



THE VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE:
LEARNING FROM OUR PAST &
CO-CREATING THE FUTURE
2022 Annual Report

FY2022 STAFF LIST

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Rev. Rachel Birkhahn-Rommelfanger | Advocacy Manager
Lisa M. Bly Jones, Ed.D. | Chief Operating Officer
Mari Castaldi | Director of Policy & Advocacy
Etta Davis | Operations Manager
LaVida Davis | Program Manager
Ashley Hamilton | Frontline Focus Program Manager
Andrew Hertzberg | Development Associate
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Dana Horstein | Program Manager
Angela Morrison | Policy Engagement Manager
Williette Nyanue | Marketing & Communication Manager
Marlen Perez | Training & Technical Assistance Program Manager
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CJC Community,

I want to thank you for the warm reception I have received since stepping into the CEO role.

From the start, I have understood the power of the CJC community and what we can accomplish together. We are a close-knit collective body with deep roots that stretch across more than four decades. We have a rich history of being the go-to entity that raises awareness and takes up a cause to increase employment opportunities for those who are unemployed and underemployed.

In recognition of systemic, institutional, and individual racism creating disparities in the way people of color fare in the labor market, we have deeply fixed racial equity as a core tenet of CJC. Picking up the strategic plan and staying true to what we learned through the planning process, we engaged staff, board members, and external stakeholders to create an aspirational vision for an anti-racist workforce development system.

With equity being a high ranking priority for CJC, we have been able to lend our voice and perspective to a variety of tables and coalitions. These efforts also include fiercely monitoring the implementation of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), influencing policy priorities as part of the Cook County Equity Taskforce, and working together with colleagues from across the state as part of the Governor's Workforce Commission on Equity and Access to reinvigorate the state of Illinois' workforce board.

The policy team continues to push our "Skills for Good Jobs Agenda," forward each year by educating and informing members of the Illinois General Assembly and the Governor's Office. In coalition with more than 50 partners, we continue to lift up the importance of investing in equitable workforce development using state funds and eliminating structural barriers to employment while advancing system wide improvements.

Direct engagement with smaller community-based providers serving Black and Latinx communities revealed the need for more flexible funding, specifically for supportive services. We will continue to press for Barrier Reduction Funds and expand the list of eligible supportive services while ensuring these funds reach the most marginalized communities and job seekers.

As individuals and organizations suffered with staff burnout with so much turnover and transition in the field, the capacity building team was able to test and pilot new trainings with a variety of methods. We listened to feedback from surveys and responded by offering timely and relevant virtual training for those who are in front of jobseekers delivering services during unprecedented times.

Thanks for the unwavering support of CJC and your continuous dedication to the work!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa M. Bly-Jones".

Lisa M. Bly-Jones, Ed.D.

CEO, Chicago Jobs Council

CHARTING A BOLD NEW DIRECTION

After an extensive search, Chicago Jobs Council (CJC) announced that Dr. Lisa Bly-Jones, a workforce champion, and integral member of CJC's board for six years, would join the CJC team as CEO effective January 2022.

In light of the leadership transition and all we had experienced over the past two years (the pandemic, unprecedented unemployment rates, a sluggish economy emerging with high inflation, unstable interest rates, and disproportionate impacts on women and people of color in the labor market), we began re-examining our priorities and determining focus areas. The vision emerged of CJC proactively and strategically leading the way to champion relevant and pressing matters that impact jobseekers and stakeholders in the workforce development field.

In recognition of systemic, institutional, and individual racism creating disparities in the way people of color fare in the labor market, CJC's board and staff developed a strategic plan that is anchored in racial equity. Using this strategic plan as a guide, we began to have internal conversations about the various levels of racism that exist—personal, interpersonal, institutional, and structural—and how we could begin to approach our work with a sense of wonder, thinking about how CJC can change conditions to achieve racially equitable outcomes.

In February 2022, CJC began working with Clair Minson, Founder and Principal Consultant at Sandra Grace, LLC, and a national expert who focuses on the intersection of racial equity and workforce development, to gain a common understanding and shared language around and deepen our commitment to racial equity. With our consultant, staff engaged in discussions about the history of racism in workforce development policy; the manifestations of racism in program design and service delivery, engagement with funders, and engagement with employers; and the role of narrative in upholding racism in the field. This work led us to draft an anti-racist workforce development definition that was shared with external stakeholders to test and further refine.



After establishing the anti-racist workforce development definition, using key insights from the brainstorming discussions, focus groups and field research, our consultant worked closely with staff to co-create an anti-racist workforce development framework. The framework will be used to guide the implementation and operationalization of CJC's strategic priorities and provide a process for field partners to understand and advance anti-racist workforce development strategies.

