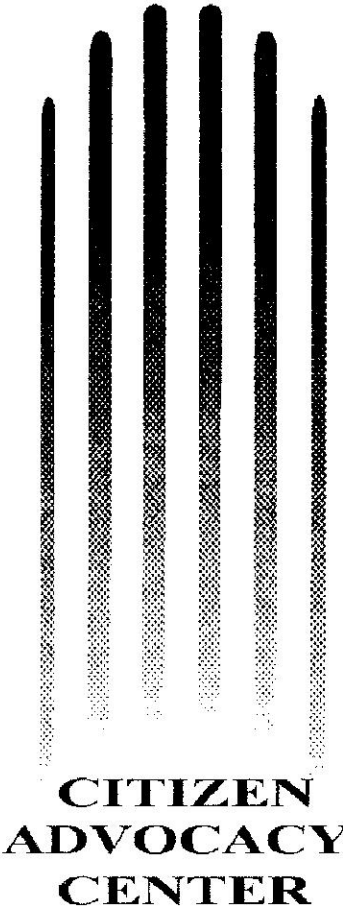


CITIZEN ADVOCACY CENTER

2011 ANNUAL REPORT



**THE CITIZEN ADVOCACY CENTER
IS DEDICATED
TO BUILDING DEMOCRACY
FOR THE 21ST CENTURY
BY STRENGTHENING
THE CITIZENRY'S CAPACITIES,
RESOURCES AND INSTITUTIONS FOR
SELF-GOVERNANCE.**

Citizen Advocacy Center 2011 Annual Report

The Citizen Advocacy Center (Center) is an award-winning, non-profit, non-partisan, free community legal organization. Founded in 1994, the Center's mission is to build democracy for the 21st Century by strengthening the public's capacities, resources, and institutions for self-governance. The Center operates through a community lawyering model. A community lawyer is one who protects the public's assets and promotes meaningful participation in the democratic process. As an institution, we pursue our mission of building democracy through a multi-faceted approach that includes community organizing, coalition building, legal advocacy, civic education, and (only as a last resort) litigation to make government more accountable, accessible, and transparent. We seek to open and increase democratic channels and protocols at every level of government to develop the voice of the public. Many times, the Center's work begins at the local level, helping individuals and community groups address a local public policy issue, but through the identification of systemic anti-democratic barriers our efforts often expand into statewide initiatives.

2011 proved to be another outstanding year in advancing our mission. Our three major initiatives in 2011 were:

- Public Education and Capacity Building
- Government Accountability and the Development of Systemic Democratic Protocols
- Litigation and Issue Advocacy

Public Education and Capacity Building

The Center is first and foremost a resource for civic information and the promotion of civic engagement. In 2011, our community lawyers and volunteers helped concerned citizens create active and vibrant democratic communities by using essential civic tools and the law to organize community campaigns. Regardless of the subject matter or the point of view of those making the inquiry, Center community lawyers answered inquiries, organized community campaigns and built the capacity of citizens to participate in local affairs.

Community Lawyering and Grassroots Assistance:

The scope of the Center's grassroots assistance is extensive and includes communities throughout the greater Chicagoland area. Issues addressed include ethics, government accountability, land use, tax increment financing, access to the ballot, social justice and more. Below are samples of public inquiries received from various communities through the Chicagoland area:

Inquiries:

- Are government attorney billing records public records?
- Does the airing of a local debate for a municipal board on a local cable station, hosted by a 501(c)(3) organization, violate the "prohibited political activity" provision under the Illinois Ethics Statute?
- Are non-profit economic development corporations, supported by tax payer dollars, subject to Illinois transparency laws?
- When can an individual be removed from an open meeting?
- What kind of public notification is required for text amendment?
- How broad of an application can the term "ancillary use" be used in identifying the types of land use for an area zoned for a governmental purpose?
- What records are members of a public body entitled to by virtue of being a public official?
- What policies can be created to promote sustainable "green energy" among public bodies?

Communities:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| • Libertyville | • City of Chicago | • Caseyville |
| • Lisle | • Elgin | • Norridge |
| • Downers Grove | • Grays Lake | • Wheaton |
| • Campton Hills | • Wilmet | • Hinsdale |
| • West Chicago | • Glen Ellyn | • Lake Zurich |
| • Elmhurst | • Bloomington | • Deer Park |
| • Des Plaines | • Smithfield | |
| • Forest Park | • Belleville | |

Grassroots Democracy Building

Norridge our Voices Matter

Norridge, Illinois is a small and diverse community just west of Chicago. When parents were concerned about a Superintendent's recommendations regarding the reconfiguration of a K-8 school, which included the transition of a popular principal to another school, the Center was called for assistance. Parents wanted to know how to convince the School Board to reject the reconfiguration proposal. In launching a community organizing effort, the parents realized that the primary issue was one of government accountability and responsiveness to constituents. We helped parents launch an advocacy campaign that included outreach to neighbors, attending meetings, collecting public information, reaching out to the local media, and practicing their First Amendment rights. Parents successfully transformed their issue into a community wide concern. Concerned individuals ran for school board and young people engaged in protest by wearing t-shirts to school that said, "Save our Principal." When the School Board attempted to have a special meeting without providing proper notice, a Center community lawyer contacted the district and apprised them of the illegality. The School Board rescheduled and properly noticed the special meeting, at which the only agenda items were Executive Session and Public Comment.

