Subject: Invitation to Contribute to UIC Social Justice and Community Disparities Working Group (SJCD) Book Project

Dear Colleagues,

We invite you to participate in a new opportunity to share your expertise to showcase UIC’s singular efforts in research and scholarship on social justice and community disparities. This new project is led by the Social Justice and Community Disparities Working Group (SJCD), an interdisciplinary collaboration of scholars and researchers from various colleges and schools.

The SJCD is one of six initiatives organized by UIC’s Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research to advance areas of research excellence at UIC. Intrinsic to UIC’s mission in urban public higher education, the concept of “social justice” permeates our campus, informs our work and shapes our discourse. As a community of scholars, many of us approach our research, pedagogy, clinical practice, and community engagement with a commitment to identifying, reducing and preventing inequities in healthcare, education, economic opportunity, cultural production, civic participation, public health and the built environment. As an institution of higher learning, we have earned national prominence for addressing myriad societal issues including, but not limited to, racial and gender bias, the formation and expansion of social movements, the role of arts and culture in urban spaces, immigration, violence prevention and trauma-informed care, healthy communities, environmental justice, and equitable access to resources for Chicagoans and global citizens.

To expand the reach of our collective endeavors and ensure the body of work produced at UIC initiates critical conversations and advances advocacy, policy and action, within the halls of academia, through the streets of our city and beyond, the SJCD Working Group is pursuing a campus-wide book/digital media project. This as-yet untitled anthology will focus on how we at UIC see, understand, explain and present the “Chicago School” as reshaped for the 21st century. We will link together a deep focus on practices of ethical and equitable community engagement, attention to community assets, frameworks for community-based participatory and action-oriented participation in the city of Chicago. Never a place to make small plans, we see this as a collective scholarship effort.

Focusing on our core mission as a public research university centered in a diverse global city, SJCD looks to cast a wide net to produce a representative catalog of materials by UIC faculty, graduate students or staff, geared toward a public audience. While the original Chicago School focused on urban decay, crime, race and sexual deviance, the new Chicago School, as we envision it in the context of this anthology, will shift the focus to community assets, community-
driven processes, environmental factors, and stakeholder partnerships with the goal of creating an equitable city that can serve as a model for others to emulate.

We invite you to participate in this exciting initiative by showcasing your research. We are specifically looking for research articles and essays that highlight the multifaceted and multidisciplinary work done at UIC that engages the city of Chicago as a site of study, or is sited in Chicago engaging the urban, writ large. Because this is an interdisciplinary endeavor at its core, we have a broad definition of what could qualify as a submission. The work may be theoretical analysis, narrative interpretation, or scientific findings written for a general audience. It must be based on research conducted during your tenure at UIC with implications for the 21st century Chicago School. We seek original or largely reformulated contributions (not reprints of previously published research/scholarship) written for a general audience.

Proposal Submission
We invite proposals in the form of 300-500 word abstracts that outline your potential anthology contribution/chapter. Contributions from anyone conducting research or scholarship at UIC (faculty, postdocs, staff or students) are welcome. Please submit your proposal via email to RDS@UIC.EDU no later than 5:00 pm on Thursday, May 10, 2018. We will review the proposed abstracts and notify those invited to advance to the next step so they may prepare working papers (up to 6,000 words) for the SJCD anthology which will be presented and discussed at a workshop in late summer 2018. After the internal peer review process conducted at the workshop, we will provide feedback to finalize contributions.

Abstracts must include:
- Author(s) (including potential community partners you want to coauthor with)
- Title
- Description of the community and social issues, strengths/assets, and project you want to present/share and keywords
- Form your contribution will take (research findings, conceptual or theoretical summary, critical analyses, methods piece, performance art summary)

Questions? Please contact sjcd@uic.edu

Best regards,

SJCD Working Group Leaders

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