CJC was also awarded Design B&B's 2022 Good Egg Grant this year. Through the grant, CJC was selected to partner with Design B&B over the course of the year to develop a brand strategy and identity, print collateral, and web & experience design that is aligned with our reimagined vision and direction for the organization. The entire staff has been working closely in sessions with Design B&B to architect a bold external brand that raises CJC's profile as a comprehensive systems change organization and attracts like-minded advocates, donors, funders, workforce development professionals, community based organizations, governmental organizations, and elected officials to further partner in this work.

This fiscal year has been an exciting moment in time where we are imagining our future and looking forward to bringing our entire community on this journey with us.



CAPACITY BUILDING UPDATES

In FY 2022, our capacity building team continued to navigate the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, having pivoted to virtual trainings and events during our last fiscal year. Although the initial demand for programming brought forth by the pandemic decreased as workforce staff and organizations grew acclimated to working virtually, we filled 612 seats over the course of the fiscal year and received positive feedback from participants in post-training evaluations: 98% of respondents felt the content was beneficial, 97% learned new concepts and strategies, 90% felt more confident in their work, and 99% of survey respondents would recommend CJC trainings to a colleague. We plan to continue our virtual programs through the end of 2022, with the plan of returning to in-person events in 2023.

CJC expanded its capacity building offerings this fiscal year through a partnership with the Illinois Department of Human Services. In this new initiative, CJC provides training to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Employment & Training providers in Illinois. During the first year of our partnership, we trained 234 professionals from more than 25 organizations. We look forward to expanding our reach in FY 2023.

Our capacity building team also continued to develop personalized trainings for organizations in the workforce development field. We partnered with more than 20 organizations to develop and facilitate trainings, covering topics such as Leadership Development, Career Coaching, Racial Equity with Employment Partners, and Cultural Competency & Trans Affirming Workplace.

In addition to our core programming, we led our Workforce Professionals Credential (WPC) and the Chicago College and Career Advising Credential (CCCAC) to increase individual leadership within the field, support improvements in organizational effectiveness, and advance system-wide improvements. Our intensive, yearlong WPC cohort graduated 14 individuals from organizations across Illinois, including Greater Chicago Food Depository, Harold Washington College, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, North Lawndale Employment Network, and more. The cohort applied their learning in [Capstone projects](#), which offered practical solutions to actual workforce entities, helping them solve a problem they were facing in their work. The projects WPC graduates presented were: Creating Strategies for Retention and Recruitment for the Greater West Town Community Development Project; Client Engagement Post-Services for Upwardly Global; and, Internship Opportunities & Marketing for YWCA Evanston/North Shore.



Our CCCAC program, which provides workforce professionals with opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and beliefs they need to help youth explore their passions and find pathway options that are right for them, graduated 15 professionals from the workforce development, education, and youth development fields. CCCAC participants also developed [group projects](#) based on their learnings and expertise on the training content. Projects ranged from a podcast on creating an internship program to a short video explaining apprenticeship and resources on becoming an entrepreneur. All projects are open source and intended to be shared widely.

During FY 2022, we continued sharing our [Career Readiness Framework \(CRF\)](#) with the field. In February 2022, we were asked to present the framework and our innovative approach to career readiness programming with the Workforce Accelerator Fund's Community of Practice hosted by the California Workforce Board, so they could integrate the learnings into their own work. Other presenters at this event included individuals from Chmura Economics and Analytics, LeadersUp, Love Never Fails, Highroad Alliance, and the Foundation for California Community Colleges.



POLICY UPDATES

This fiscal year provided unique challenges for our policy and advocacy work. In addition to the passage of significant criminal justice reform in 2021, which shifted the attention of elected officials to other issues, we saw an unusual legislative calendar in 2022 with the session officially ending April 8th to allow time for elected officials to campaign for the June primaries. Additionally, much of the January session was canceled due to the Omicron variant of COVID-19, which left only two months to pass legislation. Despite these challenges, CJC was able to advance critical policy work.

Our “Skills for Good Jobs Agenda,” coalition, which lifts up the importance of investing in equitable workforce development using state funds and eliminating structural barriers to employment among the members of the Illinois General Assembly (ILGA) and Governor’s office, increased from 15 to 53 organizations in 2021. The coalition’s organizing and advocacy during the General Assembly resulted in \$110 million in new resources towards workforce and employment programs in Illinois, including reinstating the Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) program.

Our direct engagement with smaller community-based providers serving Black and Latinx communities revealed the need for more flexible funding, specifically for supportive services for participants facing unprecedented barriers from the brutal combination of systemic racism and health/economic impacts of COVID-19. The new JTED funding includes dedicated funding for a Barrier Reduction Fund, which will reimburse for emergency needs at higher amounts than other sources, and expand the list of eligible supportive services. CJC has continued to collaborate with coalition partners to influence the implementation of these funds so that they maximize flexibility and innovate with new equity-focused initiatives.

