

Greater Dayton IAF Sponsoring Committee

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF)? Founded by Saul Alinsky in 1940, IAF is the oldest and largest community organizing network in the country. Today, IAF has affiliates in 56 cities in the United States, 3 in the United Kingdom, 2 in Germany, and 1 in Australia.

What is the mission of the IAF? IAF builds broad-based, non-partisan organizations of dues-paying member congregations, schools, unions, business associations, and non-profits committed to building power for sustainable social and economic change. IAF organizing develops a constituency of leaders to become citizens in the fullest sense: participants in democratic decision-making and agents of the creation of a more just society.

What has IAF accomplished? IAF has a strong track record of improving communities. For example, IAF affiliates have accomplished the following:

Living Wage: In Baltimore, conceived, designed and passed the nation's first living wage. Since then, over 100 jurisdictions have passed a living wage.

Affordable Housing: Developed 5,000 new, affordable, owner occupied homes in New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington DC and created an \$87 million housing trust fund in Montgomery County, Maryland.

School Reform: Engaged thousands of students, parents, teachers, and principals in improving schools. Established partnerships to run seven schools in the Bronx and Brooklyn and partnered with New York City to build a state-of-the-art campus for four new high schools in the South Bronx. In 1996, established a model after-school initiative in Baltimore that provides academic, cultural and recreational enrichment for over 1000 students each year.

Neighborhood Redevelopment: Secured a \$1 billion commitment from DC government for neighborhood redevelopment, \$295 million from the City of Philadelphia and \$59 million from the City of Baltimore to eradicate blighted neighborhoods.

Who are IAF's members? The members of IAF organizations are institutions: congregations, schools (public, private and charter), unions, business associations, and neighborhood and civic associations.

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Darryl Fairchild, Organizer * dfairchild@donet.com * 937-239-0688

Where does IAF get its money? IAF does not accept any government funds. IAF organizations are primarily funded by the dues from member institutions. The remaining funds come from local and national foundations.

What kinds of issues do IAF organizations work on? IAF organizations work on issues that emerge out of conversations within member institutions. IAF organizations have worked on health care, education, housing, immigration, employment, public safety, the environment, and other issues of fundamental importance. The organization's agenda is set by the institutions that make up the organization.

What is a Sponsoring Committee? A team of leaders from institutions who are exploring developing an IAF affiliated organization in their community (neighborhood, city, county or metropolitan area). Its purpose is to determine with other leaders if there is a critical mass of institutions and money to build a broad-base organization. Its goal is to develop an organization that represents the economic, geographic, religious, racial and ethnic diversity of a community in order to legitimately "stand for the whole." Once enough institutions have joined and the needed funding is secured, the Sponsoring Committee will decide to "go public" and officially announce its founding as an IAF-affiliated organization. Greater Dayton's goal is to have its Founding Assembly in September 2010.

What is the process of the Sponsoring Committee? Leaders representing religious, labor, business, community and civic institutions invite IAF to work with them to build an organization. IAF assigns a professional organizer to assist and train leaders. A founding campaign is conducted. This campaign is built on thousands of one-on-one conversations conducted by leaders and their organizer. During each phase, these conversations serve to build relationships, recruit, and to understand the interests of leaders, institutions and the broader community. By listening, the Sponsoring Committee is able to identify the top interests and to develop a platform to present at its Founding Assembly. This platform is then advanced with key decisions makers in the civic, corporate, and public sectors of the community.

What does it cost to be part of a Sponsoring Committee? This varies by locality. For 2010, Greater Dayton leaders have determined they need to raise \$40,000 through investments from local congregations, foundations and contributors. This funding is used to pay for a professional organizer (Darryl Fairchild) and training provided by the IAF. Each institution is asked to support the Sponsoring Committee by investing according to its interest. As the organization is founded, members will determine and agree to pay annual dues starting in January 2011.

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