



A New Local Initiative to Establish a Citizens' Organizing Round Table

by Bill Woods

An initiative moves forward to establish a Citizens' Organizing Round Table in Cincinnati. The purpose of the Round Table is to enhance citizen organizing in this area. Supported by a grant from the Murray and Agnes Seasongood Good Government Foundation, Applied Information Resources will plan and administer this initiative.

This initiative is an outgrowth of an all day forum sponsored by the Seasongood Foundation in February. The event, "The

Power of Organizing - Finding Your Community Voice," highlighted a variety of diverse organizing efforts. It featured panels and discussion groups on everything from basic neighborhood organizing to building coalitions in order to pass ballot initiatives.

The theme of the forum and also the Round Table initiative is that without effective organizing average citizens are often overlooked in public decision making in Cincinnati, Columbus, and Washington, D.C. The growing power of "big money"

in politics in recent decades has made it harder and harder for citizens to compete with lobbyists and powerful institutions in shaping policies and

legislation that often impact their lives and neighborhoods. The goal of the Round Table will be strengthening the citizen voice through organizing.

AIR's first task will be to put together an informal coalition of citizen organizers that will meet regularly to discuss local community organizing needs. By creating an entity comprised of people

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Applied Information Resources is a non-profit, public policy research and community information organization dedicated to:

- Citizen education on public issues.
- Assisting human service organizations in evaluating their programs, and
- Providing the best possible information to decision makers responding to changing human and urban needs.

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who represent diverse local citizens' organizing initiatives, AIR envisions a group that shares information, assists various community organizing activities, assesses the health of citizen involvement, and collaborates on issues when appropriate.

A number of people who fit this description were involved in the February forum, and AIR will seek to

include them as members of the Round Table. Initial organizations that will be asked to participate include the Peaslee Neighborhood Center, the Greater Cincinnati Homeless Coalition, Invest in Neighborhoods, the Sierra Club, CUFA, the Cincinnati Interfaith Workers Center, the Woman's City Club, Community Shares, the League of Women Voters, Bold New Democracy, and Project AMOS. AIR hopes that the Round Table will begin informal meetings by late summer.

At the start of its existence, the Round Table will be asked: "What can the group do to strengthen citizen involvement in public decision making and in addressing critical community issues? An important second question is: "How can the Round Table reach out to citizens and grassroots groups that need organizing assistance? For further information about this initiative, call AIR at 381-4994.

Marian A. Spencer Statue

Marian A. Spencer Statue

Marian Spencer was beloved friend of Ed Burdell, Bill Woods and Alice Schneider. We support the effort of Woman's City Club of Greater Cincinnati to commission the first statue of a named woman in Cincinnati for civil rights icon Marian A. Spencer.

Marian was an extraordinary woman of grace and dignity who spent her life working for equality, justice, and her belief that each of us has the ability to make the world a better place. We are asking for your support in this effort.

Marian Spencer achieved many firsts: first female president of the local NAACP (1981), first African American woman elected to Cincinnati City Council (1983), and first African American woman to serve as Vice Mayor of Cincinnati (1984). She is especially noted

for leading the successful effort to desegregate Coney Island (1952), and the desegregation lawsuit she brought against Cincinnati Public Schools in 1972. She was a founder of Housing Opportunities Made Equal (1969) and co-founding chair of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. She provided decades of leadership to the Charter Committee, NAACP, the University of Cincinnati and many organizations. Mrs. Spencer's achievements and awards are too numerous to recount here.

Marian Spencer was also warm, gracious, and always polite. She stood up fearlessly for what she believed was right and set the example to be smart, be polite and keep on fighting.

The sculptor, Tom Tsuchiya, is well known for his local sculptures, including the

bronze statues of former Cincinnati Reds players near the entrance of Great American Ball Park.

Please join us in making this happen in order to dedicate the statue on the 100th birthdate of Marian Spencer, June 28, 2020.



Donations are welcome.

Marian A. Spencer Statue Fund
at Fifth Third Bank
% of Woman's City Club
103 Wm. H. Taft Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

CONTRIBUTIONS HELP AIR, INC. WITH COMMUNITY WORK

AIR depends on individual contributions to support our work. We are a charitable 501(c) (3) organization and your contributions help fund such projects as campaign finance reform, political reform and studies in racism and community organizing in Cincinnati. We invite you to assist us as AIR takes on community issues and challenges.

\$1000 \$500 \$100 \$50 \$25

Make your tax-deductible checks **payable to: AIR, Inc.** and send to:

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You can now donate online at www.airinc.org

Applied Information Resources' Office Has Moved!

Our new office is now located in the Cincinnati Club on Garfield Place. The official address is:

Applied Information Resources
30 Garfield Place, Suite 302
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202-4320





Preview of Upcoming Community Issues Forums

The forums are held in the Christ Church Cathedral's third floor Forum Room, unless otherwise noted, and they are generally held twice a month on Thursdays at noon. They are free and open to all.

Thursday, September 12, 2019 Community Issues Forum Kicks Off Its New Season At The Peaslee Neighborhood Center With A Forum Focusing On Community Organizing. The Peaslee Neighborhood Center 215 East 14th Street in Over-the-Rhine.

NOTE: Different meeting place

Thursday, September 19, 2019 Board of Education Candidates

Thursday, October 3, 2019 Gun Violence Initiative

Thursday, October 17, 2019 Gun Violence Initiative

Thursday, October 31, 2019 Halloween Party exploring the Horrors of Dark Money

Thursday, November 14, 2019 TBD

Thursday, December 5th, 2019 TBD

Come join us for these Forums, and do bring a friend. Lunch can be purchased for \$6.50, or you can bring a brown bag. Parking is available in the garage of the building across the street from the Cathedral on 4th Street between Broadway and Sycamore. For video clips of past Forums, go to www.airinc.org.