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**CCI News**

**October 2010**

Dear Community Member,

Thank you so much for taking the time to read CCI's new quarterly newsletter. Our first couple of issues were a success, and the list of people who are interested in CCI's involvement in community happenings keeps growing!

This newsletter is a great way to keep you updated on some of what we've been up to and how our whole community is striving to grow together. As always, please forward this issue to anyone who may be interested by clicking the blue "Forward Email" link at the bottom right of this letter.

Please check our [web site](#) for detailed information on our programs and [principles](#), or to [donate](#).

Hope your fall is off to a great start!

Community Chest, Inc. Executive Board and Staff

**The Dream Comes True**

This is a watershed year for Storey County! After more than fifteen years, countless federal, state and private foundation proposals - after numerous legislative hearings, bill drafts and testimony - after years of volunteer architectural design, youth-led conceptual design and multiple stages of plans for the structure - after input on its use from focus groups, families and the youth this center will serve - after partnering with multiple non-profits to provide medical and dental care, childcare, youth and arts programs - after securing facility support from Storey County, engineering, soils and environmental reports - we have raised the necessary funds to begin construction on the Storey County Youth and Community Resource Center in July 2010.

On July 6, 2010 a fifteen year dream became a reality. The first shovel full of dirt was symbolically dug as Community Chest Inc. broke ground on the new Storey County Youth and Community Resource Center. In little over a decade we have raised more than one million dollars - a sum unthinkable when we began so long ago. It is because of the belief in this project by so many that soon our county will have the resources for its youth and families. We are indebted to everyone for their patience, their perseverance and their steadfast support for the ideal of building a healthy community - a community in which everyone thrives.

What began as an idea - to create an organization that would be a catalyst for change and a center for resources to help people help themselves - has evolved into a broad team of people and volunteers, who together, build healthy families and communities. This fundamental belief in the ability of others to make a contribution - no matter what their age or expertise, to choose to live with integrity, respect and work toward the common good underlies all that we do at CCI including bringing the community center into reality

However, we still need help raising the additional 1.3 million dollars to finish construction on the Community Center. On March 26th, 2010 we hosted our first annual benefit. We had over 100 people in attendance and raised over \$10,000 dollars. This was the first of many events to come.

We thank you for all your support and encouragement in accomplishing this dream.



Members of CCI Board, Staff and Miles Construction Break Ground

**Social Justice Institute a Success!**

Community Chest sponsored the first Social Justice Institute on September 17, 2010 at the University of Nevada, Reno. More than 100 people attended the event which was highlighted by poetry from Spoken Word, and the Galaxy of Change mural by the Nevada Youth Action Council. David Bobzien, Christy McGill and Jan Gilbert gave presentations (respectively) on getting a bill through the legislature, volunteer coordination in rural communities and systems advocacy. All participants were able to rotate between the three group workshops. Erik Schoen and Shaun Griffin of CCI gave opening and closing remarks.

The event was a half-day affair, sponsored by NV Energy and Charles Schwab Bank. Community Chest hopes to expand the event next year and to increase efforts to build just equitable communities throughout Nevada. Most of the institute evaluations were positive and there were suggestions for improvement which will be included in the coming year. The staff and board of Community Chest would like to thank everyone who made this event possible

### **Outstanding CCI Staff, Jessica Paz Cedillos**

By: JoAnne Skelly

Jessica was raised in Oakland, California by a single mother who emigrated from El Salvador to the United States. As a high school student, Jessica participated in community-based organizations like Summer Search, Upward Bound, and Puente which helped her develop into a confident and socially conscious young woman with a passion for social justice. In 2007, Jessica received her BA in History and Spanish from Mount Holyoke College.



Following her studies, Jessica interned at Public Advocates, a non-profit law firm and advocacy organization that challenges the systemic causes of poverty and racial discrimination. At Public Advocates, she led and organized a major fact investigation project that resulted in a law suit against the Oakland Unified School District. After her internship, Jessica had the amazing opportunity to work for the American Civil Liberties Union Immigrants' Rights Project. At the ACLU, she worked with a variety of lawyers and law clerks and provided litigation and advocacy support.

Currently, Jessica works as the Case Manager at Community Chest. She is in charge of stabilizing families and individuals that seek CCI services with an emphasis on employment placement. Her goal is to foster a meaningful and engaging relationship with each client before and after the client is placed in employment.

As a board member for CCI, it has been my pleasure to observe Jessica at work. She is one of those individuals who lights up a room with her enthusiasm, her passion for social justice and her caring for those in need. She is driven to make CCI thrive so it can continue to support the communities it serves and expand its outreach. She is a remarkable addition to the outstanding team at CCI.

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