

# Annual Report 2014-2015

## Board of Directors

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 Bruce Hunter  
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## Contact Information

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## Staff

Gail Schechter, *Executive Director*  
 Neda Nozari Brisport, *Director of Fair Housing*  
 Nancy Burton, *Director of Administration*  
 Carrie Cutler, *Shared Housing Coordinator*  
 Alicia De La Cruz, *Immigrant Integration Project Director*  
 Anna Dominov, *Housing Counselor*  
 Oliver Jury, *Landlord/Tenant Liaison*  
 Gabriel Machabanski, *Fair Housing Testing and Education Coordinator*  
 Liliana Salcido, *Office and Outreach Assistant*  
 Brendan Saunders, *Director of Organizing & Advocacy*  
 Jes Scheinplug, *Director of Communications*  
 Michael Stumpf, *Housing Counselor*

## Open Communities, Financial Statement\*

Fiscal Year July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015

Revenue	Dollars	Percent
Memberships	6,210.31	0.73%
Individual Contributions	28,937.28	3.40%
Corporate/Foundation Grants	341,826.70	40.21%
Government Grants	461,313.27	54.26%
Performance & Project Income	6,100.00	0.72%
Fundraising Events	1,105.00	0.13%
Investment Income	250.65	0.03%
In-kind Contributions	3,916.50	0.46%
Other	512.00	0.06%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>850,171.71</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
Expenses	Dollars	Percent
<i>Program</i>		
Foreclosure Prevention Housing Counseling	191,522.07	22.91%
Fair Housing	288,299.21	34.49%
Homesharing	127,886.73	15.30%
Affordable Housing Advocacy & Tenant Organizing	112,795.51	13.49%
Immigrant Integration Initiative Project	57,223.80	6.85%
Lobbying	916.68	0.11%
<b>Total Program</b>	<b>778,643.99</b>	
<i>Support Services</i>		
Fundraising	23,281.01	2.78%
Management & General	34,025.56	4.07%
Total Expenses	835,950.56	100.00%
<b>Net Gain/(Loss)</b>	<b>14,221.15</b>	

## Net Assets

Beginning Balance as of July 1, 2014 100,393.25  
 Excess of expenses over revenues 14,221.15  
 Ending Balance as of June 30, 2015 114,614.40

\* Audit in progress by Arthur S. Gunn, Ltd.



## Here's What Your Support Achieves

We educate, advocate and organize  
 to promote just and inclusive communities  
 in north suburban Chicago.

## OPEN COMMUNITIES

614 Lincoln Avenue, Winnetka, Illinois 60093

**For 43 years** we have been the area's premier voice for not only fair and affordable housing, but social, economic and racial justice. We're delighted to share this annual report with you and thank you deeply for your generous support.

# Accomplishment Highlights

## The Justice Project: The March Continues

Inspired by the North Shore Summer Project, a grassroots campaign founded in the early 1960s by ordinary people determined to end housing discrimination on Chicago's North Shore, we launched **The Justice Project: The March Continues**. The Justice Project is a grassroots social justice movement to inspire the communities in the northern suburbs of Chicago and beyond to be welcoming, inclusive and diverse, and to offer them a framework for doing so. The Justice Project's "Principles of the Welcoming Community" set out a structure by which municipalities can evaluate themselves in order to become more accessible, safe and engaged; and by which residents can hold their elected and appointed representatives accountable. This project is one of the most ambitious initiatives Open Communities has undertaken, a new grassroots social justice movement that is reshaping the ideals of our founders for the 21st century.

## Fair Housing Services Save and Secure Homes

**Fair Housing Enforcement:** Discrimination against people of color, people with disabilities, families with children, immigrants, older adults and others continues to be a serious problem in the northern suburbs. Open Communities investigates discrimination complaints and supports victims seeking to protect their rights. This year we successfully paved the way to a signed lease for a single Latina parent who was initially refused a rental unit in Winnetka because she has two children.

