Biography

Ms Ladonna Redmond President The Institute for Community Resource Development

LaDonna Redmond was born and raised on the south side of Chicago and has been a resident of the West Garfield Community for over 20years. Ms. Redmond grew up volunteering at Operation PUSH. While there, Ms. Redmond learned about community planning and development whilst organizing workers on the election of Harold Washington-Chicago's first African American mayor. Ms Redmond believes that through community and regional planning, planners can play a significant role in shaping the food environment of communities and facilitate healthy living.

As an activist, Ms. Redmond got involved with developing a farmers market called Austin Sustainability on the Westside of Chicago. The Austin Sustainability Circle focused on improving the food system process. It began through built connections with a group of African-American farmers from Pembroke Illinois that were growing produce and raising chickens without the use of chemicals. The farmers market is now 3 years old and has expanded to include other farmers from Illinois, Wisconsin in and Michigan. The goal was to create a cooperative grocery store that carries organic food and other natural food products.

Austin Sustainability has evolved into The Institute for Community Resource Development (ICRD) which is a non-profit community based organization located in the West Garfield community. It assists residents of urban communities obtain access to safe, healthy food through the development of alternative food systems. ICRD also works on other issues that relate to sustainability, some of which include encouraging the use of local land to grow food, assisting community residents develop farmers markets, food buying clubs and Co-ops that are linked with family owned organic produce and meat farms in the region.

As a national speaker, Ms. Redmond has presented locally, nationally and internationally to food industry leaders, policy makers and heads of state concerning community safety and food access. Ms. Redmond has also spoken at a number of colleges and Universities including University of Chicago, University of Illinois, DePaul, Stanford University, University of California and Occidental College.

Ms Redmond's work has been featured in the local news and print media which includes local affiliates of ABC, NBC, WTTW, *Chicago Sun-times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Conscious Choice* and *Chicago Parent*. Ms Redmond was the 2003 recipient of the Chicago Tribunes Good Food Award and in 2006. She has also been featured in the national media including magazines such as *Organic Style*, where LaDonna was named a 'Women of Style and Substance' *Essence* magazine recognized her as a 'woman shaping the world' and in *TIME* magazine as a 'food innovator.' She has also been featured in Gourmet, Family Circle, Living Without, Entrepreneur and the CNN documentary "Americas Killer Diet."

Ms. Redmond lives in Plano, Illinois with her family and is President of ICRD and co-coordinator of the Neighborhood Assistance Center at Chicago State University in the Department of Geography.