

NLI NEIGHBORHOOD LEADER

Neighborhood Leadership Institute *Greater Cleveland's Connection to Neighborhood Leadership and Community Engagement*

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FREE AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS BEGIN IN OCTOBER



Tutors work with students at the Lincoln-West SNR site.
Photo by Chuck Dancy

Where can you take an aerobics class while your children go for a swim? Where can you take a GED class while your children receive one-on-one tutoring? Where can you hold your block club or youth group meeting?

It all happens at NLI's Schools As Neighborhood Resources (SNR) program—and it's all free of charge. SNR makes school buildings available for community use in the evening from October through April.

NLI operates SNR through a partnership with the Cleveland Municipal School District and the City of Cleveland. More than 3,000 people participated in SNR activities during the 2004-2005 program year.

Programming at the sites includes athletic activities such as basketball,

volleyball, swimming, weightlifting, karate, cheerleading, drill team, and aerobics; creative activities such as dance, instrumental music, ceramics, crafts, and cooking; and educational activities such as tutoring, computer instruction, and GED preparation.

Program offerings vary from site to site. Participants range in age from elementary school children to senior citizens.

During program hours, the buildings are also available for a variety of community uses, including youth group meetings, band rehearsals, coaches association meetings, clubs, singing tryouts, drama productions, candidates nights, alumni association meetings, and science fairs.

"The SNR sites are open for residents to use," says NLI's executive director, Don Slocum.

"If you're a community member and you want to use the building for an activity, we want to hear from you."

This year's program begins on October 17. Though the activities are free of charge, registration is required. For information about registration or about reserving the buildings for community use, please contact Jason Lewis at NLI.

Schools are open Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights. Program hours are 6:00 – 8:45 p.m. For more information, contact Jason Lewis at NLI: (216) 812-8700.

Charles Mooney K-8 School
3213 Montclair Ave.

Collinwood High School
15210 St. Clair Ave.

John Marshall High School
3952 W. 140th St.

Lincoln-West High School
3202 W. 30th St.

Nathan Hale K-8 School
3588 Martin Luther King Drive

Skyline Campus at Sunbeam
11731 Mt. Overlook Ave.
(5:00 - 7:45 p.m.)

Grassroots Leadership



Don Slocum
Executive Director

Leadership Link

Earlier this year I had an opportunity to meet with representatives of Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN), an after-school initiative in Portland, Oregon. Launched in 1999 through a partnership involving the city, county, state, and school districts, the initiative now has 46 "SUN" schools in six different school districts in Multnomah County.

I would love to see us explore a similar collaborative effort here in Cuyahoga County. Wouldn't a countywide collaboration around after-school opportunities be a great way to demonstrate the promise of regionalism?

You can read more about the SUN initiative at www.sunschools.org

SCHOOLS AS CENTERS OF COMMUNITY

Dear Neighbor,

Our Schools As Neighborhood Resources (SNR) program, which we're highlighting in this issue, was originally created to address the need for recreational opportunities in Cleveland neighborhoods that were not served by recreation centers or settlement houses.

Recreation is not a luxury—it's an important part of community life. Our children and families need safe places to play. We adults need opportunities to relax and to explore new interests. And all of us need more exercise!

But as important as recreation is, I think SNR has the potential to be much more than a recreational program. As I see it, SNR is really about creating spaces where neighborhood residents can come together as a community.

They can come together to play, but they can also come together to learn, to share ideas, and to receive needed services. Furthermore, if we really believe that democracy requires participation by average citizens, then we must provide places where average citizens can come together to discuss the critical issues that affect their communities.

I think our SNR program has only scratched the surface of its potential. I would like to challenge the members of our network—the grassroots leaders who have graduated from our leadership programs—to step forward and make the SNR program even better.

This past year one of our graduates did just that. Michael Matthews (NLC Class 19) brought a new tutoring program to the SNR sites (see page 3). The tutors don't have to pay for the space, NLI doesn't have to pay for the tutors, and the children don't have to pay for the service. It's a great deal for everyone.

Think about how you might make use of an SNR site. Hold your community meetings there. Bring your youth groups. Get the social service providers in your neighborhood to offer services in the evenings at the school sites.

