Friends of IPCE,

With a new semester upon us and spring just around the corner, we have quite a range of exciting activities and events headed down the pipeline. But first, I'd like to acknowledge some of the wonderful initiatives that have already passed as we closed out the fall semester and headed into the new year.

In November we announced the winner of the Urban Forum Civic Engagement Action Project—a funding opportunity through The Chicago Community Trust and IPCE that emerged from the 2015 Urban Forum at UIC. The Center for Public Safety and Justice at UIC is the recipient of the award for its project entitled, "The Building Blocks Experiment: Addressing Health, Energy, and Environmental Inequalities through a Social Justice Lens."

We also kicked off our annual Lunch Talk series featuring IPCE-funded research related to civic engagement. Lauren Nolan with the Voorhees Center presented "The Gentrification and Neighborhood Change Project"; Susan Magasi in Occupational Therapy discussed "Developing Knowledge Translation Collaboratives to Promote Healthcare Justice for People with Disabilities"; and Nathan Phillips from Curriculum and Instruction spoke on "Supporting Evidence-Based Argumentation from Spatial Data in Schools." Coming up this spring, we'll also hear from Brian Grossman in Disability and Human Development regarding "Civic Engagement and Social Security for Older Gays and Lesbians after Windsor" and Sultan Tepe in Political Science on an "Assessment of the Declining Civic Capacity of Muslim Immigrant Women and the Impact of a Religiously Responsive Civic Training Program."

Over one hundred high school students whose schools participate in the CPS Global Citizenship Initiative (GCI) visited UIC at the end of February for Civic Engagement Day. IPCE partnered with the African American Cultural Center, the Latino Cultural Center, and the Participatory Budgeting Project to provide students with engaging and interactive workshops relevant to policy and social movements.

The Greater Chicago Dialogue and Deliberation Community of Practice, which is supported by IPCE staff, launched a new meet-up in Chicago called Demo Night that is aimed at offering demonstrations of innovative programs on democracy and public participation. Blocks Together and Mikva Challenge participated in the first two Demo Nights and Kari Thierer of the School Reform Initiative will present in March. Demo Nights take place every third Thursday of the month from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the McCormick Foundation.

The Urban Public Policy Fellowship (UPPF) students are gearing up for their research poster presentations on April 6. Fellows have been hard at work conducting their research on public policy topics, writing abstracts, and compiling a research poster of their findings in preparation for the IALHEA conference, all the while still working at their internship sites and attending program seminars. We applaud their dedication and hard work.

On the research side of things, we're thrilled to be working with the Trust for the third year on its On the Table initiative. Once again we will produce an impact report based on findings from a post-event survey. On the Table is scheduled for May 10, and our report is expected to be released later in the summer. We're also working in partnership with the Urban Transportation Center to produce a report for the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) identifying specific public engagement practices that have the best potential to enable IDOT to effectively engage underserved populations. Stay tuned.

Please put our spring events on your calendar, and we hope to see you soon!

Sincerely,

Joseph K. Hoereth, PhD

CPSJ Wins Urban Forum Civic Engagement Action Project Award

The UIC Urban Forum is pleased to announce the 2015 Urban Forum Civic Engagement Action Project Award has been granted to the Center for Public Safety and Justice at the University of Illinois at Chicago for "The Building Blocks Experiment: Addressing Health, Energy and Environmental Inequalities through a Social Justice Lens."

In partnership with the UIC Urban Forum, the Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement (IPCE) and The Chicago Community Trust (CCT) opened up a call for proposals to partner with a project that engages residents to develop healthy, sustainable, and vibrant urban environments. The Center for Public Safety and Justice has been selected to receive funding for its work that engages residents through a substantive or collective decision-making role in helping to reestablish the urban social contract. The project will develop a better understanding by stakeholders of "how the environment and lack of resources can not only cause isolation and poor health, but also influence decision making relating to public safety." The project will also produce meaningful dialogue and the building of authentic relationships between elected officials, criminal justice stakeholders, and those who have been affected in health, energy, and environmental inequities.

