



El Yunque cuenta historias mientras los niños escuchan atentamente.

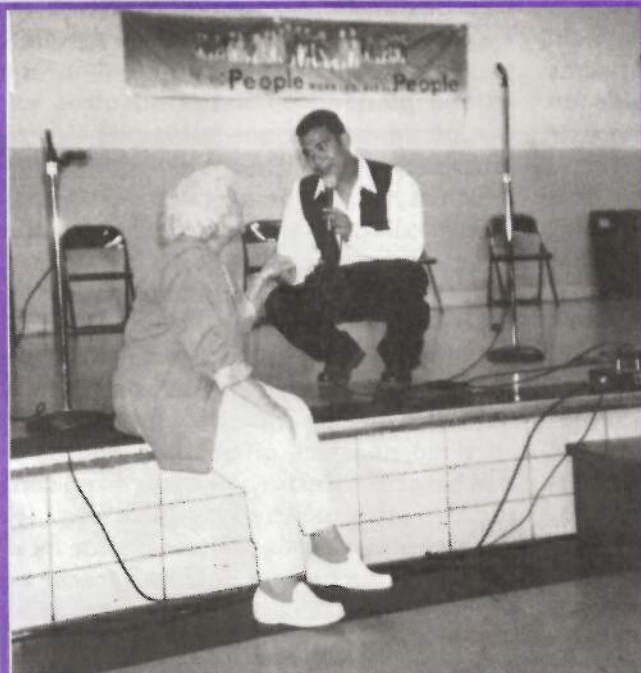
El Yunque tells stories while Logan Square children listen in rapt attention.

The Eagle News

Noticiero El Aguila

Fall 1996

Otono 1996



En el evento del Proyecto Intergeneracional celebrando multi-culturalismo, Blas Ortiz da serenata a Pauline Del Santo./Blas Ortiz serenades Pauline Del Santo at an Intergenerational Project event celebrating multiculturalism.

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LSNA Community Building Project

Counting In Those Who Have Been Counted Out

by John McKnight

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The Community Building Project of the Logan Square Neighborhood Association is one of the most innovative programs in America. It is at the cutting edge of a growing number of the most progressive and powerful local organizations in our cities.

The Project is based upon the recognition that too many neighborhoods have grown weak because so many of the local residents have been "counted out" of the action. As more and more people fail to participate or can't join the process of community building, problems grow.

One of the main ways local residents get "counted out" these days is when they are called names like elderly, mentally retarded, welfare mother, youth at risk, homeless, physically disabled, etc. Those names say that the residents are problems rather than problem solvers. And while we use those names to describe people we say are in need, the names actually mean that we can't see the person's gifts, skills or abilities. And if we can't see and mobilize their abilities to contribute, we become weaker as a community. Our "troops" grow fewer because we can't see that our new recruits need to come from those people who have been pushed aside with labels that ignore their powerful potential contributions.

What makes the LSNA project so important is that it is showing the way to build more powerful local organizations by calling on the people who have been "counted out" to join the local army of active local citizens.

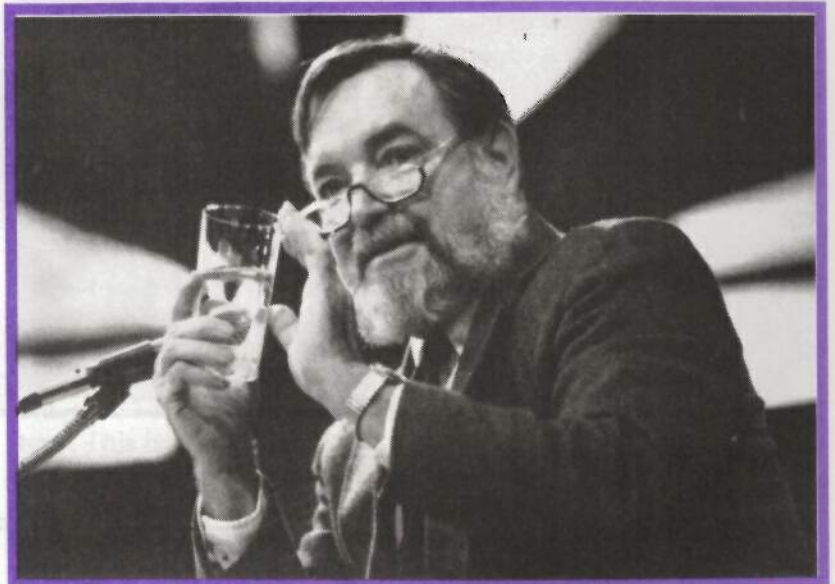
In particular, LSNA's Community Building Project has created a path to participation for some people who have been called developmentally disabled and others called elderly. In both cases, LSNA has cleared the way for people with these labels to come back to the community and contribute to the life of Logan Square.

For instance, through the CBP, Genevieve has volunteered every Wednesday at LSNA since 1991. She is in charge of caring for

the many plants in the office as well as spontaneous tasks that arise during the day. Genevieve has become a permanent staff/volunteer and everyone's mom.

Another example is that of Lew. Lew has been connected to a community friend, Maria Terry, since 1991. They enjoy a unique relationship, very much like father and daughter. And since he is so much a part of Maria's life, he has become a grandpa to everyone else in Maria's family and circle of friends! They share common interests, both being diehard sports fans and avid dancers. They do not miss a step in having fun together.

The Community Building Project of the Logan Square Neighborhood Association truly believes that the strength of the community is in the welcome given to neighbors. LSNA's example has inspired other local organizations to create task forces for community building. If you are interested in more information about the CBP or would like to participate, please contact Rosita De La Rosa at LSNA.



"The Community Building Project of the Logan Square Neighborhood Association is one of the most innovative programs in America."

—John McKnight (pictured above)