Meeting attendees waited several hours, late into the evening, for School Board members to finish an executive session. They waited in the hallway for several hours with no chairs! When they reconvened three hours later, more than 20 parents gave public comment and called on their School Board members to reject the reconfiguration recommendation. Even a young middle school girl gave a public comment at the end of meeting asking that the board vote to keep a popular principal.

The result of the community advocacy was outstanding. The School Board responded to the public's organizing effort. Three members of the organizing effort successfully ran for the School Board, the principal was rehired and the young people who participated in the effort ran for student government. A year later, the principal for whom the community came out in support of became superintendent of the district.

Morrison City

Morrison City is a small community in the far western suburbs of Chicago. It is a community that is fortunate to have an avid and outspoken community advocate who for several years has attended municipal government meetings. When Morrison City had a change in senior city staff, this citizen advocate began to have government accessibility problems. The senior city staff member was opposed to the enthusiastic, sometimes harsh manner, in which the community advocate spoke with public officials and staff when relevant information he was seeking regarding public policy issues was not forthcoming. Things came to a head when the citizen advocate was ousted by police escort from City Hall prior to a Historical Preservation Commission meeting because earlier in the day the citizen advocate was accused by the senior city staff member of making a city employee cry due to the harness of how he spoke regarding an issue.

After the citizen advocate was removed from City Hall, and upon a threat by city staff to indefinitely ban the individual from city hall, the Center was contacted for assistance. A Center community lawyer talked with the individual about his rights and responsibilities at public meetings and contacted the attorney for Morrison City. The resolution was recognition that the individual would not be barred entry from City Hall or government meetings. Furthermore, after being informed of the illegal ouster, the Illinois Attorney General's Public Access Counselor's Office produced a binding opinion affirming that "prohibiting the public from attending meetings held by public body is a drastic measure that should only be taken in the limited circumstances specifically enumerated in [the Open Meetings Act]." The opinion reiterated that no evidence showed that the resident engaged in threatening or disruptive actions prior to or during the meeting to justify his ouster. The resident remains a civically active participant in city affairs.

Citizens United for Healthy Development in Libertyville

Libertyville is a well developed suburb just north of the Chicago. In the center of town, surrounded by schools, parks, and homes there is a 150 acre parcel of property that is largely open space owned by Lake County. Upon a request from the Village of Libertyville, Lake County submitted a master plan for development for the 150 acres. Neighbors first learned of the proposal by a county employee staking the property line and marking trees for removal. Neighbors began asking questions. They learned that Lake County's proposal included a series of buildings that had no indication of what the property was going to be used for. Additional concerns of residents included building height, light pollution, traffic and water retention issues. The primary issue quickly became the lack of responsiveness by Lake County with respect to involving community residents in developing the 150 acres.

Residents called the Center for assistance. Center community lawyers helped the residents established a community group called "Citizens United for Healthy Development in Libertyville," obtain public records which produced a document from Libertyville staff to Lake County questioning how neighbors would react to such a proposal (three months before any member of the public was informed of the project), and broaden community engagement beyond the immediate property neighbors. What was clearly supposed to be a "done deal" between the County and Libertyville turned into an 18 month process where residents showed up and filled meetings rooms to maximum capacity, had local media run several stories on the issues, and met with Lake County representatives to negotiate elements of the master plan. After more than five public hearings, Lake County and the residents successfully reached common ground one several issues. Additionally, Libertyville is now encouraging all planned unit development applicants to actively reach out to neighbors early in the process.

