



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **CRICKET ISLAND FOUNDATION AWARDS \$440,000 IN GRANTS TO YOUTH-LED SOCIAL CHANGE ORGANIZATIONS IN CHICAGO**

New York, NY (December 5, 2008) – Today, the Cricket Island Foundation announced its newest group of seven grantee partners, all youth-led social change organizations from the Chicago, IL area. The Foundation will award five-year general operating support grants to each organization to enable the grantees to focus on capacity building and organizational development.

Following a rigorous multi-stage application process, the groups were chosen based on their strong commitment to youth-led social change, community leadership, and commitment to organizational development. Seven Chicago-based organizations will receive general operating support grants at an average size of \$60,000 each year from 2009-2013, totaling over \$2M in grants. All grantees have excelled in areas of youth leadership development, policy and advocacy, and partnering with young people to identify community issues and implement solutions. The Foundation hopes that in this five year partnership, the grantees will establish a learning community that will strengthen their respective organizations, share best practices, and promote youth-led social change.

“In a society that does not always embrace young people as capable decision-makers, we saw these organizations as field leaders that effectively partner with young people to create solutions for community challenges,” says Elizabeth Sak, Cricket Island Foundation’s Executive Director. “Our new grantees in Chicago view young people as assets and leaders, and it is the Foundation’s role to support our grantees as they continue to develop and grow their organizations.”

The grant recipients are as follows:

**Albany Park Neighborhood Council** - A grassroots, intergenerational community organization with a mission to create a safer community, improve the quality of education and preserve affordable housing in Albany Park. [www.apncorganizing.org](http://www.apncorganizing.org)

**Chicago Freedom School** - A movement building organization that brings together youth and adult allies from across Chicago to study past social movements and develop strategies to address the root causes of social inequality and oppression. [www.chicagofreedomschool.org](http://www.chicagofreedomschool.org)

**Inner-City Muslim Action Network** - A community-based organization that provides arts programming, direct services, and organizing opportunities to the Muslim community and their allies.

[www.imancentral.org](http://www.imancentral.org)

**Korean American Resource and Cultural Center** - A multiservice organization that serves Chicago's Korean American community through social services and programs in education, organizing/advocacy and culture. [www.chicagokrcc.org](http://www.chicagokrcc.org)

**Little Village Environmental Justice Organization** - An intergenerational and community-based organization that works with youth and families to organize for environmental and social justice in the southwest side of Chicago. [www.lvejo.org](http://www.lvejo.org)

**Tepochcalli Community Education Project** - A community-based organization that mobilizes youth to address the root causes of issues afflicting the youth in Chicago's Little Village, including gang violence, lack of safe after school options for teens, and the disconnect between high school programming and higher education.

**Young Women's Empowerment Project** - An organization rooted in a harm reduction model, that offers safe, respectful, and free of judgment spaces for young women impacted by the sex trade and street economy. [www.youarepriceless.org](http://www.youarepriceless.org)

The Cricket Island Foundation is a family foundation representing three generations. Founded in 2001, its mission is to develop the capacity and commitment of young people to improve their lives and communities, as well as the world around them. Recognizing that organizations need the time and support to become stronger and more sustainable, in 2005 the Foundation began providing long-term general operating support to critical yet under-funded organizations that offer meaningful opportunities for youth to contribute to positive societal change. In addition, though the Foundation provides funding nationally, in 2008 it made a strategic decision to focus regionally in order to develop local organizations, build partnerships with and among grantees, and promote collaborations with local funders. For more information, please visit [www.cricketisland.org](http://www.cricketisland.org).

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