The Center for Public Safety and Justice will present on the project at the 2016 UIC Urban Forum. For more information, visit www.uicurbanforum.org.
CPS Students Head to UIC to Learn Civic Engagement Strategies

As part of its continued commitment to strengthening the civic engagement capacity of local youth, IPCE once again offered an interactive workshop this winter for 120 students from four area high schools. Entitled “Understanding Policy and Social Movements,” the February 2 event offered an opportunity for students from Kelvyn Park High School, Alcott College Prep, Lake View High School and Uplift Community High School to engage in a series of discussions and activities on the UIC campus.

Held as part of IPCE’s ongoing Civic Engagement Days series, this year’s event was once again geared toward students from CPS’ Global Citizenship Initiative and aimed to further empower and encourage them to become active members of their communities.

In Partnership with BallotReady — a national nonprofit focused on nonpartisan voter education — IPCE provided participants with detailed rundowns of each candidate’s professional experience and policy positions on a wide range of issues.

On the day of the event, several dozen participants converged on Student Center East to take place in a pair of facilitated conversations. Each dialogue began with a presentation from BallotReady on the role of the office in question and a brief synopsis of each candidate’s general platform. From there, students engaged in structured conversations to determine which issues mattered most to them in deciding how to vote and the relative merits of each candidate’s associated proposals.

Participants were encouraged to question their initial assumptions and thoughtfully weigh the potential tradeoffs of ideas with which they agreed.

Campus Dialogues aim to create space for thoughtful deliberation on important policy issues facing members of the UIC community. Rooted in the idea that open-minded deliberation and sound factual information is essential to the functioning of American democracy, IPCE uses the events as a means by which to spur students to consider the world around them and examine their role in public life.

UIC Students Deliberate on Upcoming Races

In years that feature heated presidential campaigns, down ballot races tend to garner far less attention from news sources and voters alike. In an effort to prevent these important contests from going unnoticed, IPCE hosted another installment of its ongoing Campus Dialogue series this March to encourage members of the UIC community to come together and discuss the campaign platforms of candidates for Illinois’ U.S. Senate seat and Cook County State’s Attorney.

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Are you on IPCE’s Listserv? If not, join today and receive updates on IPCE, civic engagement activities, and more. Subscribe now by sending a message to neramos@uic.edu.
UPPF Students Prep for Research Poster Exhibition

On Wednesday, April 6, the Urban Public Policy Fellowship (UPPF) program will showcase fellows’ research posters at the annual Diversity and Dialogue Research Forum hosted by the Illinois American and Latino Higher Education Alliance (IALHEA). Fellows’ projects stem from hands-on internship experiences on policy-related topics such as education, health, criminal justice, and immigration.

According to Catalina Nava, UPPF Program Coordinator, “It has been a rewarding experience to see students grow via their experience in the program.”

UPPF fellows have been hard at work this semester diving into their research. After conducting the research last fall, they have since written abstracts and are in the process of compiling a poster of their research findings. Several seminars have assisted fellows with their projects, including a seminar at UIC’s Writing Center where fellows had an opportunity to share their abstracts and practice peer editing as well as informational sessions on how to construct a research poster.

In addition to working on their research, fellows have been attending weekly seminars and continuing putting in hours at their internship sites. Seminars this semester have included an arts-based dialogue at the Latino Cultural Center; a demonstration on research tools at UIC's Daley Library; a talk on leadership theory from Spencer Long, Associate Director of Student Leadership Development and Volunteer Services (SLDVS); and a presentation on NextGen Illinois from Brenna Conway, Illinois Director of the Roosevelt Institute. Internship sites have been helping to guide students on identifying what issues are present in their communities and how they can become change agents around these acknowledged issues.

“Thank you to our community partners who host our students each year and provide them with the opportunity to identify ways they can help their community and address the policy issues they are passionate about,” Nava says.

The UPPF program is a leadership development program designed to expose historically underrepresented minority undergraduate students at UIC to key public policy issues. For more information, contact Catalina Nava at 312-355-0154 or follow UPPF on Facebook: UIC UPPF.