Additional community forums:

In addition to answering public inquiries and helping community groups organize, the Center hosted, was a guest speaker, or participated as a panelist at the following forums:

- Lombard Log Cabin DuPage County Democrats(Guest Speaker)
- Morton Arboretum Grant Award Committee (Panelist)
- Midwest Public Interest Law Conference (Interviewer)
- Citizen Advocacy Center & League of Women Voters joint program: Redistricting (Elgin)

- Illinois Civic Mission of Schools Conference: Democracy & Youth Civic Engagement (Panelist)
- Appleseed Fund for Justice Continuing Legal Education Forum: Redistricting (Panelist)
- Citizen Advocacy Center Freedom of Information Act Citizen Workgroup (Host)
- Citizen Advocacy Center & League of Women Voters joint program: Redistricting (DuPage)
- Council of Islamic Organizations Land Use Seminar: Advocacy Training (Panelist)
- Downers Grove Township Democrats (Guest Speaker)
- CHANGE Illinois! Redistricting (Panelist)
- Citizen Advocacy Center's Summer Open House and Intern Night (Host)
- Citizen Advocacy Center & Citizen Works Summer Intern Meet Up (Host)
- Naperville Boy Scout Troop: Community and Democracy (Host)
- Public Interest Law Initiative Pro Bono Lawyering Panel Discussion (Panel Discussion)
- Heartland International Democracy Initiative: Indonesian Non Governmental Organization Exchange (Host)
- Citizen Advocacy Center's Constitution Week Community Forum: Defending First Amendment Freedoms with Toni Locy (Host)
- National Civics Conference (Attendee)
- Citizen Advocacy Center & Better Government Association Transparency Conference (Host)
- WBBM's "At Issue" Political New Show: Redistricting (Panelist)
- University of Illinois School of Law Public Interest Career Forum (Panelist)
- Citizen Advocacy Center Holiday Cheer & Citizen Initiative Award Celebration (Host)
- Illinois Campaign for Political Reform "Cindi Canary Leadership Award" (Awardee)
- Midwest Democracy Network (Discussion Facilitator)

Citizen Initiative Awards:

Every year the Center honors those individuals and community groups who are organizing to make a difference in their community. They are average citizens who identified an issue of concern, and rather than assuming other people will get take a stand or speak out, they choose to get involved. In 2011, the Center honored the following individuals and groups:

Citizens United for Health Development in Libertyville for their dedication and outstanding efforts to have a voice in the political process associated with the Lake County Master Plan Development for County Farm property. (Description of groups effort detailed above.)

Norridge our Voices Matter for their tenacity and perseverance in standing up for their beliefs and demanding to have the School Board be responsive to their concerns.

Immigrant Solidarity DuPage for their long standing commitment to improve the lives of immigrants in DuPage County. Immigrant Solidarity DuPage started as an ad hoc group more than five years ago and has grown into the largest immigrant rights advocacy organization in DuPage County. The group focuses on social justice, right to work, and racial profiling issues.

Bill Dobias for his commitment to preservation of open space. Bill's involvement in holding the LaGrange Park District Accountable resulted in a community wide movement to save a park and force the local Park District to put to referendum the sale of land for development. Bill is an inspiration in the arena that one person can make a difference. (Posthumously recognized)

Youth Civic Education and the “Civic Empowerment Zone”

The Civic Empowerment Zone is the Center's hands-on civic education program that helps educators and youth transform their communities into “civic labs” and teach what it practically means to be a “good citizen.” We focus on building civic skills, confidence, and knowledge through engaging youth at the local level on issues they care about and developing a working knowledge of how to affect government decision making by mastering universal civic skills of practical applications of the laws and policies involved in the democratic process. In 2011, the Center engaged in the following activities:

2011 Constitution Week:

Constitution Week in September is an opportunity for educators to remind students about the importance of living in a democracy. The Center worked in collaboration with several area high schools to make Constitution Week a meaningful event by hosting Ms. Toni Locy. Ms. Locy is a nationally recognized journalist who was held in contempt of Federal Court for refusing to disclose her confidential source under the Freedom of the Press with respect to articles she wrote during the Washington D.C. anthrax scare in 2001. On a whirlwind tour, Ms. Locy visited with more than 1,500 students, collectively from York Community High School, Downers Grove South High School, and Waubonsie Valley High School. She shared her story about why she held her ground and stood up for her beliefs despite intense pressure from the United States government, the court system, and even her friends and colleagues. Ms. Locy interacted with students in a variety of forums, ranging from individual classes, student journalism classes, and auditorium talks. Ms. Locy also participated in a community event hosted at the Center for the general public wherein more than 20 people attended.

From Cairo to DuPage County; Developing Democracies:

The Center was proud to host Sherif Abdel Azim from the non-governmental organization Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement in Cairo, Egypt. Sherif is a dynamic young man who played a role in organizing revolutionary activity in Cairo. Through the work of his organizations, Sherif led thousands of pro-democracy protestors in rallies at Tahrir Square, the epicenter of rallies that led to the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak. He was also a news source for international journalists covering the revolution. Sherif spent a month at the Center shadowing community lawyers and learning how we impact the democratic process and engage the public. As part of his internship Sherif met with more than 3,000 high school students throughout DuPage County to provide first hand testimony of what it means to be part of a pro-democracy movement and live in a country that currently does not have Freedom of Speech, Freedom of the Press, and many of the other rights that are guaranteed by our Constitution. The youth who talked with Sherif had the opportunity to discuss how human rights

are related to issues of democracy, especially when citizens rise up against a dictator and how Muslims are discriminated against in the United States.

