



CREATING A CULTURE OF HEALTH THROUGH RESIDENT LEADERSHIP

In this report, ioby shares the method we used, in partnership with the New York State Health Foundation, to support more than 120 resident leaders in eight communities in New York State to successfully fundraise more than \$228,500 in matched funding to implement 44 projects in just 12 months. Funding from philanthropic institutions, like the New York State Health Foundation, incentivizes citizen participation as leaders, donors and volunteers, and builds personal investment, local knowledge, and long-term stewardship of local projects.



BRINGING
NEIGHBORHOOD
PROJECTS TO LIFE,
BLOCK BY BLOCK



HEALTHIER NEIGHBORHOODS START WITH US!

ioby recognizes that the places we live, work, and play are the roots of understanding community health, economic equity, and environmental justice.

Research shows that social determinants like the distance from where we live to open space, public transit or a grocery store, our income, and our race can all impact our health (Kwate et al., 2009; Boardman et al., 2005). And new studies show that increases in active living and access to healthy food are major factors in saving lives and reducing healthcare costs (Rudolph, 2016).

Many organizations are responding to this issue with innovative strategies; for example, Dignity Health recently created a \$100 million loan fund to develop affordable housing, provide job training, assist neighborhood revitalization, offer needed medical services, and build wealth in under served communities (Norris and Howard, 2015).



This is an important step forward. Yet, connecting these shifts in health policy to ongoing community-led work remains a challenge. In order ensure access to a healthy lifestyle is truly equitable across geographies, demographics, and income levels, it's crucial to look to leadership from within our communities.

Residents have great ideas to make their communities healthier—

building new urban farms in food deserts, making streets safer for cyclists and pedestrians of all ages, or activating public spaces for recreation. Unfortunately, these leaders have traditionally been an underfunded, overlooked source of solutions. To truly bolster strong community leadership in health and resiliency, we must provide resources at the neighborhood scale.

ioby's match funding model incentivizes local citizens with ideas for improving their community to step forward, share their vision with their neighbors, and take action. With match funding for financial support, and ioby's training resources and one-on-one coaching for technical support, a match funding opportunity can be the right motivation to move an individual to action.

In 2016 and 2017, ioby partnered with the New York State Health Foundation to support their Building Healthy Communities program, aimed at improving health outcomes in eight priority communities throughout New York State -- including Brownsville, Brooklyn; East Harlem and the Lower East Side in Manhattan; Claremont/Morrisania, Hunts Point, and Mott Haven in the South Bronx; the North End neighborhoods of Niagara Falls, and the rural Clinton County.

Together, we enabled over 40 neighborhood projects throughout the state to promote community health and wellness from the ground up, and strengthen leaders taking an active role to create a culture of health in their neighborhoods.



SUPPORTING NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH LEADERS

ioby improves the capacity of residents to advocate and fundraise for their work, and helps build fundraising skills and confidence that will last a lifetime. Every leader in the Healthy Neighborhoods Challenge worked with a Leader Success Strategist, one of ioby's experienced in-house fundraising coaches, to support them in running an effective campaign and to teach best practices along the way.

In the Healthy Neighborhoods Challenge, ioby also provided on-ramps into fundraising and neighborhood leadership through free, public workshop and webinar trainings. In summer 2016 and early spring 2017, ioby provided seven in-person workshops, including at least one workshop accessible to all of the Healthy Neighborhoods Challenge priority communities, which were attended by a total of 92 residents looking to learn more about civic crowdfunding. In-person workshops were supplemented with seven webinar trainings, attended by a total of 76 neighborhood health leaders with project ideas.

14 Total workshops and webinars given

168 Total number of residents trained in civic crowdfunding

Of the 168 residents that attended ioby's Healthy Neighborhoods Challenge trainings:

