



BUILDING HUMAN CAPITAL, COMMUNITIES AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

## Agency Programs and Activities

### AGENCY INFORMATION

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Founder/Executive Director

Kerry Knodle

Board of Directors

Jeffrey Lischin

Terry Moran

Linda Gerdes

Steve Oyler

Jeffrey Kirk

Annie R. Davis

Karen Hansen

### MISSION STATEMENT

Comprehensive Community Solutions, Inc. is a non-profit, 501 (c)(3) corporation founded in 1992. Its mission, as a community change agent, is to bring about fundamental transformation of neighborhoods, communities and the circumstances of those who live there, through programs and services which emphasize building human capital, communities and affordable housing, including but not limited to:

1. planning, developing and implementing programs which are designed to train, educate and make more self-sufficient at-risk individuals, especially young people, including education, job training, counseling and assistance in finding employment;
2. providing decent housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income people, including but not limited to construction, rehabilitation, and management of such housing; and
3. fostering sustainable communities through collaborative, neighborhood-based services and support which improve the social and economic fabric of the community.

### EDUCATION, JOB TRAINING AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

**Green Workforce Training Initiative:**

**YouthBuild** is a unique program serving out-of school youth ages 16-24 who are from low-income communities, have dropped out of school and are unemployed. It provides academic education, vocational skills training, personal counseling, positive peer support, leadership development, job placement and follow-up support. Young people spend half their time in academic programming and half learning skills in construction. Participants build or rehabilitate housing for low-income families, and have produced 48 units of housing in Rockford since the program began. Since 1995, YouthBuild Rockford has seen more than 5,600 youth apply, and has served more than 1,000 young people. At least 75%



of program completers have been placed in jobs or educational programs, and youth have completed over 420,000 community service hours. Leadership development is a key part of the program with classes, activities and leadership positions within the organization providing a foundation for preparing youth to play important roles in their communities. Youth participate in governance of the program through an elected Youth Policy Council and Community Leadership Committee; serve on local, state and national groups, including the Illinois YouthBuild Coalition, the national YouthBuild Young Leaders and Alumni Council, and others. Graduates have the opportunity to serve on the agency board of directors.



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## Glossary of Programs and Activities

### GREEN DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING CENTER

**GREEN DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING CENTER:** In 2008, CCS began developing a comprehensive set of programs and activities centered on the creation of green jobs, training opportunities and economic development strategies.

**SALVAGE TOO/ROCKFORD REUSE CENTER:** In 2006, CCS opened this entrepreneurial venture, whose mission is *“to take useful products discarded by those who no longer want or need them, and provide them to those who do.”* **Salvage Too** is an innovative enterprise that converts huge volumes of landfill-bound waste into valuable community assets. Through environmentally sound deconstruction services, the sale of recovered and donated building materials, furniture, tools, appliances, and other items, CCS generates needed revenue while protecting the environment, creating jobs and training opportunities and reducing effects of poverty. **See our website for store hours—[www.salvagetoo.com](http://www.salvagetoo.com)**



**GREEN BUILDING:** As part of YouthBuild USA's Green Building Initiative, YouthBuild Rockford trainees achieve certification in and incorporate green building techniques into the homes built for low-income families and learn about careers in the green economy. CCS has completed construction of the first two LEED-certified single family homes in Rockford, achieving a significant level of energy efficient design and function.



**Deconstruction:** Deconstruction is the systematic dismantling of structures, either total or partial, with an emphasis on salvaging materials for reuse or recycling and ultimately rescuing materials destined for a landfill. The program also includes marketing the resulting building materials through our Salvage Too retail store. Deconstruction projects are offered to public or private entities on a fee-for-service basis. Donation of salvaged materials can also provide a tax deduction for the owner. **CCS is a Certified Deconstruction Contractor/ Area Manager for The ReUse People of America.**

### RESIDENTIAL WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM:

Under a grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Development, CCS is providing weatherization services to eligible low-income homeowners and residents over the next 2 years. Upon qualifying, CCS personnel perform a Home Energy Audit of the property, determine necessary work to achieve energy savings, and perform the work. CCS will weatherize approximately 65 homes per year, at a maximum of \$6,500 per unit. Typical work may involve furnace replacement, window replacement, insulation, air sealing, etc.



### COMMUNITY SERVICE AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

**AMERICORPS:** AmeriCorps is a national service movement that engages Americans of all ages in a domestic “Peace Corps” to get things done in our communities. AmeriCorps members commit to a term of service and upon completion, earn education awards about \$5,000 toward college or vocational training. YouthBuild Rockford has operated this program since 1996, and members have completed over 410,000 hours of service to the community since 1995. This affiliation broadens both the scope of activities undertaken by the agency and the depth of leadership and community service activities available to members.



## Glossary of Programs and Activities

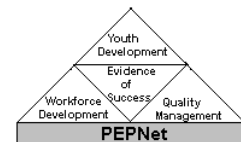
### AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

CCS provides affordable housing for low-and moderate-income families through the construction, rehabilitation and management of homes and apartments. The agency was designated by the City of Rockford as a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) in 1997. Since 1995, the agency has completed 118 housing projects. Of these units, 48 have been completed by YouthBuild Rockford trainees. In addition, the agency has completed two major subdivision projects (Lincolnwood Estates Phases 1,2) with 44 units of mixed income housing produced. CCS acts as developer and general contractor for the construction and sale of these homes to low-income families. ***For a list of current properties for sale, please visit our website at [www.comprehensivecommunitysolutions.org](http://www.comprehensivecommunitysolutions.org)***

### AWARDS, MEMBERSHIPS AND RECOGNITIONS

- ◇ 1997: YouthBuild Rockford was recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor and the Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) as one of 14 programs nationally which demonstrated effectiveness in preparing youth for jobs and independent learning. PEPNet is a project of the National Youth Employment Coalition. The agency was awarded again in 2002 for recommitting itself to effective practices and improving upon those criteria, which led to its original award.
- ◇ 1999: CCS (for its YouthBuild Rockford program) was the recipient of a John J. Gunther Blue Ribbon Best Practices Award from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This award honors programs that show significant impact of those they serve, are replicable, establish partnerships with government, other nonprofits and the private sector and use creativity in addressing a problem.
- ◇ 2005: National City Children's Champion Award
- ◇ Recognized by both the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor as demonstrating exemplary practices in teaching of workplace skills and competencies.

**Memberships and Affiliations:** Illinois YouthBuild Coalition, Accredited Affiliate of YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network; United Way of Rock River Valley; Building Materials Reuse Association; Furniture Bank Association of North America; Rockford Area Chamber of Commerce; U.S. Green Building Council, Enterprise Foundation; Housing Action Illinois. CCS, Inc. serves as the headquarters for the Illinois YouthBuild Coalition, which includes a total of 16 YouthBuild programs operating within the state of Illinois.



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