Professional Development Trainings

A crucial element of the Center's youth civic education forum is training teachers in how to impart hands on civic education. In 2011, the Center facilitated two professional training sessions that focused on the First Amendment, redistricting, and campaign finance reform. The professional development programs were facilitated through the DuPage Regional Office of Education's teacher institute day and a forum hosted by the McCormick Foundation.

Educational Forums and Schools Visited by Center Community Lawyers:

- Teacher Professional Development Training, Redistricting and First Amendment
- Bartlett High School Democracy Forum
- McCormick Foundation Teacher Professional Development Forum: Citizen Advocacy Center Facilitator of Redistricting Lessons
- West Chicago Democracy Forum
- Nequa Valley Democracy Forum
- Downers Grove South – Constitution Week/ Democracy Forum
- York Community High School – Constitution Week/ Democracy Forum
- Proviso Math and Science Academy – Student Internship Program Sponsor
- Waubonsie High School – Constitution Week
- Benedictine University
- Columbia College
- We the People: Citizens and the Constitution

Hands-on Civic Education Lesson Plans

With funding from the McCormick Foundation, the Center has created an impressive library of hands- on lesson plans that build the capacity of teachers to impart civic knowledge. Most of the lesson plans were first developed in 2005 and last year the Center conducted a comprehensive review of all lesson plans and updated content and weblinks. Middle school, high school, college, and home school parents utilize the Center's lesson plans to teach about government and civic engagement. Visit the Center's website to see the full listing of lesson plans: www.citizenadvocacycenter.org.

Student Internship Program

The Center has a highly developed internship program where high school, college and law students learn how to address issues of public concern, evaluate policy considerations, and engage in community organizing in a hands-on manner. In 2011 hosted interns and volunteers from the following institutions:

- Proviso Math and Science Academy (3 students)
- York Community High School (3 students)
- Vanderbilt Law School (1 student)
- Chicago Kent College of Law (2 student)
- University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign College of Law (1 student)
- Governors State University (1 student)
- Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement (1 student)

Summer Interns Everyday Democracy Articles:

All student interns write articles for the Center's newsletter, *Everyday Democracy*. Titles of the following articles are:

- "Research with Relevance"; discussing transparency issues associated with non-profit economic development corporations and First Amendment concerns associated with protest permit policies. (Sara Smith, Chicago Kent College of Law)
- "Corn vs. Four Tortillas"; discussing Illinois' Freedom of Information Act broadly construed "preliminary draft" exemption. (Jason Han, University of Illinois at Urbana College of Law)
- "Honoring Rabble Rousers"; discussing the creation of a good government audit. (Jack Bentley, Chicago Kent College of Law)
- "Building Work Skills with District 205"; discussing work study student projects. (Nick Moralis, William Hickey and Steven Sabel, York Community High School)
- "From Kazakhstan to Elmhurst"; discussing understanding the democratic process from the citizen view point, participatory budgeting, and government budgeting. (Sulushash Dossymkulova, Governors State University)
- "Engaging the Next Generation"; discussing high school students experience in researching how local government entities engage in the redistricting process. Sarah Bridgewater, Herbert Houston, Emanuel Marchan, Proviso Math and Science Academy)
- "Community Lawyering 101"; discussing how a newly licensed attorney navigated what it means to be a community lawyer versus traditional lawyering. (Christine You, Vanderbilt University Law School)
- "Exporting Democracy: Elmhurst Illinois to Cairo, Egypt"; a discussion of the challenges of democracy building organizations in a developing democracy and basic rights average citizens take for granted in the United States. (Sherif Abdel Azim, Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement)

Journalism Training Program

2011 was the year of redistricting, and the Center spent a significant amount of time educating the public and journalists on substantive and procedural redistricting issues. Politicians routinely draw lines to protect political interests rather than the people's interests and the Center facilitated a series of journalism training programs to build the capacity of reporters to inform the public. Collectively, the Center educated more than 60 reporters from the largest to smallest media markets in Illinois. We facilitated the trainings through two avenues: a general training program that was considered a "redistricting road show" and a Specialized Reporting Institute, one day intensive training for reporters who were already knew about, to some degree, about the redistricting process.

Road Show Training Program:

Topics covered:

- Apportionment and local examples of gerrymandering;
- Identify what a "good district" looks like;
- Reviewing Census data;
- Reviewing legislative process and new legislation;
- Identifying how technology is a crucial citizen tool this time around; and
- Generating story ideas connecting redistricting to individuals.