65%
of attendees were **first-time or beginning** fundraisers

69%
reported increased **confidence** in asking for donations for their project

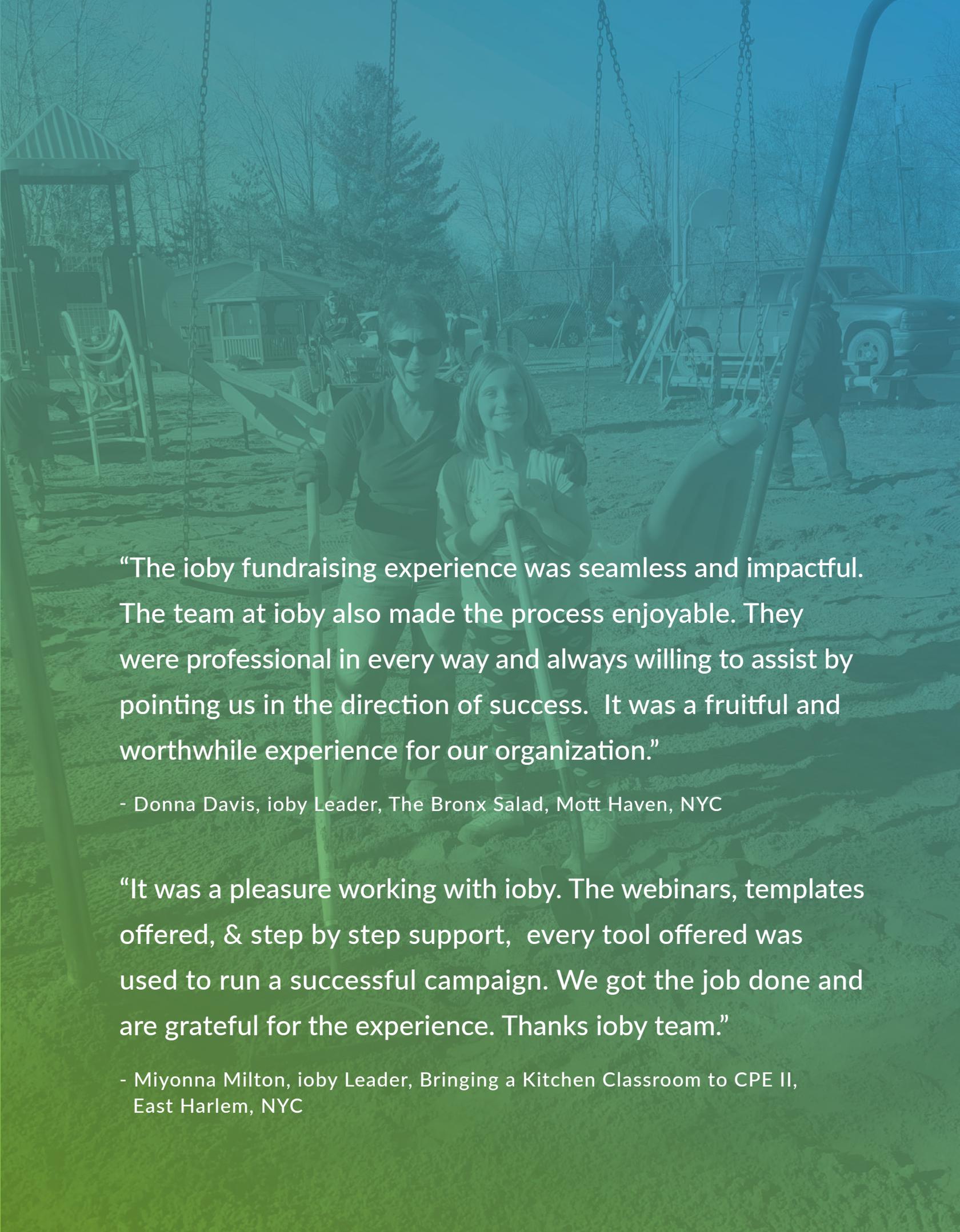
81%
reported increased **readiness to launch a fundraising campaign**

Of the 44 ioby Leaders that worked with an ioby Leader Success Strategist while participating in the Challenge:

NEARLY
100%
reported **growth in confidence** to run an ioby campaign and ask for community support

64%
reported an increase in **effective use of social media** for fundraising

94%
of leaders said they were "very likely" to **recommend ioby**



“The ioby fundraising experience was seamless and impactful. The team at ioby also made the process enjoyable. They were professional in every way and always willing to assist by pointing us in the direction of success. It was a fruitful and worthwhile experience for our organization.”

- Donna Davis, ioby Leader, The Bronx Salad, Mott Haven, NYC

“It was a pleasure working with ioby. The webinars, templates offered, & step by step support, every tool offered was used to run a successful campaign. We got the job done and are grateful for the experience. Thanks ioby team.”

- Miyonna Milton, ioby Leader, Bringing a Kitchen Classroom to CPE II, East Harlem, NYC



ONE CHALLENGE, MANY SOLUTIONS

Of the 44 ioby Leaders of the 2016-2017 Healthy Neighborhoods Challenge, some participants were established local organizations, working hand-in-hand with residents to build a culture of health from the ground up. They used the Challenge to fill critical funding gaps, pilot creative initiatives, or provide new opportunities for their networks to support them. Many participants were resident neighborhood leaders in health, with great ideas for their community, who used the Challenge as a way to amplify and strengthen their local work. Others were residents who had never considered fundraising for or implementing a community health initiative before hearing about the Healthy Neighborhoods Challenge, who were taking action on their ideas for the first time.

All 44 of these exemplary leaders possess deep knowledge of their neighborhoods, personal connections to the health crises and challenges their communities face, and share a passion for creating a stronger culture of health with and for their communities.

BY THE NUMBERS

\$228,522

Total raised (including match funding)

\$100,000

Total match funding distributed

\$128,522

Total raised in citizen philanthropy

\$1.29

Average amount of citizen philanthropy raised per dollar of match funding

31 Average number of donors per campaign

\$5,194

Average project budget

\$50

Average donation amount

Often, ioby projects address multiple problems at once, therefore these categories are not mutually exclusive:

21 Total number of projects activating greenspace

24 Total number of projects improving access to affordable healthy food

9 Total number of projects fighting chronic disease

5 Total number of projects providing mental health and wellness services

19 Total number of projects promoting walking, biking, and exercise

10 Total number of projects educating neighbors about health issues

17 Total number of projects working to build resident leadership



HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS CHALLENGE

PROJECTS ACROSS THE STATE

| | Project Name | Location | Leader | Budget |
|---|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------|
|  | BAOBAB FIT BROWNSVILLE | Brownsville, Brooklyn | Krishna Davenport | \$1,882 |
|  | BRINGING A KITCHEN CLASSROOM TO CPE II | East Harlem, Manhattan | Anat Grosfeld | \$11,122 |
|  | BRINGING THE PEACE AND BUILDING COMMUNITY | Claremont/Morrisania, Bronx | Linda Kemp | \$1,352 |
|  | CHAMPLAIN VALLEY FAMILY YOGA | Clinton County | Virginia Brady | \$3,550 |
|  | CHARGE UP EAST HARLEM | East Harlem, Manhattan | Susan Rodriguez | \$5,540 |
|  | CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZING PROJECT | East Harlem, Manhattan | Joyce McMillan | \$5,886 |
|  | COMMUNITY CLEAN UP | North End, Niagara Falls | Michael Davis | \$840 |
|  | COMMUNITY FOOD ACTION LEADERSHIP GROUP | Claremont/Morrisania, Bronx | Jenina Podulka | \$3,209 |

 = FIGHTING DISEASE

 = FOOD

 = OUTDOOR SPACE

 = ACTIVE RECREATION



Description

Family Fit Brunch wellness events for mothers of color

Creation of a kitchen classroom in an East Harlem school, to build on healthy food programming from the successful school garden

Park beautification and events that bring together police and community members

A yoga program for those in substance-abuse recovery and their friends and family

A fun Fender Blender bike that allows attendees of neighborhood events to make a pedal-powered smoothie

Kitchen upgrades to allow for more healthy food to be distributed to those in need

Converting a vacant lot to a community garden

Leadership training and meeting costs for the Community Food Council, a resident health leadership program.

