



# “Now You Know”! Online Newsmagazine

Volume 1/2014 (September 2014)

## “Now You Know”!

Introducing  
A Monthly Online Newsmagazine  
Serving The Citizens of  
The Village of Hazel Crest

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The Village of Hazel Crest is on the move. Residents want and need to know what’s going on in real time, so they can **benefit** and **participate**.

“*Now You Know*”! will fill that void, regularly informing citizens about important issues and work that is in progress, to improve the quality of life for you and your families.

“*Now You Know*”! will also be a forum for the various **Homeowners’ Associations, Committees and Commissions**, and other entities serving the village.

“*Now You Know*”! is also a place where your political representatives, including **Congresswoman Robin Kelly, Sens. Michael Hastings and Napoleon Harris, and Rep. Will Davis and Al Riley**, will report on various legislative activities affecting the **Village of Hazel Crest** and the **Southland**.

Finally, “*Now You Know*”! is a place where you, the residents of our great village, will get answers to your questions, and learn what your **local elected representatives** are doing on your behalf.

“*Now You Know*”! will regularly **highlight local residents**, including **seniors, college students** and other **youth**, who are lifting up our community.

“*Now You Know*”! will also profile **local businesses, including small businesses**, that are model citizens employing local citizens, supporting village projects, while also adding to the tax base of the village.

“*Now You Know*”! also wants to hear your ideas. What should we be talking about that affects you? Often mainstream media reports on issues and you never hear any follow up. Now, you can get updates on the status of the **3<sup>rd</sup> Airport** from those who are involved. Now, you won’t have to wonder about what’s going on with the **new Metra station**.

“*Now You Know*”! is here. Become a regular reader. Pass the word. Every month something new. Something to make you proud to be a resident of the great **Village of Hazel Crest**. Now you can’t say, I don’t know, because “*Now You Know*”!

## "Now You Know"! - Village President's Bridge Program Putting Youth on Path to Success



On a steamy August day as many Hazel Crest youth were out enjoying the final days of summer...participants in the Village President's Bridge Program, were winding down after six weeks of intense academic exposure, field trips, guest speakers, and fun.

Among their unforgettable experiences was a downtown trip to Microsoft, where each of the students learned how to create their own video game. Most were surprised at how quickly they learned the process. Cayla Gilford said, "This was the best field trip. It only took about 35 minutes to build our games."

The idea for the program was sparked by Hazel Crest Village President Vernard L. Alsberry, Jr., who modeled it after a similar program developed by former Carver High School Basketball Coach, and University of Chicago administrator, Larry Hawkins.

"Academics in the morning and fun activities in the afternoon, seems to get and hold the students' attention," President Alsberry said. This is especially important when your audience consists of students in 7th – 9th grades who soon will be on their way to high school and beyond. "I presented this program concept to local business Mi-Jack Products who generously donated monies to fund

the program, and we were on our way to a successful summer." Mi-Jack Products CEO Jack Lanigan, was also one of the featured speakers.

The program was developed to ensure that the students had fun, while experiencing a variety of activities, there was also a strong academic component, thanks to Irma Holloway, CEO of Academic Community Development Corporation, one of the co-sponsors of the project.

ACDC's mission is to build strong communities where people from all social and economic backgrounds can succeed in an increasingly competitive global environment. ACDC is committed to providing cutting edge information and training to its participants through youth training & mentoring, college preparation boot camps, adult education, financial literacy, job readiness training, health & wellness training and supportive services to the community with an emphasis on ensuring that every resident has the tools needed to be successful in any market place.

Holloway said, "Students participated in a range of engaging activities in the core subject areas of English, math and science, as well as entrepreneurship. These activities were designed to address deficits in basic skills while also preparing them to transition to the upcoming school year."

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And they apparently paid attention. "I now enjoy reading. I hated reading before the program," said Shemar DeAndrew Jackson. Continuing he said, "I liked learning about technology and entrepreneurship. I now want to be a barber and run my own business."

Interest in the independence of entrepreneurship was a running theme with many of the student participants. Colin Gilford says, "I liked the kids (in the program). I also enjoyed the field trips, math and learning about entrepreneurship. I learned a lot."

And introduction to a variety of new experiences seemed to be key to helping them decide on future careers. Angel Covington said "I want to be a lawyer or a model. I liked all of the education programs, especially science. Getting to meet new people who were fun was enjoyable. I also liked the food." As did everyone.



Kyla Duncan was especially impressed with the variety of knowledge shared by the speakers. "Mike Jennings (former Chicago Bear); Bob Love (former Chicago Bull); and Chef Brian, all helped me learn what I want to do in the

future. Kyla is torn between a fashion accessory business, acting, and joining the family's mortuary science business.

