE Projects Kick-Off

Proud moments deserve attention! Many of the 17 new CARE grantees held kick-off press events across the country. Each event captured the importance of EPA's CARE funding to the community in a unique way, and most featured local officials and partners.

Through events and press releases, the CARE message reached wide audiences. Penn State's project was featured on radio. The CARE event in Camden, NJ, was covered by the most-watched television station serving the area. Local TV stations covered events in Cerro Gordo, IA, Marquette, MI, and Rock Hill, SC, as well. Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-Oakland) issued a press release in honor of the West Oakland grant. Other CARE communities received significant print coverage.

## Rochester's Neighborhood Toxics Educator Making a Difference

The Neighborhood Toxics Educator Program in Rochester, New York, operated by Action for a Better Community, Inc., through Rochester CARE's Center for Environmental Information, is reaching a wide spectrum of community residents. While raising awareness about risks from toxics in and around the home is important, in Rochester there have been unexpected positive results.

After hearing a presentation on asthma triggers and lead poisoning, residents and other community outreach workers asked Ted Murray, the Toxics Educator, to visit individual homes for more targeted referral. Utilizing a Visual Survey Report model from the Community Environmental Health Resource Center, Mr. Murray examines homes, points out areas of concern, and educates residents about basic remediation. When more complex evaluation of remediation is required, Mr. Murray connects residents with community resources.

During one such visit, in the home of a severe asthmatic who had sought emergency medical treatment repeatedly, the Toxics Educator identified a significant problem with basement moisture and mold. The Monroe County Health Department Indoor Air Quality inspector was called and made an immediate visit to the home. Working in cooperation with the local housing office and the Department of Social Services, Mr. Murray was able to help relocate the family to a safer residence.

This example of education, community agency cooperation, and advocacy captures the essence of CARE.

### 1st Year Results

By the end of their 1st year, the twelve 2005 CARE grantees had:

- Secured over **\$930,000** in financial and in-kind support (in addition to the \$600,000 in Brown-fields support).
- Over **300** partner organizations.

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program helps communities address risks from various sources of toxic pollutants in their local environment.*

#### CARE

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LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

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## CARE Communities in Action:

### 29 CARE Communities



There are four steps in the CARE process: joining together, identifying problems & solutions, implementing solutions & reducing risks, and becoming self-sustaining.

### JOINING TOGETHER Partnerships Formed Around Common Concerns

The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments continues to develop its extensive contacts from three counties (Cibola, McKinley and San Juan) into fully engaged partners. They found that “Educational Forums” are the best method of gathering rural citizens and providing baseline information about uranium mining, energy, and water use.

In Philadelphia, the Clean Air Council continues to expand its partnership to include more community groups and residential housing groups in its effort to address environmental risks from the local port. Although their highest priorities are affordable housing and dealing with drug use, the residential groups united around environmental causes such as asthma, traffic and diesel emissions from port activities.

and residential housing groups in its effort to address environmental risks from the local port. Although their highest priorities are affordable housing and dealing with drug use, the residential groups united around environmental causes such as asthma, traffic and diesel emissions from port activities.

### IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

#### Toxic Prioritization Achieved

In Level I CARE communities’ fourth quarter reports, several grantees detailed successes with consensus-building and prioritization of toxic concerns.

Pacoima Beautiful (CA) succeeded in ranking environmental risks from all sources and media to create a consensus-based list of the top four risks, namely: diesel exhaust from trucks and non-road equipment, general aviation emissions, auto body dismantlers’ emissions, and highway traffic emissions. Many partners helped compile the data and synthesize information on risks. Students from California State Northridge campus and from the local high school helped map sites. The data were supplemented with input from the City Environmental Affairs Dept, Regional Water Quality Board, California Air Resources Board and EPA. The health collaborative and Neighborhood Legal Services all worked together with residents on the ranking. The tools and methods used in developing a comprehensive understanding of environmental risks will be shared with all CARE communities.

While Oneida County (NY) CARE continues to recruit more businesses, such as Wal-Mart Corporation and Homogenous Metals, Inc., into its partnership, the community is also compiling its environmental health concerns and developing criteria for issue ranking. The CARE Team anticipates the results of the ranking in its next report.

International District Housing Alliance (Seattle) learned how to apply existing best practices from the CARE 2nd Annual Training Workshop in November, and consequently reformulated its approach. IDHA plans to create an advisory council for the second year of the Level 1 CARE grant. This advisory council will guide the project and ensure that community is engaged as the project develops goals and strategies. In addition, 26 Youth and 12 elder participants of the IDHA’s Wilderness Inner-City Leadership Development (WILD) Program elected to begin an indoor air quality campaign to provide education to community residents.



*WILD Youth Performing Outreach at International District (Seattle) Summer Fair*

**Involving College Students**

After holding several focus group sessions and a town hall meeting last quarter, **DeKalb County (GA) CARE** analyzed the information obtained from the focus groups and determined next steps. Also, the collaborative added a key partner, Emory School of Public Health, and engaged students in the CARE program.