Outcomes so far

Family Fit Brunch events were hosted in late 2016-early 2017, reaching over 40 moms of color living in Brownsville, and upwards of 20 children. The events included healthy food options, recipes, cooking demonstrations, and cutting edge fitness classes taught by amazing NYC trainers. Family Fit Brunch is in the process of planning its next event--the Annual Family Fit Field Day--for September, and will be holding the event in Brownsville for the first time.

This project is still underway, but construction on the new kitchen classroom at the school has begun, and the classroom is expected to be functional and ready to host all-ages healthy cooking classes for the 2017-2018 school year.

In spring/summer 2017, four events were held in Drew Park, adjacent to Claremont Village in the Bronx. Events served over 300 residents, including over 100 youth, and included activities like planting and park beautification, basketball and games. Elected officials, the NYPD, and various social and health service providers also connected with community members at a well-attended Community Day in the park on July 8th. Further community events with anti-violence themes are scheduled for fall 2017.

The expanded space for the Champlain Valley Family Center is currently under construction, with an expected completion date in August 2017. Funds raised on ioby are currently being used to cover additional training for the yoga instructor who will be the lead teacher in the program, and will be used to buy classroom equipment and build a small library of yoga books and DVDs. Champlain Valley Family Center plans to begin offering weekly yoga classes to those in recovery, as well as their family and friends.

Funds raised on ioby were used to purchase the charging-station bicycle, blender attachment, food for blending healthy treats with the bike, and marketing costs for the free public events that the bike will be appearing at as part of the SMART Food for Life program.

This project is still underway, but funds are being used to complete upgrades to the Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP) kitchen. With the upgrades, CWOP's kitchen will meet city standards and allow them to receive fresh food from Food Bank NY, so that they can provide daily healthy meals to attendees of their advocacy programs.

This project is still underway, but funds from ioby will be used to purchase equipment needed for garden landscaping, print marketing for volunteer recruiting, and t-shirts for identifying volunteers that work on the vacant lot clean up and garden creation.

With support from the New Settlement Community Center, a core group of resident leaders has been coordinating monthly food justice-focused community meetings since March 2017, and has decided to organize under the name "Stirring Up Community Change". So far, the Stirring Up Change leaders have hosted lectures on the history and policies underlying food injustice in their communities, shared their personal stories of impacts from food injustice in the South Bronx, and have done outreach resulting in regular attendance of about 20 residents at each meeting. They are beginning to work together to select specific food justice initiatives to work on with their neighbors.

| | Project Name | Location | Leader | Budget |
|---|---|----------------------------|-----------------|----------|
|  | HARLEM GROWN 127 STREET FARM | South Bronx | Vanessa Vincent | \$10,769 |
|  | HUNTS POINT HUSTLE | Hunts Point, Bronx | Irene Branche | \$6,536 |
|  | KELLY STREET GARDEN AMBASSADOR PROGRAM | Hunts Point, Bronx | Sheryll Durrant | \$4,777 |
|  | LET'S GET MOVING! BRINGING FREE YOGA TO THE PARK | Lower East Side, Manhattan | Michael Marino | \$3,415 |
|  | MAKE 130 A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE | East Harlem, Manhattan | Anita Velasquez | \$460 |
|  | PERRY'S MILLS PARK | Clinton County | John Canty | \$6,495 |
|  | PLANTING HOPE: ABC'S AT-RISK YOUTH AND THEIR COMMUNITY GARDEN | East Harlem, Manhattan | Hannah Bernard | \$11,084 |
|  | PROJECT GREEN SPACE | North End, Niagara Falls | Charlie Harris | \$582 |
|  | ROCKING THE BOAT ALUMNI ROWING TEAM | Hunts Point, Bronx | Jaye Pockriss | \$13,243 |
|  | ROUSES POINT FITNESS TRAIL | Clinton County | Jan Letourneau | \$11,185 |
|  | SMOOTHIE & JUICERY POP-UP | South Bronx | Sharlena Powell | \$390 |
|  | SUPER AWESOME ACTIVE BIRTHDAY PARTIES! | East Harlem, Manhattan | Mac Levine | \$1,682 |

Description

Outcomes so far

Opening a new urban farm with a youth development program

Funds raised on ioby are being used to support the opening of a new expanded urban farm space and hydroponic greenhouse at 127th Street in East Harlem. While the farm expansion has been delayed due to city permitting issues, community members have been participating in student programs and in building out new garden beds at the existing 127th Street Farm. Once farm expansion is complete, the space is expected to serve 3,000 residents in 2017.

The 10th Annual Hunts Point Hustle, 5k community run/walk event

The Hunt's Point Hustle 5K run/walk was held on October 1st, 2016. It reached over 150 residents and received great feedback from the community participants.