CJC also successfully advocated for the establishment of two additional Barrier Reduction resources: \$2 million Barrier Reduction Fund administered by Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and connected to SNAP E&T and up to \$21 million per year for a Barrier Reduction Program as part of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA). We are now focused on influencing implementation of the new funds to ensure they reach the most marginalized communities and job seekers.

We continued to make progress throughout the winter/spring session, advocating for Failure to Appear Legislation which aims to eliminate driver’s license suspensions for failure to appear in court. The bill returned to the Rules committee and we believe it is well-positioned to move forward next session.



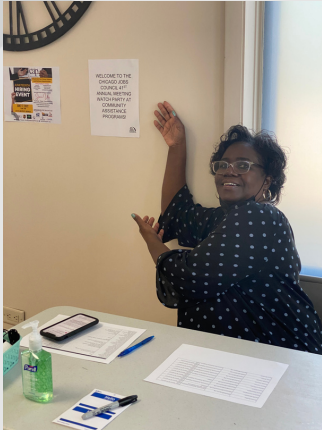
Over the course of the year, CJC and our partners in the Employment Task Force (ETF) were instrumental in pushing the employment and income priority to the forefront of the Chicago Continuum of Care's (CoC) Action Agenda to end homelessness, and building out the interventions needed to make sure that thousands more job seekers experiencing homelessness get the workforce services they need. The long-term goal of the Employment & Income Navigator Project is to build a dedicated, funded employment strategy for homeless job seekers coming through Coordinated Entry. This fiscal year, the Department of Family and Support Services committed to support a Senior Program Manager position for one year using CARES Act funds. CJC will focus on monitoring and measuring specific interventions that will improve outcomes for African American job seekers in the homeless response system.

In September 2021, the Illinois Equity & Access Workforce Commission was launched to create a vision for an equitable, accessible, and effective future state workforce system grounded in an understanding of user and stakeholder experience, including how racial, social, and geographic inequities inform experience and outcomes across Illinois' federally and state-funded workforce programs. Both CJC Policy Engagement Manager Angela Morrison and CEO Lisa Bly-Jones were appointed as commissioners to serve on the Commission. Lisa Bly-Jones also serves as co-chair of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board Equity Taskforce and has been invited to serve as a member of the Funding & Infrastructure Working Group as part of this effort.

In response to passage of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), which established Illinois as a national leader on climate action, CJC shifted its expertise to the Act's implementation process and ensuring it meets the equity provisions entailed in the Act. CJC's staff co-lead the Jobs & Economic Justice Subcommittee of the Illinois Clean Jobs Coalitions. This subcommittee seeks to influence the workforce development components of CEJA, which are intended to prioritize the job-seekers, workers and communities disproportionately impacted by environmental and economic injustice. CJC's Policy Engagement Manager Angela Morrison was also appointed by the governor to the Energy Transition Workforce Commission, which will work on a report regarding the anticipated impact of the energy transition and a comprehensive set of recommendations to address changes to the Illinois workforce during the period of 2020 through 2050.



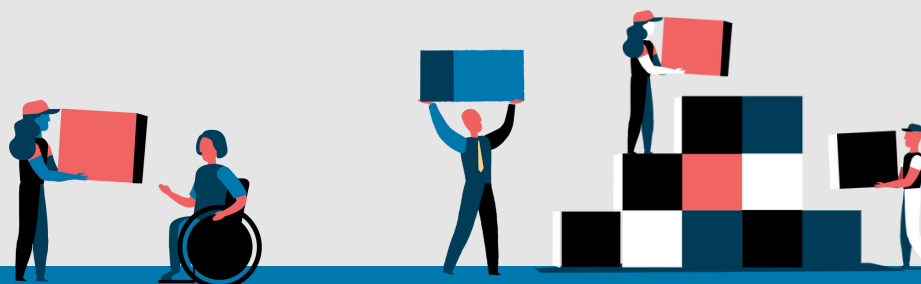
41ST ANNUAL MEETING



CJC hosted its [41st Annual Meeting Celebration](#) on June 10, 2022. With the loosening of COVID-19 restrictions and the widespread adoption of the COVID-19 vaccine, we were able to offer a hybrid annual meeting with options to view the meeting online or at one of three in-person sites throughout the city. Our in-person watch parties took place at CJC’s office, Revolution Workshop’s office, and at Community Assistance Programs (CAPs) office so that attendees located in different neighborhoods throughout the city could have an opportunity for some of the in-person networking that we are used to at our Annual Meeting.

