

# 2009 Oxford Circle Community Festival



## My Final Project Report by Bianca Lani Prunés

This summer, I was a summer service worker, in my very own neighborhood. I worked with The Oxford Circle Christian Community Development Association (OCCDA) leaders, an intern from Goshen College and others who volunteered in our Summer Education Program (SEP). My job was to help plan, set up and insure things went smoothly. It was a job that required a lot of patience, energy, and creativity.

A few years before, I was just a volunteer and always worked under an intern. This time, the intern and I were co-leaders. I learned to give and receive criticism and to step forward when necessary.

Many SEP campers brought their families and friends to church every Sunday during and after the camp had ended. Seeing that was very encouraging.

Also, seeing kids begging to pray over our morning and to recite the scripture by heart, was uplifting. It showed how

my work, and the work of the other intern and volunteers, was making a difference even in the smallest ways.

I also learned to be persistent and determined to the task at hand, and any other task that

looked just as difficult and challenging. I hope to return next year and learn some more. Please pray for me as I start my senior year of high school this Fall.

"Blessed are the ones who do not walk in the council of the wicked, or stand in the way of sinners, or join those who have no use for God. They are like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers." Psalms 1:1,3



*"I grew as a leader and became more*

*open to discuss and share problems or struggles openly instead of quietly complaining or becoming frustrated."*

## Extreme Makeover at OCMC!



**THE NEW REALITY**  
by Ron Tinsley

With her pensive look and imposing presence, The Statue of Liberty is a symbol of freedom and opportunity for Americans and those who emigrate here. Inscribed on her tablet is:

'Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free.'

This bold statement is a thoroughly Biblical idea found in several scriptures where God tells his people to protect the defenseless: the widow, orphan, the poor and the alien. The United States of America has become a better nation because of this diversity and offers this new reality to all newcomers.

Historically, cities have been the drivers of culture and places of refuge. They are where we display our cultural treasures and our empathy through museums and ministries to the poor, elderly and disabled. It is where someone who does not speak English can find a glass of water and a place to sleep. Even the prophet Jeremiah encouraged the exiles to seek the welfare of the people and systems and structures around them (Jeremiah 29).

Oxford Circle Mennonite Church (OCMC) seeks to respond with the good news of Jesus Christ using authentic community, radical discipleship and peace education. Since urbanization is now a global reality with more than 50% of all people living on our planet inhabiting urban centers, how does Anabaptist theology respond to this?

Jung Joo Park participates in the International Visitors Exchange Program (IVEP) through Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). She comes from Seoul, South Korea. She spends her time in Philadelphia working with the OCCDA and its partners in local ministry efforts. She brings extensive experience as a peace activist in volatile regions of the world. Before her arrival, MCC Asia sent a delegation including OCMC members on a learning exchange tour to South Korea.

"I take English classes twice a week and get to know a diversity of people," says Jung Joo. She comes from a homogenous culture that has to adapt to a multicultural future as foreigners arrive in South Korea to work.



"She works in our afterschool program with youth," says Anita Lyndaker Studer, Executive Director of the Oxford Circle Community Development Association (OCCDA). "We have also partnered with Philadelphia Mennonite High School to use her and their students to teach weekly conflict resolution classes at Carnell Public School." Her involvement allows her to continue using her peace education skills and experience intentional community through Philadelphia area Anabaptists churches, ministries and organizations.

Through her efforts, we pray and hope that residents in the OC area will be able to breathe free experiencing the love of Jesus Christ in this new reality.

*"Having friends from many backgrounds frees me to accomplish God's purposes. Once I go home, I hope to introduce a deeper understanding of diversity to South Korea."*

--Jung Joo



## OXFORD CIRCLE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

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*To extend  
healing and hope in the  
Oxford Circle community,  
believing that God's  
purpose of reconciling  
all people to Jesus  
leads us to minister  
on spiritual, physical,  
social & economic  
levels.*



## NOTES FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

### MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

We have the following ministry and resource opportunity opportunities and welcome your participation!

#### Human resources:

- After School interns and volunteers—Beginning October 2009, contact Jungjoo Park at jooya29@hanmail.net or (267) 265-6070
- Professional grant writer to assist in writing grants for community programming
- Work teams to finish work on 2nd floor for OCCDA and youth room (can use any skill level!)  
Contact Dan Umstead @ dumstead@mcc.org or (610) 574-2959.

