

CITY OF CHICAGO'S

Bicycling Ambassadors



Final Report 2012

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Funders



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2012 Final Report

Executive Summary

In 2012, The City of Chicago's Bicycling Ambassadors celebrated its 11th Anniversary as the leading force in bicycle safety education and outreach in Chicago. The Ambassadors are a team of community outreach specialists who promote Chicago as a world class cycling city. The Ambassadors focused their efforts on three primary goals:

1. **Increasing the number of trips made by bicycle**
2. **Reducing the number of bicycling-related injuries and fatalities**
3. **Helping cyclists, motorists and pedestrians better share the roads and off-street trails**

This year's team was comprised of nine Bicycling Ambassadors and 17 Junior Ambassadors. The team appeared at events all over the city conducting face-to-face outreach in order to reach as many Chicagoans as possible. Outreach events included public education at libraries, schools, community festivals, businesses, athletic competitions and Chicago Park District Day Camps.

At every event the Ambassador team provided bike safety information to the public through conversation and educational literature. This literature focuses on topics such as proper helmet use, bicycling with family, using the bike lanes properly, sharing the road with motorists and commuting to work.

The City of Chicago's Bicycling Ambassadors reached more people in 2012 than ever before. Between March and October the Ambassadors:

- Attended **515 events** throughout the city
- Directly educated nearly **63,500 people** through face to face education.
- **Properly fit 1,235 helmets** on adult and youth cyclists.
- **Directly educated over 15,000 people** about dangerous cyclist and motorist behaviors at 91 Share the Road events.



Share-the-Road Campaign

Four years strong, the City of Chicago's Bicycling Ambassadors expanded the Share the Road Campaign. In 2012, the Ambassadors worked in collaboration with 23 Aldermanic Offices and 17 Chicago Police Districts. The program targets motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists by educating them about how to share the road and prevent crashes. The Ambassadors **educated over 15,000 Chicagoans at 91 Share the Road events** at intersections throughout Chicago.



Ambassador Genaro encourages a cyclist to stop for pedestrians at a Cyclists Stop for Pedestrians enforcement event.

Share the Road events consisted largely of targeted roadside outreach at key locations. Ambassadors used several methods of outreach to educate the public. These included:

- Educating motorists about safe driving around cyclists and pedestrians
- Stopping cyclists who run traffic lights and who do not stop for pedestrians in crosswalks and educating them about bicycle laws
- Taking positions at high-traffic zones encouraging cyclists to not ride on sidewalks and motorists to not talk on their cell phones while driving
- Stopping cyclists who are riding without a white front headlight and providing them with one

Share the Road publications were distributed at each enforcement event; these flyers address dangerous behaviors and serve as a warning for both motorists and cyclists. In 2012, the Ambassadors handed out 2,200 front white headlights to cyclists riding at night without one. Headlights were made available by participating aldermen, chambers of commerce, Special Service Areas and CDOT. Ambassadors positively reinforced bike safety messaging amongst Lakefront Trail users with 2 Share the Trail awareness events, distributing 100 bells to cyclists to encourage safer Trail behavior.



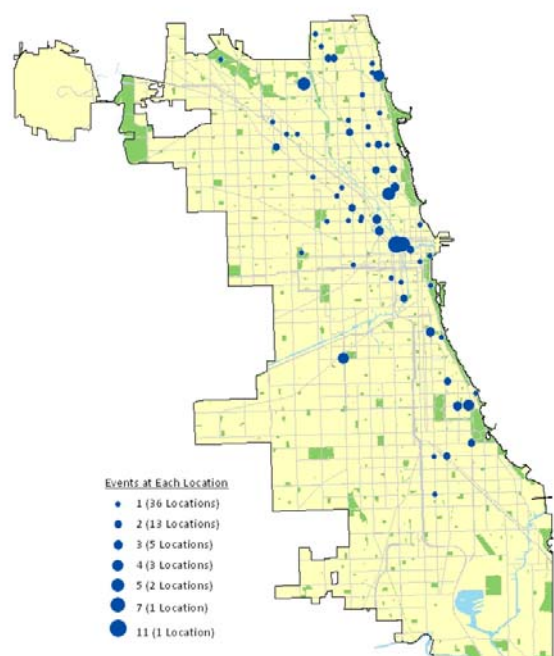
Ambassador La'Quita encourages cyclists to use a front white headlight at dusk during a Bike Light Distribution event.

From June to October, Staff specifically evaluated one enforcement location at Kinzie & Kingsbury (42nd Ward) before and after three waves of enforcement events to determine an increase in traffic law compliance. The evaluation took place during a two-hour morning rush hour period and observed the number of cyclists who did not stop or yield when a pedestrian was present in the crosswalk. Each wave of enforcement included two events during the same time period.

Pre- and post- observations were conducted with results showing that the overall total stopping rates for cyclists rose from 3.4% to 37.78%.

Due to the high visibility of Share-the-Road events, many passers-by are also exposed to these messages, not just those who are educated directly. It is estimated that more than **123,000 people** were contacted in this way.

