



Blackstone Bikes Cyclocross Team Off to a Strong Start in 3rd Season

Blackstone Bicycle Works began its third season of cyclocross racing this year. Cyclocross—or CX for short—is a racing discipline that takes place in the fall and early winter. It is an off-road sport, and involves barriers, dismounts, sand, grass and all sorts of inclement weather conditions. Our kids love it, and they have been welcomed as a staple part of the Chicago cycling scene because of their enthusiasm.

Thankfully, the season had a warm start with eight of our racers participating in the xXx Team Relay CX on August 24th. We've since had racers participate at the Caldwell Woods, Dan Ryan Woods, Indian Lakes, and Melas Basin races. As the season grows chilly, we just bundle up and ride faster to keep warm! The remaining two races of the season are both in December, so wish them luck!

The kids have received an amazing amount of support in this endeavor. Heritage Race Club donated custom jerseys—which were designed for them by Jen Ferguson of Dulcius Design. Rapha also donated over 50 kid-sized jerseys! Employees from SRAM hosted practices for the kids every Thursday night during August and September in Jackson Park. One of our racers, Nayla got to ride with eight-time

National CX Champion, Katie Compton at a girls-only skills clinic in Wisconsin—all thanks to outreach and support from The Chicago Cuttin' Crew. The fine folks at The Bonebell volunteered to pay for the kids' full season of racing fees, and this marks the third year Blackstone has been the recipient of the proceeds



Katon, Brandon, and Reggie get their game faces ready in anticipation of the Dan Ryan Woods race.

from the Afterglow CX race in December—which pays for all of their annual licenses. The whole Chicago community really came together when two of our racers had their bikes stolen in August. They received a deluge of donated new frames, parts, winter clothes, and helmets from riders from ABD Cycling, Verdigris Village, The Pony Shop, Albertos, and Tuxedo Thunder.

It's been great to see these kids become active and get increasingly into the sport of cycling. Be sure to check for social media updates on our young athletes year round!

Eat Up! App Pilot a Hit with LINK Shoppers at 61st Street Farmers Market

Experimental Station continues to work on the forefront of healthy food access, with a new app that anonymously records LINK shoppers' health metrics and rewards them with more money to spend at the market.

The Eat Up! program was largely developed at CNT's Urban Sustainability Apps Competition and took 2nd place. We went on to complete the app and partnered with University of Chicago Medicine, which staffs the Eat Up! tent at the market.

Anyone can visit the Eat Up! tent to check their height, weight, blood pressure and heart rate. But LINK shoppers also receive \$5 more to spend on healthy food per market day. The measurements are noninvasive and only take a minute or two.

As we showed last year, the majority of these funds are in turn spent on fresh fruits and vegetables, with the rest spent on eggs, dairy, meat, and bread.

120 LINK card shoppers visited the Eat Up! tent in the 2014 season. Many of them returned regularly, citing both the monetary reward as well as the convenience of being able to check their own blood pressure regularly, for free at their neighborhood market.

We see lots of potential for farmers markets to be vectors of preventative health in areas where healthy food access is difficult.

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear friend,

There's a lot of talk these days in the cultural sphere about 'placemaking.' It has even been described as "one of the most transformative ideas of this century." This is curious, as humans have been making places for thousands of years, and we've proven that we're actually pretty good at it. Somehow, however, as we've built giant zones of urban sprawl and engineered our cities around our cars, and as modern technology enabled us to be connected instantly even at great distances, we've forgotten what places actually are, how they work, and the deep meaning they carry for us as humans. It seems that we're in the process of relearning what makes a place a place.

Experimental Station has always been aware of itself, first and foremost, as a real place. As such, Experimental Station is a destination—dynamic, organic, complex, adaptable, sociable, diverse, and welcoming. While inhabiting a physical space, Experimental Station is built on relationships and collaboration, economic exchange, and community and civic life.

As you will see in these pages, the programs we run and the initiatives and cultural events we support take us in a variety of directions, but find their coherence in the place we inhabit and the community it draws together. We invite you to become a part of that place by being a customer, a guest of our events, a collaborator, a volunteer, a donor.

Sincerely,

Connie Spreen
Executive Director

The Invisible Institute Pushes for Police Transparency Reform



Chaelyn Hunt leads an editing session with HPA students.

Over the past year, the Invisible Institute has engaged issues of public safety and police accountability on several fronts.