On Friday, August 8, the final regular day of the 6-week session, the morning was spent on a subject that many of our youth will encounter in one way or another...Bullying. During the session moderated by Instructor Monica Payne, one student candidly admitted, "I used to be a bully."

CEO Holloway strongly advised students saying, "Don't put yourself in a situation that you might later regret. When you have the opportunity to be a bully, walk away. You're not responsible for anyone else, you're responsible for you."

One female participant asked, "Am I a bully if I talk back?" Holloway responded saying, "It's your initial action or comment that makes you a bully. "If you don't remember anything else remember these things... It's important that you love yourself..."

Your attitude determines your altitude and it's important that you Police yourself."

And that just might be the most important message of all. Just a brief interaction with the Village President's Bridge Program made it clear that time spent with and interest shown in our youth is like money in the bank.

In fact, judged from the lessons learned, introduction to new experiences, and meeting of new friends, it's even better than money in the bank. Once spent, money in the bank is gone. The new relationships and knowledge developed this summer will last forever.

Village President Alsberry is hoping to expand the program beyond the 17 students served this summer. "I expect that more of our local businesses will want to be a participant next year, once they learn about the success experienced this summer."

The program ended on Tuesday, August 13 with an awards luncheon and ceremony at D.A.'S Deli & Dining; located in Country Club Hills where they celebrated the conclusion of their inaugural session. The sponsors and instructors were introduced to the students' parents.

Holloway, CEO of ACDC; Hazel Crest President Alsberry; and Mi-Jack Products CEO Lanigan offered words of encouragement. Five students shared their overall experience and what they will take away from the program, that they believe will help them in their future.

Certificates of completion were awarded to the graduates and Destiny Sanders, Andre Thomas and Shamiyah Beck received certificates for perfect attendance. Mike Jennings, football Hall of Famer stopped by and shared the story behind his adopted motto "I'm Fired Up and Ready to Go". A surprise monetary award was presented to each student by Mi-Jack Products CEO Lanigan and CFO Gene Larkin in celebration of their accomplishments.

Dinner was served and the celebration concluded with Mi-Jack Products CEO Lanigan observing that The President's Bridge Program, Irma Holloway and the ACDC staff had exceeded his expectations, and that he was looking forward to next year's program!

## “Now You Know”! Village President's point of view



I would like to welcome you to the Premiere issue of “Now You Know”!, a monthly newsmagazine dedicated to keeping the residents of Hazel Crest, on top of the many positive things that are taking place in the village.

As you know “The Villager”, is published quarterly. In between issues I receive many calls and inquiries asking for updates on issues and projects affecting the Village of Hazel Crest. My team and I thought that this would be a good way to provide timely information.

Hazel Crest is a progressive community. An informed citizenry that knows how its tax dollars are being spent is very important. “Now You Know”! will help to serve that purpose.

We plan to keep you better informed about upcoming and ongoing projects. This will be where you will receive the latest information from your Committees, Commissions, Homeowner Associations, local legislators, and other groups that are working to make Hazel Crest an even better place to live, work, learn and play.

I will make every effort to inform you of the work being done by my administration, and our ongoing efforts, to improve the quality of life for all residents. Part of my mission is to also inform you about how your elected officials, including myself are using the legislative process on your behalf.

Many of you have expressed concern about the often acrimonious aspects of our Village Board meetings, held the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month. Others have discussed their outright embarrassment when these meetings are later aired on our local cable station. I agree that these meetings and broadcasts do not show the village at its best.

Unfortunately, much of the legislative debate gets lost at these meetings, leaving residents confused

about exactly what has taken place, and how it will affect their lives. “Now You Know”! will provide a calm, collected airing of views and outcomes, enabling residents to make better decisions.

Often residents have difficulty accessing routine information that will help them in their daily lives. When do I put my garbage out for pickup? Are there limits on when I can water my grass? What kinds of items should I be recycling? “Now You Know”! will routinely answer these questions and more.

I am now in the second year of my four-year term. Following are some of the highlights of my first year.

- \* Over \$600,000 from state IDOT for road and infrastructure improvement
- \* Additional \$600,000 from state IDOT requiring 20% matching funds
- \* 47 summer youth jobs working with State Rep. Will Davis and South Suburban Regional Mayors Black Caucus
- \* Renewed relationship with South Suburban Advocate Hospital
- \* Restored all Committees & Commissions to active status
- \* Through State Rep. Will Davis secured \$60,000 grant for middle school mentoring program, to be extended through school year 2014-2015

### Update

Look for news on the progress of the new Metra Station, set to be built in 2015. This project will fill a long-needed transportation void, while also serving to modernize the village of Hazel Crest.