The opportunity is there for us. The buildings are open. The lights are on. Now let's make these schools true centers of community.

Warmest regards,
Don

The Neighborhood Leadership Institute exists to develop grassroots leadership that will contribute to rebuilding the bonds of community and improving the quality of life for neighborhood residents throughout the Greater Cleveland area.

YOUNG LEADERS STEP FORWARD AT COLLINWOOD SUMMER PROGRAM

For the second year in a row, with support from Ward 10 Councilman Roosevelt Coats, NLI hosted a special summer session of Schools As Neighborhood Resources (SNR) at Collinwood High School. The school stayed open five days a week from 12:30 to 7:30 p.m., from mid-June through mid-August. This summer's program featured major contributions from a number of promising young leaders. The young people featured here are all recent graduates of Cleveland public schools.

Championship Track Stars Make Great Summer Tutors, Future Teachers and Excellent Role Models

The young women on the track team at Collinwood High School do not shy away from a challenge. In fact, they have beaten back all challengers on the track, winning the state championship two years in a row.

This summer they faced a different type of challenge: helping young children learn to read and do arithmetic.

Assistant track coach Latanya Johnson recruited six recent graduates of her championship teams to work in the summer tutoring program at Collinwood.

(Tutors were paid through the Cleveland Scholarship and Tutoring Program. NLI provided the space through its SNR use permit.)

Brittany Jones, a freshman at Bowling Green State University, jumped at the opportunity: "I want to be a teacher when I graduate from college. I thought it would be a learning experience to work in the tutoring program."



Photos by Lee Gleason, Class 15

Jasmine Bell, a sophomore at Lake Erie College, learned about the challenges of working with a diverse group of children. "You have to treat them all the same," says Bell, "But at the same time they have different personalities."

Her teammate Rochelle Hall learned just how serious a responsibility teaching can be. A first-year student at Mercyhurst Northeast, Hall says of her students, "They expect us to be here. If I don't show up, I let a child down. I can't do that."

Along with the responsibilities come the rewards. Shantell Lewis, also beginning her freshman year at Bowling Green, recounts the enthusiasm of one child whom she tutored in multiplication: "She said, 'Ms. Lewis, I'm so glad you're teaching me how to do this.'"

And how did Lewis motivate that student? "I told her I'd race her."

SNR Drumline

"Potential at rest is dead." So says Collinwood High School graduate Kraig Brock, a sophomore percussion major at Central State University.

Brock and two of his Central State classmates, Jihan Williams and Chris Knott, had little time to rest this summer. They spent their summer teaching 14 children, ranging in age from 8 to 19, the fundamentals of drumming and drumline performance.

Veteran instructor Richard Fisher, who directs the SNR music program at Collinwood, enlisted the three college students as volunteer interns. "I see talent in them," says Fisher of his interns, "There's no need for that to go to waste during the summer."

The three young men chosen by Fisher share a talent for percussion and a passion for teaching. Williams, a Glenville High School graduate who also volunteers at two other local high schools, says of his work, "I like to see the potential in kids—to see how far I can push them as a person."

Adds Knott, "They can be better than what they are." The East High School graduate wants his students to understand, "There are people who can help you."

The young interns know that the lessons they offer extend beyond music. "I want to teach the kids commitment through percussion," says Brock. "Someone helped me. I'd like to pass along the favor."



What's Inside

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NLI NOTES

NLI's new Web site is now on line at www.neighborhoodleadership.org. Please take a moment to visit the site and let us know what you think.

Recruitment has begun for **Class 22 of Neighborhood Leadership Cleveland**. The class will begin in January 2006. If you would like to recommend someone for the class, or if you would like to interview applicants, please contact Jacquie Gillon at (216) 812-8700.

NLI co-sponsored a back-to-school rally at **East High School** on August 24. More than 200 people attended. NLI staff and volunteers solicited donations of school supplies that were passed out to students. More community volunteers will be needed throughout the school year to support East High's transformation into "small schools." If you live in the Hough area and would like to volunteer, contact Araaman Alvin Fudge, NLC Class 21, at (216) 323-0618.

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