The Youth/Police Project—a collaboration of the Institute with the Mandel Legal Aid Clinic of the University of Chicago Law School and the Television and Radio

Program at Hyde Park Academy—has inquired into interactions between youth and police on the South Side, producing a series of short video documentaries. These videos have since been used in trainings of national law enforcement and a presentation to the U.S. Department of Justice.

Participating HPA students also had the opportunity to testify before a state commission on racial profiling. In April 2015, the U of C Law School will hold a two day national conference focused on issues and themes that have emerged from this project.

This past March, the work of the Institute—in collaboration with the Mandel Clinic and the law firms of Loevy & Loevy and the Peoples Law Office—yielded a major legal victory as well. In *Kalven v. Chicago*, the Illinois appellate court ruled that documents bearing on allegations of police misconduct are public information. In the wake of the decision, the Institute is developing the Citizens Police Information Initiative, a public database in which information about police misconduct will be collected and organized.

B’Gabs Goodies Successfully Incubates, Opens New Restaurant

It’s a great delight to see a business that we’ve hosted move on to the next page. Since 2010, B’Gabs Goodies Raw/Vegan Deli, located at the Experimental Station, had built a devoted clientele of raw and healthy food enthusiasts.

B’Gabs Goodies also maintained a much-appreciated presence at the 61st Street Farmers Market, and provides instruction for our kids healthy cooking classes.

And now, they have opened a new location at 1450 E 57th Street, where the Cafe Florian used to be. Pay them a visit! And keep an eye out for the next project behind the north door on Blackstone.

Giving Thanks

The Experimental Station would like to thank our generous donors. The following funders made our various programs possible during the last year:

| The Chicago Community Trust
| Greer Foundation
| Anonymous
| Leo S. Guthman Foundation
| Polk Bros. Foundation
| Richard H. Driehaus Foundation
| Harmony WellCare
| USDA
| City of Chicago
| The Joyce Foundation
| University of Chicago Medicine
| Morrison Family Foundation
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| IL Department of Agriculture
| Wholesome Wave Foundation
| The Seabury Foundation
| Seattle’s Best Coffee
| Kanter Family Foundation
| Evanston Bicycle Club

Individual Donors like You!

Blackstone Bicycle Works College and Career Prep is Posting Up Strong Results

Blackstone Bikes has started its second year of college and vocational advising! As a result of the 2013-14 Greer Scholars Program, three of the shop’s seniors—Wilfred Ssepunga, Rajah Dye, and Jermell Akins—all embarked on very new and exciting chapters in their lives.

All three of these students participated in Kaplan ACT prep last fall, worked closely with the shop’s college counselor on both their applications and financial aid documents over the winter, and saw all their hard work and dedication pay off this past spring collectively receiving 22 acceptance offers.

Wilfred is now attending Illinois College, and Rajah is studying hard at SIU-Carbondale. Jermell just returned from bootcamp with ROTC and will be heading off to school this coming winter. We hope you share in our excitement and pride at their great accomplishments!

This year, we’ve expanded the program to include our juniors as well as our seniors.

Our new counselor, Matthew Rosenbaum—a senior admissions counselor at the University of Chicago—has been working closely with our kids since September. The shop held a college info session, and Matthew has jumped at the opportunity to provide individualized counseling. Matt has taken the time to help our kids with the Common Application process, hone their writing skills, draft and edit their personal statements, collect letters of recommendation and transcripts, and demystify the application experience.

Some of our lucky juniors have also had the fortunate experience of starting this process early, and Matthew has offered weekly tutorials and guided reading enrichment for these students. ACT prep courses will begin for some of our juniors in January. Later this spring we will be leading additional college visits to UIC and DePaul and to local bicycle-related businesses for career exploration and enrichment.



Carnegie Elementary 5th grade students such as Alonté (right) have been slicing veggies and preparing healthy meals at the 61st Street Farmers Market’s afterschool cooking classes.

Partnership with Harmony WellCare Means Greater Access to Healthy Food throughout Chicago

This farmers market season we partnered with health insurers Harmony WellCare and the City of Chicago to provide \$85,000 in Double Value Coupons at farmers markets across the city, including 16 City of Chicago farmers markets, 14 independently-run area farmers markets, and our own 61st Street Farmers Market.

For households on LINK, that means these farmers markets double their purchasing power up to anywhere from \$10-\$25 per LINK shopper per week.