Thanks to Governor Quinn’s Illinois Jobs Now! Program which is providing Hazel Crest \$64,341 to repair potholes and other important infrastructure, that was damaged during this past winter’s extreme winter weather. The funds will be added to the village’s Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) account.

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Also, make sure you stay tuned for ongoing information about the proposed 3rd Airport near Peotone. Although Hazel Crest is outside of the airport's footprint, we will still be positively affected once construction is underway. Thousands of jobs will ultimately be created. We want to ensure that residents of Hazel Crest are positioned to receive their fair share of this long-needed economic development for the Southland.

The state has just spent another \$34 million for Bult Field as part of the Peotone project. Gov. Quinn is planning a forum on September 23, where private developers and others will discuss the future of the project and how to proceed.

Finally, I will also provide periodic information of interest regarding my involvement with various organizations. Included are the South Suburban Regional Mayors Black Caucus, and the South Suburban Mayors and Managers. I am also a board member of the South Suburban Land Bank.

### Get Prepared

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reminds us that September is "National Preparedness Month."

Do you and your family know what to do in an emergency? If you're like most of us, probably not. How many of us can find a flashlight when the power goes out? How many of us have fire extinguishers in our homes, in case of a fire in the kitchen or elsewhere?

Especially considering the difficulties of this past winter. How many of us have sufficient water and

food in our homes, just in case you can't get to the store. Or, what if the car won't start?

We want to keep our citizens safe in and out of their homes. Hazel Crest is the home to a sizeable Senior Citizen population. What plan is in place if caregivers are unable to get to your home?

The CDC wants each of us to make a plan. "Planning what to do before a disaster strikes provides the best protection for you and your family." Here are a few suggestions by the CDC on what you can do when faced with an emergency.

- \* Teach family members how to text, easier to do when phone lines are down.
- \* Subscribe to an emergency alert system - [www.fema.gov/wireless-emergency-alerts](http://www.fema.gov/wireless-emergency-alerts)
- \* Keep a first aid kit that is accessible to everyone in the house.
- \* Get a fire extinguisher. Learn how to use it before you need it.
- \* Keep a supply of non-perishable food and fresh water in the house.
- \* Keep at least one vehicle outside. If power goes out, you're stuck.

Just a few things to think about.

I look forward to communicating with you in "Now You Know"! each month. Send email to [mayoralsberry@alsberry.org](mailto:mayoralsberry@alsberry.org), if you know of anyone who should receive this publication, or visit our website at [www.alsberry.org](http://www.alsberry.org)

Vernard L. Alsberry, Jr.  
President, Village of Hazel Crest

## “Now You Know”! – News Briefs

### **Hazel Crest President Vernard L. Alsberry, Jr. to be inducted into Pi Alpha Alpha – The Global Honor Society for Public Affairs & Administration.**

On Friday, October 3, President Alsberry will join a select group during his induction ceremony at Governors State University, beginning at 6 pm. Residents, friends and supporters of the president are invited to join he and his family in celebrating this unique honor.

Members of Pi Alpha Alpha are recognized for their outstanding scholarship and accomplishments in public affairs and administration. With thousands of members nationwide and globally, Pi Alpha Alpha members are part of an elite group of public service professionals.

Reflecting on his upcoming induction the Hazel Crest President said, “I humbly accept this honor. It is in keeping with my belief that at all times public servants must put service before self.”

### **Hazel Crest Youth Gain Valuable Experience in Summer Jobs Program**

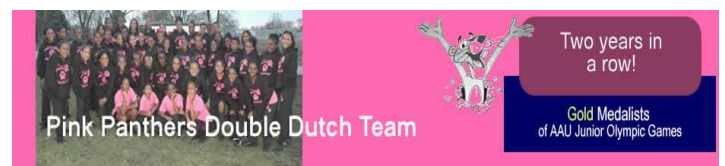
Thanks to grants obtained by the Village of Hazel Crest and the South Southwest United Way; 55 Hazel Crest youth were able to work and earn during the summer. In a time when meaningful jobs, and especially summer jobs, are scarce commodities; these young people learned valuable work and life skills that will help them later in life.

Both the Hazel Crest Park District and Department of Natural Resources provided the work experiences for those youth.

Hazel Crest President, Vernard L. Alsberry, Jr. said, “These jobs were very important to, not only our youth workers, but their families as well. The skills and work ethic learned will serve these young people in the future.