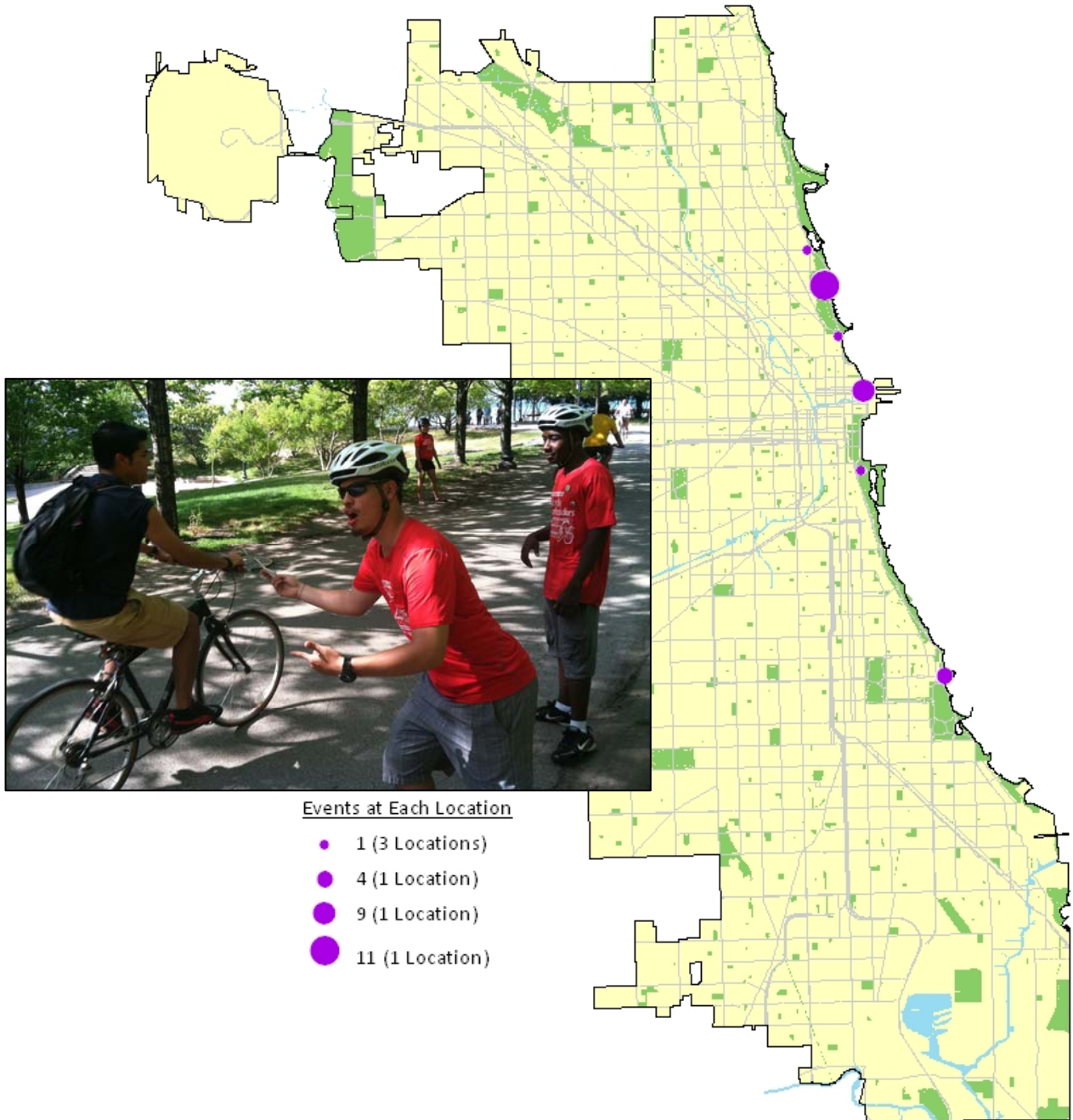
Share the Road Events 2012



Lakefront Trail Outreach

Lakefront Trail Outreach are community events that educate cyclists and pedestrians on the 18-mile paved trail along Lake Michigan. Sponsored in part by the Chicago Park District, Ambassadors provided maps, safe cycling information and brochures on cycling events in Chicago to Trail users. Additionally, they answered questions on bike routes, trail etiquette and Chicago bicycle laws. Ambassadors led **27 Lakefront Trail Outreach events** at various locations from Hollywood Avenue on the North side to 71st on the South side **educating 12,000 people**.

Lake Front Trail Locations 2012



Outreach to Youth

Thirty-six percent of all Ambassador outreach events focused on children and youth in 2012. For six weeks of each season the Ambassadors focus on Chicago's youth encouraging bicycle use and safe riding techniques. They educated more than **17,100 young people** with bicycle safety messages, and attended **175 Chicago Park District Day Camps** all over the city.



An integral part of our outreach to youth is the **Junior Ambassador** program. Junior Ambassadors are a team of Chicago teenagers, sponsored by the Chicago Park District, who work with the Bicycling Ambassador staff for six weeks in the summer. To become Junior Ambassadors, teenage candidates complete a 10 week after-school bicycle safety and repair class. They share these skills with other young people at Chicago Park District Day Camps. The Junior Ambassador program is the **largest peer-to-peer bicycle education program of its kind in the nation**. This year, Ambassador staff also brought bike education to week long "Bike Camps" in four wards across the City of Chicago. Students were given the chance to earn bikes and helmets by learning to ride safely in and around their neighborhoods.

Bike Ambassador Events 2012