“Harmony is focused on removing the barriers that make it difficult for our members and those who live in the communities we serve to attain and maintain optimal health,” said Dr. Bobby Hilliard, State President, Harmony Health Plan. “One way we are doing this is by supporting programs that make fresh, nutritious food a viable option for everyone, regardless of their income. This particular effort has the added benefit of supporting local farmers and local economies.”

With the growing number of diagnoses for diabetes and other diet-related diseases among Illinois residents receiving Medicaid and SNAP benefits, there is a tremendous health benefit to helping our low-income populations eat more wholesome food.

Through our LINK Up Illinois program, we have been able to provide Double Value Coupon funding to more than 50 markets statewide since 2011.

61st Street Market’s New Hoop House Project Strengthens Community Resilience and Healthy Food Education in Woodlawn



Carnegie Elementary School students and Market Manager Danny Burke survey rows of radishes at the Hoop House. Keep up the great work folks.

The Hoop House project is a new initiative of the 61st Street Farmers Market and an extension of Experimental Station’s focus on healthy food access advocacy in Woodlawn. It’s also a great example of diverse groups and community members coming together to make some magic happen!

The Hoop House is located in the parking lot of Jackson Park Terrace. Local farmers from The Urban Canopy helped to build the soil. Residents help to tend the garden and also grow food for themselves. The rest of the space is set aside as a learning garden for Carnegie Elementary School students and youth participants of Blackstone Bikes. In the summertime, Blackstone youth had an opportunity to ‘earn’ their hours at the Hoop House, and in turn received coupons to spend at the 61st Street Farmers Market.

Already in the first year, the

Hoop House produced a wide variety of vegetables, including collards, kale, strawberry spinach, amaranth, okra, breakfast radishes, sun gold tomatoes, detroit red beets, rutabaga, carrots and more.

Students have participated in planting, watering, weeding, harvesting and cleaning. Residents have brought a great sense of investment and ownership to the Hoop House, tending and watering the premises and growing a good amount of food for themselves as well.

The Illinois Department of Agriculture was so impressed with the resourcefulness and potential of this project that they awarded the Experimental Station a Specialty Crops grant—the only farmers market in Illinois to receive part of this funding.

Arts and Events Highlights at the Experimental Station - 2014



Concealed Carry in Public Spaces

In January 2014, concealed firearms became allowed in Illinois public spaces, unless explicitly disallowed by property owners. Experimental Station and Moving Design sought interpretations of how this policy shift impacts the spaces in which we work, play, move, learn and live. The exhibition included works by David Bowen, EC Brown, Margaret Crowley, Chiara Galimberti, James Goggin, Audrey Green, Kite Collective, Barbara Koenen, Elizabeth LeFauve, Jeff Pinzino, Jennifer Ray, Jesse Seay, Russ White, and others.



Conversation with Bernardine Dohrn and Bill Ayers

Guided by Jamie Kalven, this public conversation entitled 'Narrative Challenges of an Engaged Life' explored some of the ground that lies beyond the fact that we all live storied lives. Bill and Bernadine helped us explore memory and meaning-making in the swirling vortex of history, strategies of narrative self-defense, the rule and the dangers of silence, power and the permission to narrate, and the stewardship of narratives.



Art on the Rural Frontier

A stop on their cross-country tour to celebrate the publication of the launch of *A Decade of Country Hits: Art on the Rural Frontier* (Jap Sam Books, 2014), this intimate gathering included readings, musical performances, a slide presentation by the M12 Collective and conversations with the book's editors Margo Handwerker and Richard Saxton. As an urban venue it was interesting to join the M12 Collective in exploring themes around the value of rural communities and their surrounding landscapes.



UCPD Public Forum

Community members were invited to share opinions about the University of Chicago Police Department (UCPD) in an open mic format. Several local elected officials were in attendance, including local alderman Leslie Hairston. Over a hundred people attended the event, with many advocating for greater transparency and accountability from the UCPD. Pictured is Jamel Triggs, Youth Mentor at Blackstone Bicycle Works, who gave voice to the experience of many young black men in the neighborhood.



Butter Elbow Animation Festival

This year's incarnation of Butter Elbow paid homage to its roots by returning to a one-night event with seventeen short films. Organized by Vicky Yen and Laura Shaeffer (Southside Hub of Production), animators from the previous years were invited to submit their work, resulting in an eclectic mix of films made by artists from all over the world, among them Magda Guidi, Michela Donini and Katya Rinaldi, Nick Tuinstra, Leena Jääskeläinen, Anne Savitie, Roberto Catani and Amy Lockhart.