“Learning how to interview, dress and getting to work on time are all important experiences that will stay with our youth the rest of their lives. I am very proud of their efforts. They reflect the best of our village. I would also like to thank the Park District and Department of Natural Resources for participating and helping our youth reach their full potential. Our goal is to increase the numbers of youth participants next year.”

### **The Pink Panthers Double Dutch Team Wants You**



On Saturday, September 6 from 9 – 11 am, open registration will take place at St. Anne’s Church, 16801 Dixie Highway, in Hazel Crest.

Joyce Dickerson, founder of the team in 2004, is looking for a big turnout. She says our mission is simple, “to develop youth physically and mentally through the sport of jump rope. We are proud of our 100% high school graduation rate, with all jumpers attending major universities.”

Jump rope has changed from what it used to be. It is highly competitive and uses elements of gymnastics and tumbling to remain competitive. The Pink Panthers offers participants kindergarten through high school positive learning and team experiences with the opportunity to create lasting memories.

The Pink Panthers have won numerous awards and recognition. Most recently in July, 2012 they were the World Jump Rope Grand National champions in the Double Dutch Freestyle Triad event. They have also been recognized as AAU Gold Medalists for five straight years.

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*--- News Briefs Continued*

Media appearances have included appearances on ABC News "Someone You Should Know," ABC's Sylvia Perez show; as well as other appearances on Channels 2, 5 and 9. And they have served as the opening act for Keke Palmer and the Jonas Brothers at a Radio Disney production at Great America. Competitive jump rope is a good physical and mental outlet for our youth.

The world champion Pink Panthers Double Dutch Team is a tax-exempt, not-for-profit organization, serving more than 40 participants throughout the south suburbs. For more information call (708) 372-0734.

## “Now You Know” Call For Contributors



“Now You Know”! needs you. The Village of Hazel Crest is home to a number of organizations and entities that contribute to our well-being and development. We want to regularly report on your

meeting dates, activities, goals, objectives and outcomes.

This Call To Action includes, but is not limited to Homeowners’ Associations and Committees and Commissions. We want to represent any recognized entities that are working on behalf of Hazel Crest.

We will make every effort to publish “Now You Know”! the first week of every month. Deadline for submission is the 2nd Friday of the month, by midnight. So, if you would like to contribute copy for the October 2014 issue, send no later than Friday, September 12, midnight.

Meeting the deadline is especially important for time-sensitive information. Please keep articles between 250-1,000 words, as space will be limited. Depending on the size of the font, about 4 double-spaced pages equal 1,000 words.

We recognize that sometimes it will not be possible to meet the deadline. In that case, both the importance and timeliness of the submitted information will be considered. In many instances late information can be rolled over to the next issue. Sometimes not. So we urge you to make every effort to meet the copy deadline.

*See editorial guidelines Page. 9 - "now You Know"!*

Please submit only the highest quality pictures with captions, explaining the significance.

Editor’s Note – Obscenities, defamatory, unsigned and excessively self-serving articles will not be printed. “Now You Know”! is a publication dedicated to the progressive activities of the Village of Hazel Crest. Group copy writing instruction will be offered to those wishing to sharpen their informational messages.

Please submit articles, and inquiries to: Editor at: [wp@informationpluspro.com](mailto:wp@informationpluspro.com). We are working on a process which will enable pictures to be uploaded to a common drive, and will provide that information.



## Writers & Editorial Guidelines

1. Keep to the 250 – 1,000 word limit. Get copy in on time.
2. Check copy for grammar and spelling before submitting.
3. Know what you want to say and say it.
4. Write as concisely as possible.
5. Substitute small words for large ones whenever possible.
6. Use words and phrases that your audience is likely to understand.
7. Don't be unnecessarily redundant. Don't use different words to convey the same thoughts.
8. Don't use jargon that only those who do similar work understand.
9. Write as if you were having a conversation with your audience.
10. Don't talk down to your audience.
11. Be accurate as to names, titles, degrees and addresses (where relevant).
12. Write with passion, not anger.
13. Make sure your information is accurate.
14. Don't curse, defame, disparage, or violate anyone's privacy.
15. Don't write anything that you will regret, if it is published.
16. Separate your personal opinions from what is factual.
17. Be specific about your information sources.
18. Humor doesn't always work. Satire doesn't always work.
19. If someone tells you something confidential. Maintain their trust.
20. Remember that you are writing to either inform, educate or inspire people to do or not do something.
21. Use pictures that help support the story.
22. Include captions with pictures to help tell the who, when, where, what, why and why story is important.

That's it for now. We'll see how it goes.