Statewide Partner Organizations:

- Northern Illinois Newspaper Association (Rockford, IL)
- Paul Simon Institute (Southern IL)
- Illinois Press Association (Central IL)
- Community Media Workshop (Chicago, IL; Ethnic Media Training)

Center community lawyers educated more than 50 representatives from media outlets throughout Illinois.

Specialized Reporting Institute:

This forum provided intensive, in depth training to journalists who had a baseline knowledge of redistricting. Topics and guest speakers included:

- The Current Process:
 - Ms. Mary Schaafsma, League of Women Voters of Illinois, Redistricting Coordinator and Ms. Terry Pastika, Citizen Advocacy Center, Executive Director/ Community Lawyer.
- 2010 Census Results: Illinois' Changing Demographics:
 - Mr. Orestes Aguillon, Mapping Consultant, Illinois Campaign for Accountable Redistricting documented population shifts within Illinois.

- How Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups were Affected by the Census
 - Ms. Ami Gandhi, Esq., Legal Director, Asian American Institute
 - Ms. Virginia Martinez, Esq., Former Legislative Staff Attorney, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF).
- Politicians and Restricting
 - Dr. Dick Simpson, PhD., Political Science Department Chair, University of Illinois at Chicago.
- Reform Efforts: Illinois Voting Rights Act and Citizen Transparency and Public Participation Act
 - Mr. Brad McMillan, Esq., Member, Illinois Reform Commission; Executive Director, Institute for Principled Leadership in Public Service at Bradley University.
 - Ms. Terry Pastika, Esq., Executive Director/ Community Lawyer Citizen Advocacy Center
 - Ms. Whitney Woodward, Illinois Campaign for Political Reform, Policy Associate

Media Outlets in Attendance

More than 50 reporters attended the Center's specialized journalism training program. Below are examples of a few media outlets in attendance:

- Public Radio Station, Southern Illinois
- Chicago Sun Times
- Northwest Daily Herald
- Lawndale News
- Sarke County Communications.
- Ethnic Media representatives from the Polish, Hispanic, Asian, and African American media

*Government Accountability and the
Development of Systemic Democratic Protocols*

The Center responds to citizen inquiries and monitors local governments for undemocratic practices and policies that systemically bar citizen participation in the democratic process. Below is a sample of the government accountability issues addressed by the Center in 2011:

Redistricting at the State and Local Level: Midwest Democracy Network (MDN) & the Illinois Coalition for Accountable Redistricting (ICAR)

The Center is a lead member of the Midwest Democracy Network, a coalition of non-profit reform organizations committed to improving democratic institutions in Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. The coalition seeks to reduce the influence of money in politics; keep our courts fair and impartial; promote open and transparent government; create fair

processes for drawing congressional and legislative districts; guarantee the integrity of our election systems; promote ethical government and lobbying practices; and democratize the media.

Through MDN the Center helped launch the Illinois Campaign for Accountable Redistricting (ICAR). ICAR is a first time effort to create a redistricting coalition between good government organization and civil right organization to bring greater transparency, accountability, and accessibility to the redistricting process. Members of the coalition included: Citizen Advocacy Center, Illinois Campaign for Political Reform, League of Women Voters of Illinois, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, Asian American Institute, and the Latino Policy Forum. As a coalition, ICAR participated in public hearings, facilitated public education forums, educated the media, monitored the redistricting process and called out public officials for drawing political boundaries that protected political interests rather than the public interest. A successful result of ICAR's work, including the deepening of relationships among organizations, was the passage of the Illinois Voting Rights Act and the Illinois Transparency and Citizen Participation Act. ICAR also worked at the local level.

At the local level, the Center intensively monitored the DuPage County redistricting process and spoke out in public comment and at redistricting public hearings against obvious gerrymandering related to a district boundary line being drawn around a popular opposition candidate in the last election and the use of incumbent addresses to draw boundary lines.

Right of Assembly

2010 Census figures illustrate that DuPage County is growing in diversity. The result of our growing community of new neighbors is that more communities are seeking to establish places of worship. Based on several complex and controversial applications before the DuPage County Board requesting permits to build religious institutions in unincorporated DuPage County, the DuPage County Board sought to implement a ban on places of assembly for religious, civic, and cultural purposes from unincorporated residential areas. A coalition soon emerged that included religious institutions, DuPage United, land use lawyers and the Citizen Advocacy Center to speak out against the proposed rules as religious discrimination. The Center hosted coalition meetings, conducted research, testified at public hearings, and promoted the issue to the media. It was the Center's position that proposed changes to the County's zoning rules disadvantaged the fast growing minority growing population of DuPage County. The Center also challenged the County's reliance on township road claims when township representatives failed to participate in any of the hearings or the community dialogue. After a long drawn out process where hundreds of people attended public hearings and government meetings, the County revised its draconian proposal to allow the right of assembly for religious, civic, and cultural entities.

