



# MCW CONSORTIUM YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER

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## MEET THE VPI COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP TEAMS

The United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee (UNCOM) Violence Prevention Initiative and the Holton Youth and Family Center Collaborative (HYFCC) have been selected to work with MCW and the VPI team to decrease rates of violence in identified areas of Milwaukee and strengthen community capacity to prevent future violence. Let's meet them!



### United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee (UNCOM) Violence Prevention Initiative

**Please tell us a little bit about your Partnership Team.  
How did your coalition come about?**

UNCOM is Milwaukee's preeminent collaborative partnership supporting healthy, wholesome and empowered Milwaukee neighborhoods. UNCOM does this by sharing best practices, leveraging expertise and by empowering Milwaukee residents of all ages and backgrounds to help create solutions to problems facing our community. UNCOM has been in existence since 1996.

**What motivated your coalition to respond to the VPI  
Call for Partnerships?**

UNCOM's mission is to strengthen city neighborhoods by combining and enhancing the assets of our partner agencies to improve the quality of life for urban families. UNCOM partners have had a long history of proactively working on programs to contribute to the quality of life for youth and families in Milwaukee neighborhoods. Youth violence is an issue that touches everyone and our stakeholders consider violence reduction in Milwaukee neighborhoods a key issue for programming and advocacy.

**Briefly describe the community site in which the  
partnership team will conduct its VPI activities.**

The partnership team will implement (*continued on back*)



### Holton Youth and Family Center Collaborative (HYFCC)

**Please tell us a little bit about your Partnership Team.  
How did your coalition come about?**

The HYFC closed to the public in 2008 when the YMCA shifted their strategic focus. After this two year period, the HYFC board determined that the needs of youth and neighborhood residents of the Harambee and Riverwest community were best served by re-opening the Center. Because the VPI priorities aligned with the HYFCC's vision, it was then determined that the CFP would serve as an excellent framework to engage the community.

**What motivated your coalition to respond to the VPI  
Call for Partnerships?**

As we examined the partnership principles and VPI priorities, it was evident that the VPI framework could be very useful in accelerating the rate by which the core partners could achieve their vision for a healthy and sustainable environment for the two neighborhoods. Moreover, the VPI had the potential to build neighborhood capacity to guide them into the future and transform many of the dysfunctional elements that can plague neighborhoods.

**Briefly describe the community site in which the  
partnership team will conduct its VPI activities.**

The Riverwest and Harambee neighborhoods have a recognizable brand and serve as a gateway to Milwaukee's east side. The neighborhoods (*continued on back*)

(UNCOM continued) activities and develop anti-violence activities in the areas surrounding UNCOM agencies. This outreach will impact neighborhoods in Milwaukee's central city.

**How will this community-academic partnership benefit the community?**

UNCOM and our partner agencies will use proven models of community engagement and best practices among our member agencies to create safe communities and options for Milwaukee residents.

**What is your coalition most looking forward to in working with the VPI?**

We most look forward to partnering with the VPI staff to develop proven models of effectiveness in reducing violence, to serve as a community leader addressing this important community issue, and to work with a great academic partner.

(HYFCC continued) have many assets to build and implement strategies to reduce violence and build neighborhood capacity.

**How will this community-academic partnership benefit the community?**

This is an excellent opportunity to translate research findings into everyday life in the central city. This initiative will bridge the gap between academics and community residents to create a common ground that both can benefit from.

**What is your coalition most looking forward to in working with the VPI?**

The opportunity to work with a broad coalition of stakeholders and institutions that will accelerate the transformation of two vital neighborhoods and provide a template for use by other such collaborations to empower neighborhoods to reduce violence for years to come.



The VPI team is extremely excited about our work with the Community Partnership Teams and the challenge of reducing violence in this great city of Milwaukee. This community engagement initiative will truly lay a framework for future groups to engage with one another to reduce violence. Our current community partners have been a wonderful asset to this city for so many years.

The Medical College and our team at the VPI are happy to begin this process of bringing together best practices, some of our best minds, passion and commitment to reducing violence. We will incorporate unique approaches that inspire a health, as well as a crime prevention effort. Not only will negative physical environments change, but so will the negative mental environments that cause people to resort to violence. Our partnership teams offer the opportunity to bring out the best in our participants from an early age to adulthood. Together we will overcome the damaging effects violence has had on us physically and economically.

Ramon Candelaria, VPI Community Director

## OPPORTUNITIES

**VPI OFFICE AVAILABLE FOR COMMUNITY USE.** The VPI Office is available for community use, including evenings and weekends. Accommodations comfortably seat 30, with a backroom that seats eight. Please contact the VPI Office at (414) 955-2699 or [vpi@mcw.edu](mailto:vpi@mcw.edu) to check on availability.

**UNCOM VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE SEEKING DIRECTOR** Interested applicants should email a cover letter and résumé to [jobs@uncom-milw.org](mailto:jobs@uncom-milw.org). Job posting can be found at: <http://new.uncom-milw.org/EmploymentOpps.asp>.

For more VPI information and previous newsletters, visit the VPI website at: <http://www.mcw.edu/vpi.htm>

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**VPI Has a New Logo!** Our new identity was designed by Thom Ertl, Graphics Coordinator, Center for AIDS Intervention Research (CAIR), MCW!