Piloting the Garden Ambassador Program at an active community garden

Kelly Street Garden selected three Garden Ambassadors in Spring 2017, drawing from their network of Garden Committee members, volunteers, and neighborhood residents. On May 15, the ambassadors began working to maintain the garden and build bridges to the community, and they'll continue until August 25.

Free yoga classes in a neighborhood park

Funds raised on ioby are being used to host and promote free monthly yoga classes for the community in Corlears Hook Park on the Lower East Side neighborhood of Manhattan, every Wednesday in summer 2017.

New planters and garbage/recycling containers to address a trash and rat problem

This project is underway, but funds from the ioby campaign will be used to buy large planters and flowers to beautify the main building entrance to discourage trash being deposited there, and for educational flyers for residents about importance of proper trash and recycling handling.

New active playground equipment and bike racks in a town park

This project is still underway, but funds raised on ioby have already been used toward improvements to Perry's Mills Park in the Town of Champlain, NY that promote active play. The park's basketball court has been repaved, and new swings and play areas have been installed. About 200 residents have already been served by the park improvements.

Community gardening program for at-risk youth

ABC's upgraded East Harlem garden space was opened to the community in May 2017 with a fun opening celebration for all ages. Programs in the garden so far have included yoga and healthy cooking. The garden serves as a place for families and youth to come together, learn about growing fresh vegetables and preparing healthy meals, and take healthy food home. The garden is expected to serve over 600 residents in 2017.

Collaborative resident-led programming, addressing community health concerns

Funds raised on ioby were used to purchase basic materials and equipment needed to start the community garden including benches, tools, and wood for planting beds.

A series of rowing races to re-engage alumni of Rocking the Boat rowing programs

Rocking the Boat piloted the Alumni Rowing Team program in fall 2016-spring 2017, providing a new way for alumni of Rocking the Boat's impactful youth rowing programs to stay engaged with the sport and the organization. Funded primarily by the alumni themselves, the program took teams of rowers to a variety of racing events throughout the season, and was met with tremendous enthusiasm and consistent attendance from the program's participants.

New fitness equipment installed along a neighborhood walking trail

Funds raised on ioby have been used toward improvements to a community walking trail in the Village of Rouses Point. Installation of new outdoor exercise equipment, benches, and signage along the trail is underway and expected to be complete in summer 2017.

Pop-up giveaways of healthy smoothies and juice at neighborhood events

This project is still underway, but funds raised will support a healthy juice and smoothie pop up at South Bronx community events in 2017.

Affordable alternative kids birthday parties that offer active games and healthy food

Concrete Safaris piloted its Super Awesome Active Birthday Parties in late 2016. Parties were hosted in local community gardens in East Harlem and featured active games and healthy menus. The staff learned a lot through their pilot parties, including that community members of all ages appreciated the outdoor garden setting for the parties.

| | Project Name | Location | Leader | Budget |
|---|---|-----------------------------|------------------|----------|
|  | THE BRONX SALAD | Mott Haven, Bronx | Donna Davis | \$5,002 |
|  | TURN IT UP TUESDAYS | North End, Niagara Falls | Renee Mathews | \$660 |
|  | WE RUN BROWNSVILLE | Brownsville, Brooklyn | Sheila Gordon | \$5,463 |
|  | [RE]NEW LOTS: ARTIST INCUBATOR & VENDOR MARKET | Brownsville, Brooklyn | Victoria Capote | \$7,716 |
|  | A PLACE FOR COMMUNITY AT 125TH & PARK | East Harlem, Manhattan | Carey King | \$16,163 |
|  | AMPLIFIED VOICES | East Harlem, Manhattan | Kimberly Smith | \$14,240 |
|  | ANNUAL COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT DAY | Claremont/Morrisania, Bronx | Rita Jones | \$800 |
|  | BENEFIT CONCERT FOR SICKLE CELL DISEASE AWARENESS | Claremont/Morrisania, Bronx | Elissa Carmona | \$4,000 |
|  | BLOOMING STREETS - NYCHA COMMUNITY GARDEN | Lower East Side, Manhattan | Veronica Vasquez | \$1,541 |
|  | CADA PASO: THE NEXT STEP | East Harlem, Manhattan | Cappy Collins | \$10,690 |
|  | CAFE BLUE | East Harlem, Manhattan | Kadiah Kamara | \$280 |
|  | EAST HARLEM EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS EVENT | East Harlem, Manhattan | Ann-Gel Palermo | \$3,145 |

Description

Outcomes so far

Making a healthy salad available and affordable in neighborhood restaurants and at community events

This project is still underway, but funds from the ioby campaign will be used to purchase materials for the hydroponic roof garden that will be used to grow the greens needs for the Bronx Salad, which will be available for purchase at community events and participating neighborhood restaurants.

A series of free, all-ages dance fitness events in a local park

So far, Turn It Up Tuesdays has brought a fitness-boosting good time to over 50 residents of the North End of Niagara Falls. Attendees of the family-friendly event have expressed to the organizers that the event has helped inspire them to make healthier living choices.

A free workout and training group for local women

The first round of the We Run Brownsville fitness training program provided women living and working in Brownsville with a free opportunity to do fitness training with an experienced trainer and supportive group of their neighbors. 63% of the women completed the entire training program, 75% of those that completed the program logged in weight loss, and 52% competed in a 5K race."