Building the Illinois Civic Coalition

The Center is working with the McCormick Foundation to build an Illinois Civic Coalition, a partnership among schools, institutions, and non-profit organizations seeking to build student skills in the realm of civics. The Illinois Civic Coalition provides a medley of professional development resources for educators and drives civic education policy reforms. To further our work in the coalition and at the Center, we attended the National Conference on Citizenship's Annual Conference in Arizona. A community lawyer met with civic education advocates in Florida who were successful in passing civic education legislation affecting middle school students within five years despite the poor economic status of the state and returned with a wealth of ideas for driving civic education policy reforms in Illinois.

Transparency Conference

The Center, McCormick Foundation, and the Better Government Association jointly convened a meeting with more than 25 advocacy groups, academia, social and traditional media, and civic groups to assess the barriers related to the state of government transparency in the realm of access to government records, meeting, procurement policies, campaign finance, budgeting and more. This was the first step in what we hope will be a long term working group to work in a multi-faceted and collaborative manner to make Illinois a model for transparency. Groups who participated in the first stage of discussions included:

- Theresa Amato (Facilitator)
- Ron P. Baiman (Center for Tax and Budget Accountability)
- Natalie Brouwer Potts (Center for Open Government)
- Don Craven (Illinois Press Association)
- Mary Dixon (ACLU)
- Stephen Franklin (Chicago Headline Club)
- Joe Germuska (Chicago Tribune)
- Brian Gladstein (Illinois Campaign for Political Reform)
- David Morrison (Illinois Public Interest Research Group)
- Dana Heupel (Illinois Issues)
- Brian Imus (Illinois Public Interest Research Group)
- Paula Lawson (League of Women Voters)
- Daniel X. O'Neil (Smart Chicago Collaborative)
- Laurel O'Sullivan (Public Policy Donors Forum)
- Michael Silver (Knight News Innovation Lab/Northwestern University)
- Dick Simpson (University of Illinois), and James Walsh (Medill Watchdog Accountability Initiative).
- Clark Bell (McCormick Foundation)
- David D. Hiller (McCormick Foundation)
- Shawn Healy (McCormick Foundation)
- Don Cook, (McCormick Foundation)
- Janet Liao (McCormick Foundation)
- Terry Pastika (Citizen Advocacy Center)
- Maryam Judar (Citizen Advocacy Center)
- Andy Shaw (Better Government Association)
- Rita McLennon (Better Government Association)
- Solomon Lieberman (Better Government Association)
- Emily Miller (Better Government Association)

Litigation and Issue Advocacy

Center community lawyers emphasize non-litigious approaches to using the law to strengthen the democratic process. Only as a last resort, and on behalf of select citizen causes, does the Center litigate to challenge abuses of power and to remove systemic barriers that impair citizen access to local government. Below are examples of how Center community lawyers advance our work:

Recurrent Requestor

In 2009 the Center was part of a working group convened by the Illinois Attorney General's Office to re-write the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. Since it went into effect in January 2010, there has been an onslaught of attempts to weaken the substantially revised statute. 2011 proved to be no different. A last minute bill was put forth in the spring session that sought to create the category of "vexatious requestor". The notion behind the bill was that once the same individual made an arbitrary number of requests to the same public body, they were automatically labeled as using FOIA for harassment purposes of the public body rather than for engaging in democracy. The vexatious users were also to be placed on a list maintained by the Illinois Attorney General's office. The Center immediately opposed the effort through conducting comprehensive comparative research that illustrated that only a handful of states had similar legislation and convening of a "citizen work group" wherein we dissected the proposed legislation with more than 20 individuals who were well versed in how to use the statute. The result of the citizen work group was the production of a more than 50 item list of public records that should be immediately available to any individual upon request and hundreds of people contacting state legislators opposing the bill. While the bill was not defeated, substantive portions were amended which included removal of the "vexatious list" maintained by the Attorney General's office and an increase in the threshold amount of requests per individual.

Local Zoning Rules of Procedure

For projects being proposed in a municipality, the local zoning public hearing process is the level where substantive details are addressed: project density, building use, building height, parking, environmental concerns, water retention and much more. Illinois law has established that members of the public have a right to provide comment, to "cross examine" or ask questions of the party that is seeking to propose a development, and to even subpoena individuals to be asked questions at the hearing. As part of the citizen organizing efforts to oppose a proposed Navistar project in Lisle, members of the public extensively used the public hearing process to have their voices heard. This included giving extensive public testimony, cross examination, and even submitted subpoenas for individuals not present at the hearings to be available for cross examination. A byproduct of the citizen effort was a bill introduced by a representative in the western suburbs to substantively change the rules of procedure at local zoning hearings to dramatically restrict the rights of individuals at local zoning public hearings.