In addition to this being our first hybrid Annual Meeting, we also hosted our first virtual silent auction as part of the event experience. Event registrants and the general community were able to bid on dozens of prizes donated by businesses from all over Chicago. Some of the highlights included tickets to the Lyric Opera of Chicago, an unlimited pass to AIR® Aerial Fitness in Chicago’s South Loop, a gift card and swag bag to Revolution Brewing, and several book bundles donated by Haymarket Publishing. The silent auction was a fun addition to the event and we look forward to bringing it back next year.

The highlight of our annual meeting celebration was a fireside chat hosted by CJC’s CEO, Dr. Lisa Bly-Jones, around the theme *The View From the Bridge: Learning From Our Past & Co-Creating the Future*. Clair Minson joined Dr. Bly-Jones in a conversation centered around the possibilities for workforce development when we consider racial equity for the sector, the impact that centering racial equity in workforce development would have for the city and state, and how the landscape was evolving around the nation.



Other features of the day included our board presentation and the [presentation of our annual Betty J Willhoite Award](#) recognizing an individual, organization, or team that has gone above and beyond in advancing CJC's work and improving the field to Griselda Piedra, Community Relations Manager at PODER & Oprima-1 LLC. Griselda has more than 20 years of experience working across various departments at PODER to continually improve the organization with learning gained from training and professional development cohorts. She also served as a guest speaker at multiple CJC trainings and served as an advocate for the needs of her community outside of professional settings. We were thrilled to present Griselda this year's Betty J. Willhoite award.



We'd like to thank our awardees, guest speaker, watch party partners, donors, sponsors and attendees for joining us as we navigated a new Annual Meeting experience. We hope the day excited and invigorated participants on the work that is yet to be done in the workforce development field and we look forward to returning to a fully in-person Annual Meeting Celebration next year.



FISCAL YEAR 2022 FINANCIALS

Chicago Jobs Council Statement of Financial Position

Period ending June 30, 2022

ASSETS

Current Assets:

Cash and cash equivalents	\$1,155,467
Contributions receivable	\$403,266
Other receivables	\$57,850
Prepaid expenses	\$5,855
Certificate of deposit	\$52,623
Total Current Assets	\$1,675,061

Property and equipment	\$3,419
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TOTAL ASSETS **\$1,728,480**

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities:

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$31,433
Accrued payroll and related expenses	\$27,919
Loans payable	\$8,080
Total Current Liabilities	\$67,432

Net Assets:

Without donor restrictions	\$655,333
With donor restrictions – purpose restricted	\$1,005,715
Total Net Assets	\$1,661,048

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS **\$1,728,480**

FY2022 FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND DONORS

CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

Arnold Ventures
BMO Harris Bank
The Crown Family
Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance
Energy Foundation
Grand Victoria Foundation
Illinois Department of Human Services
Lloyd A. Fry Foundation
Polk Bros. Foundation
Robert R. McCormick Foundation
The Chicago Community Trust
William G. McGowan Charitable Fund
Winzeler Gear
Anonymous

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

National Center on Employment & Homelessness
National Skills Coalition SkillSPAN
Pro Path Fund

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FISCAL YEAR 2021 MEMBERS

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS

- Above and Beyond Family Recovery Center
- African American Christian Foundation
- AMBE-Advanced Manufacturing Bilingual Educators
- Asian Human Services
- Boys and Girls Club Chicago
- Calumet Area Industrial Commission
- Career Transitions Center of Chicago
- Central States SER
- Chicago Botanic Garden
- Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership
- Chicago Women in Trades
- Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance
- Chinese American Service League
- Community Assistance Programs
- Dynamic Workforce Solutions
- Easterseals
- Employment and Employer Services
- Fathers, Families In Transition
- Greater Chicago Food Depository
- Greater West Town Training Partnership
- Growing Home, Inc.
- Harold Washington College
- Heartland Human Care Services
- Hire360
- Housing Opportunities for Women
- Inspiration Corporation
- Instituto Del Progreso Latino
- Jane Addams Resource Corporation
- KRA-Westside American Job Center
- McDermott dba Haymarket Center
- Moraine Valley Community College
- National Able Network, Inc.
- North Chicago District 187
- North Lawndale Employment Network
- Northwest Side Housing Center
- OAI, Inc
- Of Color Inc
- Per Scholas
- PODER
- Rebuilding Exchange
- Revolution Workshop
- Safer Foundation
- scaleLIT
- SGA Youth and Family Services
- St. Joseph Services
- St. Leonard's Ministries
- The Workforce Connection-Goodwill
- University of Illinois at Chicago, Center for Literacy MC147
- Upwardly Global
- WRD Environmental, Inc.-Greencorps Chicago
- Youth Guidance
- Youth Job Center
- YWCA Evanston/North Shore
- YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Melissa Frazin
Paul Lewis

Gloria D. Mhoon
John Mitchell

Ivette Sosias