Healthy food vendors and free community dance classes at a pop-up arts incubator space

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Extended season of public plaza programming, including a farmers market and free exercise classes

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Building a resident health leadership team in a public housing development

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Park cleanup and free community exercise event in the park

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Awareness raising concert for sickle cell disease

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Planting a community herb garden in a public housing development

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Resident-led, family-friendly community walks

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Opening a community cafe with healthy food options and a youth entrepreneurship program

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Community events to educate the public neighborhood about emergency preparedness and help create Go Bags

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

| | Project Name | Location | Leader | Budget |
|---|---|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------|
|  | FEED OUR PANTRY | Claremont/Morrisania, Bronx | Gwendolyn Primus | \$650 |
|  | GROW CHENCHITA'S COMMUNITY GARDEN IN 2017 | East Harlem, Manhattan | Angela Maull | \$1,160 |
|  | LYDIA'S MAGIC GARDEN | East Harlem, Manhattan | Alicia Williamson | \$2,550 |
|  | NIAGARA FALLS TRACK & FIELD CLUB FUNDRAISER | North End, Niagara Falls | Willie Price | \$650 |
|  | POP-UP PARK NF! | Niagara Falls, NY | Shelley Hirshberg | \$2,245 |
|  | PROJECT GREEN SPACE | Niagara Falls, NY | Charlie Harris | \$1,250 |
|  | SUMMER BACKPACK PROJECT | East Harlem, Manhattan | Hannah Bernard | \$5,690 |
|  | THE BRONX IS BLOOMING! | South Bronx | Jennifer Beaugrand | \$22,441 |
|  | THE GET HEALTHY, EAST HARLEM COOKBOOK & LIBRARY PROJECT | East Harlem, Manhattan | Bill Fink | \$3,190 |
|  | THE SOUTH BRONX FARMERS MARKET - NEW MARKET DAY | Mott Haven, Bronx | Lily Kesselman | \$10,460 |
|  | WE RUN BROWNSVILLE | Brownsville, Brooklyn | Sheila Gordon | \$2,845 |
|  | YOUTH CULINARY CLASSES & EQUIPMENT | South Bronx | Stacey Ornstein | \$1,693 |

Description

Outcomes so far

Expansion of a local food pantry to promote food security

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Additional community programming and farmers market advertising for a thriving community garden

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Revitalization of a community garden

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

An affordable track and field program for community youth

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Series of pop-up park events encouraging community connectedness and outdoor activity

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Conversion of a vacant lot into a community garden

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

A backpack full of nutritious food for the weekend, given to every food-insecure child attending a local summer day camp

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Youth leadership development program focused on community park stewardship

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Creation of a healthy cookbook library, and design/printing for a community crowd-sourced healthy recipe cookbook

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Expanded weekday hours for a farmers market

With the cash from their recent ioby campaign in hand, South Bronx Farmers Market will now be open Saturdays and Wednesdays from June 17th-November 22nd, 2017, and be able to serve even more residents. The funds raised on ioby are covering staffing expenses for the new mid-week market day, as well as additional marketing materials and advertising to promote the market more widely.

Continuation and expansion of a free women's running and fitness program

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.

Materials for intergenerational healthy cooking afterschool classes

This project finished fundraising in June 2017, and will be implemented later in the year.



CASE STUDY: KELLY STREET GARDEN

“The South Bronx has a lot of community gardens, primarily to combat the food insecurities that exist...when a community has such pressing challenges, we build community working to overcome them.”

-Sheryll Durrant, ioby Leader

The Bronx's Kelly Street Garden is a community hub full of fresh veggies, neighbors, community art, and innovative urban agricultural systems. Their ioby project, the new Garden Ambassador Program (GAP), is providing opportunities for three Garden Ambassadors to build critical urban gardening skills, deepen knowledge of urban agriculture careers, and receive a stipend to help maintain the 2,500-square-foot growing space over 16 weeks at the garden.

THE STORY

Community Leader Sheryll Durrant says, “Although our neighborhood is known for being in the poorest congressional district in the country and the unhealthiest county in the state, we don’t accept that as our future. We’re excited about the Garden Ambassador Program for three reasons.

First, it offers us the chance to promote food and economic justice at the same time. Our current work already puts more healthy meals in front of our neighbors and saves on grocery expenses (one community gardener saved over \$300 in groceries last year by taking home our fresh produce). The Garden Ambassador Program’s \$1,000 stipends will further address the vexing lack of economic opportunities in our neighborhood by providing a non-trivial income source. The program is structured as a 4-hours-per-week commitment to allow for skills strengthening and healthy food advocacy work, without interfering with other income-generating opportunities that people may rely on.

Second, we recognize that lasting change must come from local support and changes in behavior, and GAP helps us sustain more food justice advocates who can help build a local culture of healthy eating in their communities.

Finally, we need more help in the garden to keep pace with demand for our free, fresh veggies, herbs, and fruits, and all of the behind-the-scenes work to make it happen! Garden Ambassadors will provide critical assistance to continue our core work so we can keep serving up health in the South Bronx.”

OUTCOMES

Kelly Street Garden selected three Garden Ambassadors in Spring 2017, drawing from their network of Garden Committee members, volunteers, and neighborhood residents. On May 15, the ambassadors began working to maintain the garden and build bridges to the community, and they’ll continue until August 25. In line with the Garden’s strong history of program evaluation, Ms. Durrant, Garden Manager, will evaluate the program for its success.

Total raised:
\$4,777

Number of donations:
60

Average donation:
\$43

Portion of donations that came from the garden’s neighbors and network:
76%



CASE STUDY:

TURN IT UP

TUESDAYS

“I want us all to talk about what we eat, about how we want to see ourselves in the future...I want more people to get involved and create their own healthy challenges: a bike rally, a family-style picnic. My project begins with exercise; it doesn't stop there.”

