

## **Community Organizing: Advancing the Black Agenda for Black Indianapolis by training youth how to community organize**

It's now important history that President Barak Obama got his start out of college as a grassroots Chicago community organizer. See him here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SwwOooaWqM>.

What is community organizing?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NElvLp4Oyro>

Community organizing represents the actual practice of democracy. It is imperative that young African Americans get trained in and become practitioners of community organizing.

Community Organizing is the process of:

- building power through involving a constituency in identifying problems they share and the solutions to those problems that they desire;
- identifying the people and structures that can make those solutions possible;
- enlisting those targets in the effort through negotiation and using confrontation and pressure when needed; and
- building an institution that is democratically controlled by that constituency who can develop the capacity to take on further problems which embody the will and the power of that constituency.

### **Community organizing for racial equity and policy making**

Most efforts to address any aspect of racism, privilege, power or oppression begin with or eventually end up including some form of community organizing. Community organizing strategies and tactics can be used to organize from outside an organization, institution, community or issue area, from within, or both.

- Since change mainly comes from the policy level, preparing youth to use community organizing as a means to affect institutional, educational, and governmental policy makes sense.

Further, organizing can include both collaborative and pressure strategies--often strategically applied together. See: [Community organizing for racial equity](#).

Here are some groups:

- [Faith in Action](#) Indiana is a part of a national community organizing network giving people of faith the tools that they need to fight for justice and work towards a more equitable society.
- [Black Organizing for Leadership and Dignity](#) (BOLD) is a national training intermediary focused on transforming the practice of Black organizers in the US to increase their alignment, impact and sustainability to win progressive change.
- The [Black Organizing Project](#) works for racial, social and economic justice through grassroots community organizing and policy-change.

More information

- From the Grassroots--Understanding Community Organizing  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXHRxc9q1k>
- Community Organizing  
<https://comm-org.wisc.edu/papers97/beckwith.htm>

### **Proposed Action Item: Make learning community organizing a civic responsibility of our public schools**

Since it is the civic responsibility of all public schools to introduce students to the democratic life and how it might be led, ACCI will appreciate that community organizing is the actual practice of

democracy and therefore a major way the Indianapolis Black community can maintain and grow economic and political power.

For AACI to gain sustainability, it is recommended the initiative go about starting programs that train local Black youth how to community organize. ACCI will gather social workers, politicians, Indiana Faith & Action/PICO trainers, IUPUI professors, labor union representatives, teachers and school officials, and 7-12 students to create a program to go into our public schools. This training will be a part of traditional middle school Civics and 12<sup>th</sup> grade US Government courses. It could also be a non-traditional elective or afterschool activity.

*Because influencing public school policy can be laborious and lengthy, in the interim, AACI will establish its own community organizing training program with the help of Indiana Faith & Action/PICO trainers and labor union organizers. Hopefully, this will influence our public schools to make community organizing a part of the curriculum as a way to prepare students for citizenship.*