The Center identified this legislation as citizen "back lash" legislation, introduced to curtail future citizen group's organizing power and based on the well organized effort of a Lisle group. The Center worked with community members, land use attorneys and the press. We outlined the primary impact of the bill would be a transformation of all community land issues into "NIMBY" issues and restricted citizen access to government. The result was that the bill was significantly amended to merely state that municipalities have the right to set rules of procedure that are in compliance with current state case law.

Public Recognition

The work of the Center was recognized by two entities in 2011:

The first was recognition by the statewide Illinois Campaign for Political Reform with their Inaugural Cynthia Canary Leadership Award. This award recognized the Center's leadership as being bold and effective in seeking and achieving reforms to Illinois transparency laws.

The second award was from the DuPage NAACP, with their Audley Award of Leadership Excellence. This award recognized the Center's outstanding work in promoting social justice and advancement for all people.

Leadership and Staff

2011 Board of Directors:

President: Theresa Amato
Vice-President: Steve DeLaRosa
Secretary: Gordon Goodman
Treasurer: Brian Conlon

Directors:

Barb Greenberg	Porus Dadabhoy	Claire Nader
Patricia Hicks	Milt Honel	Josh Silverstein

2011 Advisory Council Members:

Myrrha Guzman	Ken Lerner	Ellen Raymond
Corinne Johnson	Kate Millett	David Pezza
	Scott Mitzner	Marcia De La Rosa

2011 Staff:

Mr. Ryne Bex, Office Assistant/ Manager
Ms. Ala Alkhatib, Interim Office Assistant
Ms. Carla Eisenberg, Office Assistant/ Manager
Ms. Maryam Judar, Esq., Community Lawyer
Ms. Terry Pastika, Esq., Executive Director/Community Lawyer

Support, Contributions and Donations

The Center is financially supported by individual donations and foundation grants. The Center does not accept government or corporate money. Generous foundation support was provided by:

- The Crossroads Fund
- The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation
- The Joyce Foundation
- The McCormick Tribune Foundation
- The Shafeek Nader Trust for the Community Interest

Additional revenues were received from:

- Individual donations
- The Public Interest Law Initiative for a summer intern scholarship

Tax compliance services are donated by:

- Ms. Maggie Biel and the firm of Andrich, Argo & Associates, Ltd. CPA's

While the Center has hundreds of volunteers, we would like to specifically recognize the following individuals for their outstanding dedication and substantial assistance to the Center:

- Mark Daniel, Esq., Daniel Law Firm
- Ms. Ellen Raymond, Esq.
- Mrs. Gloria Backman

Thank you to the 2011 Interns:

- Sherif Abdel Azim
- Sarah Bridgewater
- Jack Bently
- Sulushash Dossymkulova
- Herbert Houston
- Jason Han
- Emanuel Marchan
- Nick Morales
- William Hickey
- Stephen Sabel
- Sarah Smith
- Christine You

The Center complies with all record-keeping and filing requirements mandated by state and federal law. Our corporate records are available for inspection at our office and are on file with the appropriate State agencies. The Center does not release the names of all of our individual donors nor do we sell our mailing list to other groups. The individuals listed in our Annual Report have agreed to be recognized.

The Center welcomes donations of time, energy, equipment or money. Donations to the Center are tax-deductible as provided by law.

Appendix of Citizen Advocacy Center In the News - 2011

Date	Title	Source	Subject
02/25/11	LTE: How to quash citizen involvement	Daily Herald	Civic Engagement
01/31/11	Law firm donates to DuPage board members, wins contract	Daily Herald	Ethics
04/07/11	Officials say budget woes may put vehicle stipends on chopping block	Daily Herald	Ethics
04/13/11	Agencies treat nepotism differently	saukvalley.com	Ethics
10/19/11	Improper property tax break costs millions	Chicago Tribune	Ethics
11/16/11	Quinn's new tollway team	Chicago Tribune	Ethics
11/04/11	Reform advocacy group plans to honor DLA Piper, Elmhurst attorney	Chicago Daily Law Bulletin	Event Notice
08/25/11	Quinn defends Illinois Tollway board 7-1 vote to increase toll rates effective Jan. 1	Daily Herald	Illinois Tollway
08/25/11	Drivers pay higher tolls starting Jan. 1	Daily Herald	Illinois Tollway
08/26/11	Quinn defends rate increases	saukvalley.com	Illinois Tollway
08/30/11	Illinois Tollway Board approves steep 87 percent toll increase	Sun Times	Illinois Tollway
01/26/11	Talk of jail and rehab centers spark concern in Libertyville	Trib Local Libertyville	Land Use
03/12/11	Master plan draws heat from residents	Daily Herald	Land Use
06/18/11	County Farm plan moves along	Daily Herald	Land Use
06/28/11	City seeks clarity after building height snafu	Trib Local Elmhurst	Land Use
08/07/11	Lisle hearing defines cross-examination	Daily Herald	Land Use
09/15/11	Citizens claim new text could let developers bypass rules	The Elmhurst Independent	Land Use
09/16/11	How tall is too tall?	Press Publications	Land Use
09/21/11	Officials expect 'packed house' when county's master plan is discussed next week	Trib Local Libertyville	Land Use
09/25/11	County Farm master plan goes to Libertyville Board	Daily Herald	Land Use
09/28/11	Libertyville trustees won't endorse county Master Plan until residents' questions are answered	Trib Local Libertyville	Land Use
09/29/11	More clarity sought before Libertyville Board vote on Lake County master plan	Chicago Tribune	Land Use
10/11/11	DuPage adopts rules for churches, mosques	Daily Herald	Land Use
09/29/11	Controversial changes to text approved by zoning group	The Elmhurst Independent	Land Use