Save the Date

The Urban Public Policy Fellowship (UPPF) Program presents:
2015-2016 UPPF Research Poster Presentation and Exhibition
Wednesday, April 6, 2016
2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The University of Illinois at Chicago – SCE Illinois Room
750 South Halsted Street
Chicago, IL 60607

Demo Night Explores the World of Public Participation

A group of Chicagoleans are exploring the world of public participation and democracy through a new meet-up launched this past January called Demo Night. The Greater Chicago Dialogue and Deliberation (GCDD) Community of Practice (CoP) has organized Demo Night in the spirit of learning and collaboration to advance public participation in the city.

Demo Night meet-ups begin with an interactive presentation on a public engagement process currently taking place in the Chicago area. The second part of the night is dedicated to “open-space” breakout groups, which are co-learning and co-working groups created and led by attendees. These meet-ups are geared toward anyone interested in cultivating meaningful public input that informs and influences the decisions of government and elected officials.

The inaugural meet-up in January featured Blocks Together, who discussed the pilot participatory budgeting process in West Humboldt Park in which residents decided how to allocate $2 million in tax increment financing (TIF) funds. After the presentation, the group of nearly twenty-five split into five working groups and explored the following topics: the world of public engagement; more accountability of elected officials and public employees via community decision-making; building boards and commissions that are more diverse; engaging young people in identifying and drawing attention to issues and places to gather; how do we talk about how we talk about race.

February’s Demo Night showcased the work of Mikva Challenge in bridging youth and public engagement. Mia Salamone, Democracy in Action Coordinator, and Lisa Kim, Youth Commission Director, shared their experiences of working to bring youth voice into policy and public spending decisions in Chicago. During open-space, the nearly fifteen participants split into three groups, each considering one of the following questions: How do we know if public engagement is successful and what evidence or data can we collect? How can we communicate to the public in ways they can understand and use? How might we increase inclusivity in public engagement?

The next Demo Night on March 17 will bring in Kari Thierer of the School Reform Initiative to discuss education and local school councils in a presentation entitled, “Moving Beyond Conflict toward Equity: Where Do We Begin?” It will take place from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the McCormick Foundation. Registration is required to attend. RSVP at demonight.org.
COMING UP

Watch your email and the IPCE website for notice of the following events/activities and more.

**Campus Dialogue** – Join other members of the UIC community to engage in facilitated discussions about current events that affect our city, state, region and nation.

UIC Student Center East
Fort Dearborn Room
12 p.m. to 1 p.m.
Tuesday, March 8, 2016

“Let’s Talk About the U.S. Senate and Cook County State’s Attorney Race” with BallotReady

**Civic Engagement Lunch Talk Series** – Learn more about how civic engagement can transform democracy. UIC faculty and staff present IPCE-sponsored research that either furthers understanding on civic engagement theory/practice or provides tools that enhance the efforts of civic engagement in community change initiatives. A light lunch will be served.

UIC East Campus Library
Conference Room 1-470
801 S. Morgan Street
12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

**Wednesday, March 2, 2016**

“Supporting Evidence-Based Argumentation from Spatial Data in Schools” with Nathan Phillips, Simeko Washington and Shawndra Allen, Department of Curriculum and Instruction/College of Education

**Wednesday, March 23, 2016**

“Know Your Rights, Illinois: Civic Engagement and Social Security for Older Gays and Lesbians after Windsor” with Brian Grossman, Department of Disability and Human Development/College of Applied Health Sciences

**Wednesday, April 20, 2016**

“Assessment of the Declining Civic Capacity of Muslim Immigrant Women and the Impact of a Religiously Responsive Civic Training Program” with Sultan Tepe, Department of Political Science/College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

**Civic Engagement Film Screening** – Join IPCE and the People’s Resource Center of Wheaton for a screening of the documentary film “The Line.” Hosted at the Robert R. McCormick Museum at Cantigny Park, the event will provide an engaging platform from which to examine and discuss issues of poverty in DuPage County and beyond. The screening is free and open to the public. Free parking is also available. Guests are asked to register in advance at Cantigny.org or at (630) 260-8162.

**Sunday, April 3, 2016**

Cantigny Park
1S151 Winfield Rd.
Wheaton, IL 60189
4 p.m. to 5 p.m.