

## **The Renaissance Collaborative**

The mission of The Renaissance Collaborative, Inc. (TRC) is to promote self-sufficiency through an innovative and comprehensive network of supportive housing, employment, and educational services.

Since its inception in 1992, TRC has always put the interests of the people it serves first. Our value statement is: "All individuals have value and they can better contribute to themselves, their families and their communities when provided the support they need."

With this value statement guiding all of its decisions, TRC has gained a reputation for excellence in developing creative supportive housing and employment solutions that renew people and build healthier communities. Using the asset-based approach, the agency works in three distinct business areas:

- Workforce Development
- Supportive Housing
- Senior Housing

## **TRC Senior Village**

The Senior Village project was designed to assist grandparents that are raising dependents. Senior Village 1 is the first phase of the Senior Village project. This project will later include a grandfamily facility and a senior assisted living facility.

## **TRC Senior Village**

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## **The Renaissance Collaborative**

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## **Senior Village**

TRC Senior Village's mission is to foster an empowering environment where seniors are active, healthy participants in their own community, achieving their full potential and maximizing their quality of life.



## TRC Senior Village

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Changes in housing needs and family dynamics demand a different approach in meeting the critical need for affordable housing. As a revolutionary response to such changes, especially the rising number of seniors who are raising their grandchildren on the south side of Chicago, the TRC Senior Village project was conceived in 2004. With this novel housing concept, TRC Senior Village endeavors to promote seniors' ability to age in place and in a supportive environment by building three unique housing models for independent seniors, seniors raising dependents, and seniors in need of assisted living. The goals of TRC Senior Village are to:

- Support seniors who are primary caregivers of dependents
- Create an attractive and innovative living environment for low-income seniors
- Develop a multi-generational space that invites broader community participation

The first development within our village, a HUD Section 202 independent living facility for low-income seniors, opened in September of 2010. Located at 346 E 53rd Street in the Washington Park neighborhood, TRC Senior Village 1 is comprised of 70 one bedroom apartments. Amenities include walk-in closets, call buttons, front desk coverage, storage lockers, on-site laundry facilities, two resident lounges, two community rooms, a computer lab, a fitness room, social activities, and a community garden.

Additional housing facilities within the village for grandfamilies and seniors needing assisted living are currently under development. When all three buildings are completed, though, the Senior Village project will then illustrate how seniors can support their peers who are parenting again, thus linking future generations to their past heritage. TRC Senior Village's mission is to foster an empowering environment where seniors are active, healthy participants in their own community, achieving their full potential and maximizing their quality of life.

## Supporting Grandfamilies

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The housing needs of seniors have changed. The senior population is predicted to double by the year 2030. Furthermore, today's seniors are not only living longer and retiring later; their roles as grandparents are also being fundamentally redefined.

In Chicago, more than 41,000 grandparents age 60 years or older are responsible for grandchildren under the age of 18. These "grand families," according to a 1997 survey, included a significant number of low income households. Of the 335 grand families surveyed, more than 51% had incomes of \$25,000 per year or less.

In 2006, 85.3% of grandparents in Bronzeville lived with grandchildren under the age of 18. In Chicago as a whole, the figure was 76.8%. Grand families account for 7.8% of family households in Bronzeville, compared to the citywide statistic of 5.2%.

## TRC's Response

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As a response to the unmet needs of community grandfamilies, TRC has been hosting a monthly support group for grandparents who are raising their grandchildren and relatives who are raising their dependents. For the past five years, the group has fostered an open and supportive environment for its members. Members are invited to come and share their experiences, seek advice, or just listen. As a way to offer respite care and build community, meals are provided to the members at each monthly meeting.

Information on resources and referrals is also routinely made available to group members. In addition, on a bi-monthly basis, guest speakers have presented on subject matter that pertains to grandfamilies such as legal guardianship, public benefits, and childhood development. Additional meeting time is spent actively supporting the current parenting needs of the group members.

## TRC Senior Village Health & Wellness Center

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Also located within TRC Senior Village is a comprehensive Health & Wellness Center. The center hosts numerous free wellness workshops, health screenings, lectures, aerobics, nutrition education, and Tai Chi classes! A state-of-the-art fitness room is also available free of charge! The center is open to all seniors (residents and community members), who are 55 or older.