**Financial/Material resources:** Contact Anita Lyndaker-Studer @ occcda@verizon.net or (267) 265-1709

- Ceiling mount projector for worship in new sanctuary
- 10 computers, 2 printers, and software for church and OCCDA offices and computer lab
- Sponsors for children in after school and summer camp program. Cost for OCCDA is approximately \$25/week per student of which families provide \$5/week per student.
- Funding to complete 2nd floor:
  - a. Carpet - \$5000
  - b. Lights - \$2600
  - c. Trim out Electrical - \$2000
  - d. Showers for bathrooms - \$5600
- Funding for Moveable Partitions for Sunday and After School Classrooms (total = \$21,000)
  - a. 2 moveable partition @ \$6600 each
  - b. 2 moveable partition @ \$4000 each

### Board of Directors

#### Officers:

Leonard Dow, President  
Hong Tran, Vice President  
Karen Jantzi, Secretary  
Carlos Rodriguez, Treasurer

#### Members:

Janelle Junkin  
Jennifer Leaman  
Bianca Lani Prunes  
Tiffany Shoup  
Ron Sider  
Ken Rush  
George Young



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## NOTES FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

DECEMBER 2009

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by Lani Prunes

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### UPCOMING DATES

12/16: 4-5:30-  
After school Christmas party

1/12:  
After school resumes

1/15:  
Carnell Elementary  
conflict resolution  
program resumes

1/26:  
OCCDDA Board Meeting

3/12-14  
EMM K-Team @ OCCDDA

3/15-19  
Mediation Skills Training  
Institute for Church  
Leaders

### A WORD FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

As Thanksgiving fast approaches and fall transitions into winter, I am reminded that last year this time I and my family were on my sabbatical from OCMC enjoying the warmth and beaches of my wife's native home of Puerto Rico! What a difference a year makes!

In addition to my sabbatical, I am reminded that a year ago we were in the midst of aggressively raising funds for the new site purchase, dutifully hoping and praying that our desire to expand our 'territory' to occupy a new home for both OCCDDA and OCMC would come to fruition. It is somewhat ironic that our transition to our new home is only a 'stone's throw away' from our previous home of 65 years! Yet I want you to know that we have traveled quite 'far' by going across the street. As a result, a seismic shift has occurred in our midst – are you feeling it? The shift of which I speak is on many levels.

#### Location Shift

We are no longer the small white church on the corner. As a congregation, we now occupy (sanctuary, Sunday school, offices) almost 3 times more square footage and OCCDDA ownership of the entire space dwarfs our previous location.

This larger space gives us more room to not only stretch out for ourselves but to grow and impact this community in the name of Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I know for myself to have appropriate space to meet and/or counsel people/couples has been a tremendous blessing. In addition, there is a noticeable increase of traffic flow from both members and non-members coming by our office for both church related issues as well as social/civic concerns in our community. It is also important to note that the location shift has increased our expectation for the use and maintenance of our space. This expectation that I speak of also reverberates in the larger Oxford Circle community as their expectation as to who we are and what is our "enlarged" responsibility has forever changed.

#### Spiritual Shift

There is also a spirit of expectancy amongst us. OCMC and the board of OCCDDA recognize that indeed all things are possible in Christ. Ministries in our community and outside Philadelphia are excited for us. We are humbled, yet rejoice in the knowledge that God is at work and making things happen amongst us.



### Congregational Shift

We are continuing our trend of increased attendance over the years, now averaging 115-125 and have reached well over 140 at least 1-2 times a month. We received a bump in our attendance since the summer and especially since we have transitioned into our new location. Praise God this bump has been largely from within our OC community through our ministries.

As I close, it is of extreme importance that each of you realizes that you have also directly participated in our ongoing seismic shift! We encourage you to continue to pray, financially contribute, volunteer, as well as visiting/contacting us. For it is by God's grace each of you have enabled us to make a difference in our community – thank you! Your intentional acts of kindness have and will continue to be the *difference maker* as we close out 2009 and look forward to 2010. Indeed, **What a difference a year makes!**

**Leonard Dow**