-Renee Matthews, ioby Leader

Renee Matthews is a Niagara Falls native who worked in Buffalo for 17 years and is now back in her hometown, where she serves as Executive Director of the Highland Community Revitalization Committee and is involved as a resident leader in the Create a Healthier Niagara Falls Collaborative. Renee's neighborhood of the North Side isn't "exercise-friendly"—it lacks bike paths and lanes, fitness equipment in parks, and healthy food options. Her project, Turn It Up Tuesdays, invited families and friends to join a high-energy line dancing party in the park once a month in fall 2016 and summer 2017.

THE STORY

Community Leader Renee Matthews says: “We’re asking people if they want to come dance in the park—not exercise. If you say, ‘exercise,’ people will say, ‘Oh, that’s too hard.’ But if you say, ‘dancing,’ that just means ‘fun.’ ”

“I first got into dance workouts with my sisters, in our living rooms. We always marveled at how much fun dancing is as a way to burn calories and lose weight without even trying,” she says. “We had so much fun that I wanted to take it to the community. It’s like going to the club, but outside!” she says. “My goal is for people to just think it’s a party, it’s a laugh. But they’re actually getting fit.”

“Our pocket park just has two benches in it. Nothing to help you exercise, no signs that say, ‘Let’s get fit! This is how to do a push-up, a pull-up, a sit-up.’ We also have junk food on every corner; it’s only, ‘Get a soda, get something to microwave.’ I want people on the street to sell salad and fruit and water instead of a hot dog. Something that’s pretty on a plate, not a hot dog with sugary condiments on it.” Niagara Falls is also not very walkable, Renee says, and her neighborhood is bookended by two major hospitals. “That sends the message that we’re sick people, and we stay sick,” she says.

While Renee can’t cure all these ailments overnight, she says that “people can change their lifestyles on a minute-by-minute basis, day by day.” To help them, she’s aiming to illustrate that getting exercise can be a fun challenge, not a dreaded, difficult one.

Renee says she wants Turn It Up Tuesdays to be a springboard for more wellness initiatives in Niagara Falls. “I do expect it to go further,” she says. “I want us all to talk about what we eat, about how we want to see ourselves in the future... I want more people to get involved and create their own healthy challenges: a bike rally, a family-style healthy picnic. My project begins with exercise; it doesn’t stop there.”

OUTCOMES

So far, Turn It Up Tuesdays has brought a fitness-boosting good time to over 50 residents of the North End of Niagara Falls. Attendees of the family-friendly event have expressed to the organizers that the event has helped inspire them to make healthier living choices.

Total raised:

\$660

Number of donations:

11

Average donation:

\$30



CASE STUDY:
SOUTH BRONX
FARMERS MARKET

“My personal challenge was: How can we set up a community-led resource that helps bring fresh and local food directly to the tables of our residents? How can we bring in more sustainably farmed and raised food without harming our residents and also keep it affordable? How can residents who rely on food subsidies eat better without going to another community for food? Our market helps solve many of these problems.”

-Lily Kesselman, ioby Leader

The South Bronx Farmers Market’s founder and Mott Haven resident, Lily Kesselman, and a small team of mostly volunteer staff, are on a mission to address the area’s public health crises—in particular obesity, diabetes, and undernourishment— by providing residents better access to nutritious, affordable, locally grown foods, and free, bilingual demonstrations for kids and adults about ways to prepare it.

On average, around forty percent of funds spent at the market come through one or more of NYC’s food subsidy programs, including SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and WIC (the assistance program for Women, Infants, and Children). Their ioby project, New Market Day, was led by Lily and Jorge Cubas, a South Bronx Farmers Market board member. The funds raised will cover costs for them to open the market on Wednesday, in addition to their current weekend days. The new day will allow for more programming, and serve residents who are unable to come on weekends.

THE STORY

“You walk in some areas of Brooklyn or Queens, and of course Manhattan, and it’s not difficult to find a farmers market,” Jorge adds. “That’s much less the case in the Bronx. This area has a history of being ‘drowned out’ in city decision making.”

Now entering its fourth season, SBFM is the only farmers market in the neighborhood of Mott Haven, the poorest congressional district in the country, where almost fifty percent of children live below the poverty line. The young organization is clearly meeting a need in the community; last season, SBFM markets facilitated over \$10,000 in SNAP purchases of healthy produce.

In the future, SBFM would like to expand its value-added offerings (like locally made pickles, baked goods, and crafts), grow to support additional farmers and food companies, and host an indoor market in the winter so residents can access fresh local food year round.