Above & Below: Participants of Clarkston (DeKalb County, GA) Focus Groups

**Implementing Solutions & Reducing Risks**

**Muskegon County (MI) Environmental Coordinating Council**, working with its partner, Lead Safe Coalition, created a cohesive lead hazards message that was distributed to 150 families in a door-to-door campaign. Currently, the partnership is launching a second campaign targeting another 150 homes in an at-risk neighborhood.

**Clean Air Partnership Project (St. Louis, MO)** targeted 11 schools for its anti-idling initiative and secured the partnership of both the St. Louis Public Schools and Laidlaw Bus Company to establish no-idling zones near the schools.

This quarter, the indoor air subgroup of **Groundwork Denver HAND** conducted 3 school inventories under EPA's Tools for Schools program. The



A house against the highway in Northeast Denver

group also educated over 800 families about air quality through their unique tool, the "Breath Better Bus," and through community events. Also, the land use subgroup planned neighborhood visioning sessions and discussed potential brownfields sites for a Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA). TBA support is available to CARE communities through EPA's Brownfields Program.

promote cycling. A "Rochester Speaks" segment on CBS Radio will feature the CARE project. The small business air pollution prevention (P2) committee identified 10 printers to partner in P2 activities with the screen-printing trade association.

**Becoming Self-Sustaining**

**Sullivan County (NH) CARE** is developing a recycling-based waste management plan for the county. The project completed a preliminary economic evaluation of pollution reduction and waste management methods, and it is building support with county and town officials to present a plan that includes cost-savings.

**Green New Haven (CT) Initiative** used an energy efficiency theme to attract businesses to CARE. Multi-lingual Yale students signed up 15 businesses for energy efficiency programs through United Illuminating (the local utility). These businesses have expressed interest in other CARE activities. Also, a member of the Mayor's Office wrote a paper outlining a vision for a sustainable CARE organization to spark interest and discussion on long-term project sustainability. This will be shared with other CARE communities.

**"A healthy community would be a place that is safe and clean...There would be parks, gardens, a library, and public space for people to enjoy. Along the streets will be trees and flowers and water fountains to make the community look beautiful..."**  
*Neighborhood elder, International District, Seattle, WA*

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## Featured Resource

### Community, Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding A Sense of Place

Meeting agendas have you stumped? Searching for a way to build investment in your CARE project goals? Check out *Community, Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding A Sense of Place*, located online at <http://www.epa.gov/ecocommunity/pdf/ccecomplete.pdf>. The guide addresses the social and cultural aspects of community-based environmental protection. Community-based efforts, such as those supported by CARE, recognize that values held both individually and as a group contribute to the quality of community life. CARE Project leaders can use the guide to get a better understanding of how such values can translate into environmental solutions and action, step three of the CARE process. Filled with practical worksheets and design tips for interactive meetings, the guide should be part of your toolkit as a CARE partner. For copies of the Guide, call the National Center for Environmental Publications and Information at (513) 489-8190, (800) 490-9198, or by mail to NCEPI, US EPA Publication Clearinghouse, PO Box 42419, Cincinnati, OH45242, or by email to [ncepiwo@one.net](mailto:ncepiwo@one.net).



## CARE Program Incorporates Feedback

Since the Second Annual CARE Training Workshop in November, EPA received numerous comments on how to better meet the needs of CARE grantees, partners, and project leads. In response, EPA staff is implementing the following changes:

- Creating a listserv for program members this spring;
- Developing training Web-casts on topics commonly identified by program members; and
- Designing enhanced training for new CARE Project Officers.

### Upcoming Events:

- March 8 – Training Web-cast on “Sustaining CARE Partnerships” (see: [www.epa.gov/care](http://www.epa.gov/care))
- April 2-8 – American Public Health Association (APHA) National Public Health Week (NPHW), “Take the First Step! Preparedness and Public Health Threats: Addressing the Unique Needs of the Nation’s Vulnerable Populations.” Visit [www.nphw.org/2007/partners.cfm?fuseaction=apply](http://www.nphw.org/2007/partners.cfm?fuseaction=apply) today to become a NPHW partner.
- April 9 – CARE 2007 Cooperative Agreements Request for Proposals (RFP) Due (see: [www.epa.gov/care](http://www.epa.gov/care))
- April 12 – Training Web-cast on “Defining a ‘Community-Driven’ Process” (see: [www.epa.gov/care/agreements.htm#apply](http://www.epa.gov/care/agreements.htm#apply))
- May 31-June 1– EPA National Asthma Forum, Washington, DC (see: [www.epaasthmaforum.com](http://www.epaasthmaforum.com))
- June 19-22 – EPA Community Involvement Conference (Jacksonville, FL)



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