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10/11/11	Mosque controversies prompt zoning change in DuPage	WGN Radio.com	Land Use
10/12/11	DuPage tightens control on new houses of worship	Chicago Tribune	Land Use
10/12/11	Committee May Tackle 'Archaic' Notification Process for Zoning Changes	Elmhurst Patch	Land Use
10/12/11	Civil Liberties advocates laud new rules for religious facilities	Naperville Sun	Land Use
10/20/11	Zoning Code words changed but height limit not decided	The Elmhurst Independent	Land Use
10/27/11	How residents receive zoning changes is reviewed	Trib Local Elmhurst	Land Use
03/07/11	FOI requests: Exercising rights or clogging government	Daily Herald	Open Government
03/08/11	Is Illinois' Open Meetings Act open enough?	Northwest Herald	Open Government
03/31/11	Schlaker Alleges Open Meetings Act Violations, Files Review Request	Oswego Patch	Open Government
04/02/11	Backlogs, leniency on new public records law	Chicago Tribune	Open Government
04/03/11	Recently overhauled laws on open records face backlash	Chicago Tribune	Open Government
04/05/11	AG Office Requests Release of Closed Meeting Minutes	Lisle Patch	Open Government
04/30/11	Stimulus transparency: Nonprofit group declines to show how it spent taxpayer money	Chicago Tribune	Open Government
05/06/11	LTE: Assaults in FOIA worsen civic society in Illinois	Elmhurst Press	Open Government
05/24/11	FOIA changes worry group	Northwest Herald	Open Government
06/28/11	Elmhurst Committee Weighs Circumstances for Providing Meeting Notice to Neighbors	Elmhurst Patch	Open Government
07/07/11	Is County's locked door a deterrent?	saukvalley.com	Open Government
07/18/11	Group questions public input policy	saukvalley.com	Open Government
07/27/11	One year waiting period for Illinois' FOIA "recurrent requestors"	Sunlight Foundation	Open Government
08/31/11	FOIA changes create a class for 'nuisances'	Daily Herald	Open Government
08/31/11	Shorewood Resident Wants More Meeting Details	The Times Weekly.com	Open Government
09/08/11	LTE: Transparency Necessary	Northwest Herald	Open Government
09/08/11	Citizens could see contract proposals in District 205 talks	The Elmhurst Independent	Open Government

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	Citizen Center says Council's new definitions 'legally indefensible'	The Elmhurst Independent	Open Government
09/15/11	Citizen Center says Council's new definitions 'legally indefensible'	The Elmhurst Independent	Open Government
09/19/11	Council to limit time for public comment	saukvalley.com	Open Government
10/18/11	Elmhurst considers rules regulating how citizens address the city	Trib Local Elmhurst	Open Government
11/08/11	Mayor refuses to release records	Chicago Tribune	Open Government
12/04/11	Word on the street: Candidate seems bit unsure of party choice	Journal Star	Open Government
12/05/11	Group seeks to map out a plan to 'restore' Illinois	Illinois Issues	Open Government
12/22/11	State, Local Officials Reluctant To Hand Over College Campus Security Plans To Public	Chicago Talks	Open Government
04/01/11	Redistricting: A primer for journalists	Northern Illinois Newspaper Association (NINA)	Redistricting
04/18/11	Redistricting reeks	Rockford Register Star blog	Redistricting
05/17/11	Reformers want more input on redistricting	thesouthern.com	Redistricting
07/09/11	Voters are the losers in current map process	Daily Herald	Redistricting
08/31/11	Analysis of Redistricting in Kane and Lake County	Proviso Mathematics and Science Academy	Redistricting
07/07/11	Redistricting dashes a potential DuPage Board candidacy	Chicago Tribune	Redistricting
08/31/11	Law Student Internship Program	Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI)	Student Internship
10/27/11	Elmhurst mulls rules regulating how citizens address the city	Chicago Tribune	