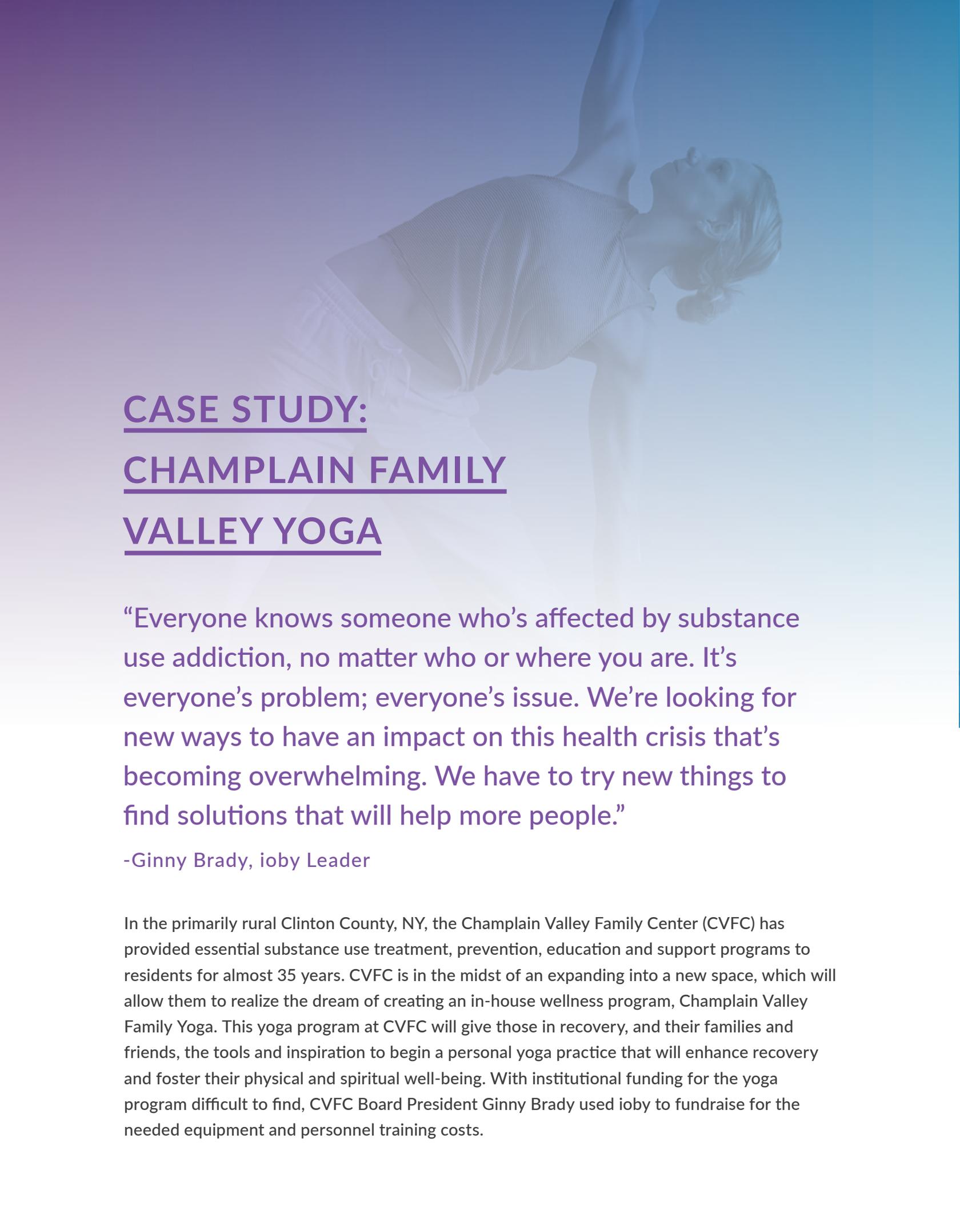
OUTCOMES

With the cash from their recent ioby campaign in hand, South Bronx Farmer’s Market will now be open Saturdays and Wednesdays from June 17th-November 22nd, 2017, and be able to serve even more residents. The funds raised on ioby are covering staffing expenses for the new mid-week market day, as well as additional marketing materials and advertising to promote the market more widely.

Total raised:
\$10,360

Number of donations:
74

Average donation:
\$77



CASE STUDY:
CHAMPLAIN FAMILY
VALLEY YOGA

“Everyone knows someone who’s affected by substance use addiction, no matter who or where you are. It’s everyone’s problem; everyone’s issue. We’re looking for new ways to have an impact on this health crisis that’s becoming overwhelming. We have to try new things to find solutions that will help more people.”

-Ginny Brady, ioby Leader

In the primarily rural Clinton County, NY, the Champlain Valley Family Center (CVFC) has provided essential substance use treatment, prevention, education and support programs to residents for almost 35 years. CVFC is in the midst of an expanding into a new space, which will allow them to realize the dream of creating an in-house wellness program, Champlain Valley Family Yoga. This yoga program at CVFC will give those in recovery, and their families and friends, the tools and inspiration to begin a personal yoga practice that will enhance recovery and foster their physical and spiritual well-being. With institutional funding for the yoga program difficult to find, CVFC Board President Ginny Brady used ioby to fundraise for the needed equipment and personnel training costs.

THE STORY

Ginny Brady and the passionate staff of Champlain Valley Family Center understand that effective prevention and treatment involves healthy lifestyle choices that are not only focused on avoiding drugs and alcohol. Prevention and treatment involve choosing activities and making life choices that nurture healthy bodies and find ways to meet the stresses and challenges of life.

“We’d like to add more of a ‘spiritual’ program that can address the many things people benefit from focusing on when they have addiction problems,” Ginny says. “Things like getting exercise and gaining strength, feeling good about their bodies, relaxing, deep breathing, mindfulness, building a new skill and a new community, and on and on. These are all qualities inherent in yoga that can help people feel good about their progress when they’re struggling.”

Adding yoga classes to CVFC’s roster of services is a multi-phase plan that began with staff member Emily Cole’s desire to earn a yoga training certificate and lead classes for the CVFC community. They lacked an appropriate venue for the classes until CVFC recently purchased the second half of the building they occupy. They are renovating it with support from the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, and took the opportunity to ensure that the overhaul includes plans for a yoga studio and library of yoga-related books and videos. CVFC will make sure classes are covered by clients’ health insurance or operate by donation.

Ginny says she realizes yoga might not be the answer for everyone struggling with addiction, but it is a way to address aspects of their experience that more traditional methods like going to a lecture or attending group therapy aren’t reaching.

OUTCOMES

The expanded space for the Champlain Valley Family Center is currently under construction, with an expected completion date in August 2017. Funds raised on ioby are currently being used to cover additional training for certified yoga instructor Emily Cole who will be the lead teacher in the program, and will be used to buy classroom equipment and build a small library of yoga books and DVDs. In August, the CVFC will begin offering weekly yoga classes to those in recovery, as well as their family and friends.