**Foreclosure Prevention Counseling:** Over the last 15 years, home foreclosures emerged as one of the top housing issues in the nation. Open Communities is one of only two non-profit HUD-certified housing counseling agencies to offer this counseling service in north suburban Cook County. Last year we counseled 203 homeowners, almost all of whom had low or moderate incomes. In one case, an immigrant from the Philippines living in Skokie had a home equity line of credit with a balloon payment of \$98,000 that she was unable to afford after her divorce. With staff's help, she was offered a trial modification with payments starting at \$360, including principal and interest. She is relieved to be able to afford her own home now.

**Homesharing:** This award-winning, shared housing program facilitates compatible matches between prospective housemates in the northern suburbs. Among our 17 successful matches this year was a white homeowner in Wilmette with disabilities who needed a "supportive roommate" to remain in her condo. We found her a match with a 25-year-old African American experienced Certified Nursing Assistant and her 6-year-old son who were facing homelessness. As a result of Homesharing, the renter and her child have housing and the child will attend a Wilmette school. The renter is registered to attend Oakton College and will apply to their school of nursing.

**Landlord/Tenant Dispute Resolution:** Open Communities responded to a record 648 complaints related to repairs, evictions, harassment, security deposits and basic information about rental housing rights and responsibilities. In one successful resolution, staff prevented an African American mother and her three young children from being evicted after a wrongful arrest.

# Contributors

Thanks to your financial support, all of Open Communities' programs are provided **without charge** to those who contact us – over 1,315 households in the past year alone.

We express our profound gratitude to all the donors below who provided financial support to Open Communities during our Fiscal Year 2015.

### Benefactor (\$1,000+)

Robert and Sheila Berner  
David and Cari Borris  
Matthew and Marilee Cole  
Sharon Feigon and Steven Bialer  
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Bill and Nancy Goldberg  
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Eric and Chris Strobel

### Supporter (\$250 to \$499)

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James and Barbara Marran, *in memory of Marvin & Rayna Miller*  
Gail Schechter, *in honor of the Open Communities Staff and in memory of Jean Cleland*  
Jennifer O'Neil  
Nan and Chris Parson  
Mary Powers  
Mary Ann Savard  
Ann Wolff

### Neighbor (\$100 to \$249)

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Linda Wittenberg

### Foundations and Community Supporters

The Chicago Community Trust  
Citizens Charitable Foundation  
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The Field Foundation of Illinois  
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The Harris Family Foundation  
HOPE Fair Housing  
Latino Policy Forum  
Moritz Family Foundation  
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Retirement Research Foundation  
Southwest Organizing Project  
Ten Thousand Villages  
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### Corporate Contributors

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First Bank of Highland Park  
Heartwood Center Inc.  
Houghton Mifflin  
North Shore Community Bank & Trust Co.  
Wesley Realty Group, Inc.

### Government Grantors

Age Options  
Cook County CDBG  
Evanston Affordable Housing Fund  
Evanston CDBG Program  
Illinois Housing Development Authority  
Moraine Township  
Niles Township  
Northfield Township  
Skokie School District 68  
U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

### Member Congregations

Baha'is of Evanston  
Beth Emet The Free Synagogue  
Beth Hillel Congregation Bnai Emonah  
Congregation Hakafa  
Congregation Solel  
Faith Temple Church of God in Christ  
First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette  
Holy Cross Church  
Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation  
Kenilworth Union Church  
Lakeside Congregation  
for Reform Judaism  
North Shore Congregation Israel  
North Suburban Synagogue Beth El  
Society of the Divine Word  
Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Deerfield, Inc.  
St. Mary's Parish  
St. Peter Community Church  
St. Philip the Apostle  
Sts. Faith, Hope & Charity Parish  
Temple Beth El  
Temple Beth Israel  
Temple Judea Mizpah  
Trinity United Church of Christ  
Winnetka Congregational Church

### Member Organizations

Community Partners for Affordable Housing  
Ethical Humanist Society of Chicago  
Fenix Family Health Center  
Housing Options  
Lake County Community Development  
League of Women Voters  
Winnetka-Northfield-Kenilworth  
Niles Community Relations Commission  
Skokie Human Relations Commission