Community Informatics Corps

Graduate School of Library & Information Science, University of Illinois

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The CIC is a master's specialization that was developed collaboratively in 2006 by GSLIS and the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago

Its goals are to:

- ❖ *Create knowledge and technology connected to people's values, history, and lived experiences*
- ❖ *Develop models of engagement that are just, democratic, participatory, and open-ended*
- ❖ *Integrate theory and practice in an experimental and critical manner*
- ❖ *Recruit and mentor a cohort of Latina/o, African-American, and other students interested in careers that enable them to contribute to, and learn from, their communities*

"Working with the community groups [to give' them something valuable that they actually wanted helped me to contextualize the uses of technology much more than any other networking course would have, or could have done."
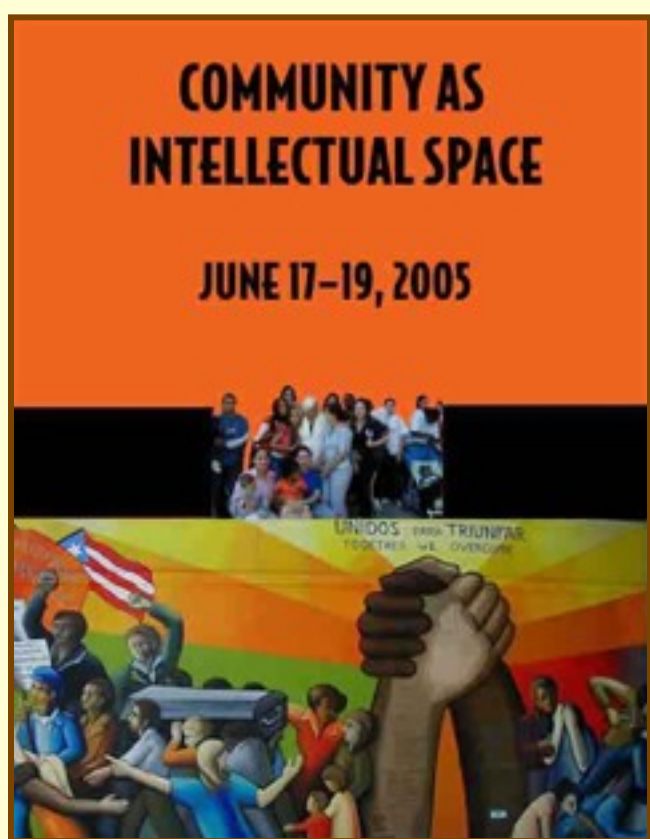
"The most valuable component of this class for me has been the reflective practice that I'm now applying to all areas of my life."

"Having the class at the PRCC was vital in how I digested my readings. It was a living example of thriving community informatics."
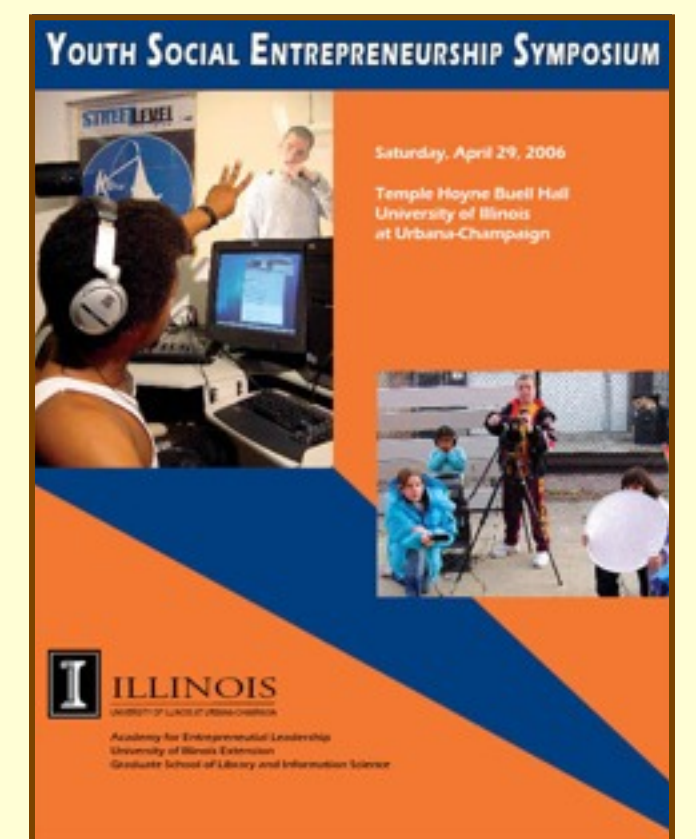

"Community informatics allows me to see how libraries can be central to social justice by creating research that is both relevant academically and rooted within community. I am concretely learning how to link theory and practice in order to become a more dynamic and engaged information professional."

"The chance to see the values and concepts of our field put to the test in a real-world environment, a very rare opportunity in the academic world."

COMMUNITY AS INTELLECTUAL SPACE
JUNE 17–19, 2005

Courses:
- ◆ *Community Information Systems*
- ◆ *Professional Research in Action*
- ◆ *Community Informatics Practical Engagement*
- ◆ *Inquiry-Based Learning*
- ◆ *Introduction to Network Systems*

YOUTH SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP SYMPOSIUM

Findings:
- ❖ *Learning is deeper and more lasting when theory is integrated with action*
- ❖ *There are unexpected challenges when working across institutions, geography, schedules, scales*
- ❖ *An community action-based program can mobilize interest from diverse participants and organizations*
- ❖ *People typically become involved initially because of immediate, individual aims, not necessarily larger goals of social justice or community building*

Student Projects emphasize social entrepreneurship:
- ❖ *Puerto Rican Cultural Center digital archive*
- ❖ *Center for Women in Transition library*
- ❖ *Information resources for Community Wellness program*
- ❖ *Booker T. Washington Afterschool Program*
- ❖ *Korean Cultural Center*
- ❖ *Books to Prisoners*
- ❖ *Literacy Across the Curriculum for urban schools*
- ❖ *Community Technology Centers in East St. Louis*
- ❖ *Youth-led Community Theater*
- ❖ *Access Living art exhibit*