Total raised:
\$3,550

Number of donations:
30

Average donation:
\$60



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AVEX

LASTING IMPACTS

There is no one-size-fits-all solution for health inequity, and the leaders of the 44 Healthy Neighborhoods Challenge projects demonstrated this through the incredible variety of their approaches to improving neighborhood health outcomes.

In this model, the amount raised by a campaign is not an isolated indicator of success. Participants were able to set fundraising goals that matched the scale of their projects and immediate funding needs. For some, \$500 provided meaningful support for their first-time pop-up event; for others, raising over \$20,000 allowed them to expand existing public programs, or pilot ideas that were difficult to fund through traditional philanthropy. Some participants were residents with absolutely no fundraising experience, while others were experienced nonprofit fundraisers diversifying their funding streams with community crowdfunding.

The goals of the project leaders in the Healthy Neighborhoods Challenge were as varied as the communities in which their projects took place. Success was self-defined differently by various leaders, some aiming to draw neighbors to a fitness event for the first time, others to make ongoing food access programs more sustainable, expand greenspaces, or add active-living amenities to their neighborhood's built environment.

Some 2016 and 2017 projects are still in planning or early implementation phases, but of the Healthy Neighborhoods Challenge participants that have already fully implemented their projects, nearly 100% report that their project met its immediate goals.

The leaders of the Healthy Neighborhoods Challenge each stepped up to promote health in locally significant ways, each of them responding to community need and planting the seeds of lasting change. Improving social determinants of health within a community is a complex process in which the knowledge and agency of residents themselves is key. Solving this multi-pronged problem requires a diversity of tactics, including the commitment and creativity of community members themselves, shaping a healthier future together.

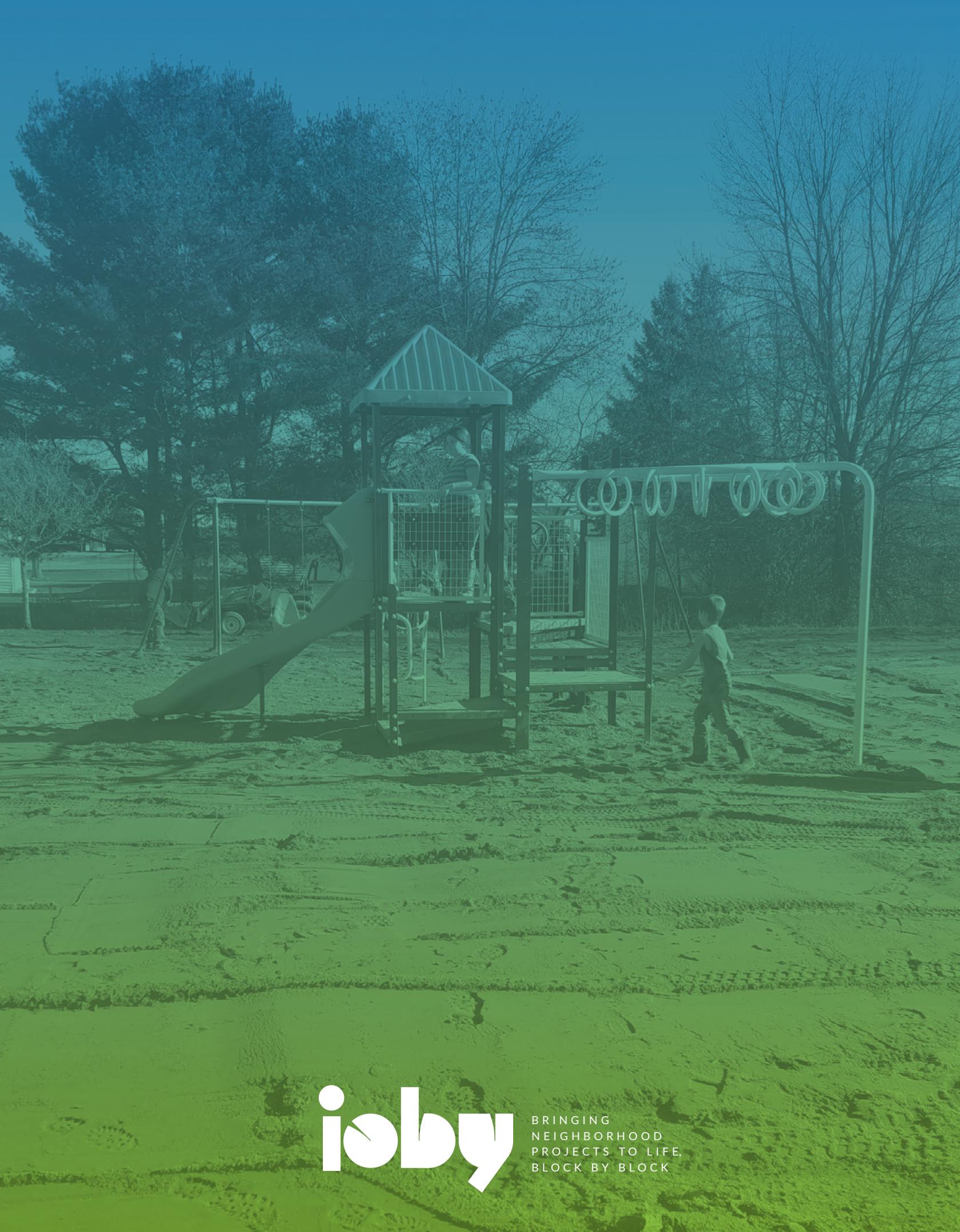
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BRINGING
NEIGHBORHOOD
PROJECTS TO LIFE,
BLOCK BY BLOCK