Tom Tresser

Co-Founder at The CivicLab

Greater Chicago Area, IL, US

Creativity champion. Civic educator. Public defender.

Biography

Tom Tresser is an educator, organizer, creativity champion, public defender and fighter of privatization. He has doing civic engagement and grassroots democracy efforts for over 40 years. His first voter registration campaign was in 1972. Tom has acted in some 40 shows and produced over 100 plays, special events, festivals and community programs. He was director of cultural development at Peoples Housing, in north Rogers Park, Chicago, where he created a community arts program that blended the arts, education and micro-enterprise. Tom was elected to the Abraham Lincoln Elementary School?s Local School Council and served from 2004 to 2006. He was a co-founder of Protect Our Parks, a neighborhood effort to stop the privatization of public space in Chicago. He was a lead organizer for No Games Chicago, an all-volunteer grassroots effort that opposed Chicago?s 2016 Olympic bid. He has taught workshops on ?The Politics of Creativity ? A Call To Service?for arts service organizations in six states. He teaches a number of classes on creativity, public policy and civic engagement for Loyola University, School of the Art Institute, the Illinois Institute of Technology, DePaul University and for i c stars. Tom has published a web-based project, ?America Needs You!? ? about the need for creatives to lead in the public sector. Tom was the Green Party candidate for the position of President of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County in November 2010 election. Tom is extremely proud to announce the launch of a new civic project, The CivicLab, a co-working space where activists, educators, coders and designers come to work, collaborate, teach, and build tools for civic engagement. The space is located in Chicago?s West Loop at 114 N. Aberdeen. He is the lead organizer for the TIF Illumination Project that is investigating and explaining the impacts of Tax Increment Financing districts on a ward-by-ward basis. Tom and the TIF Illumination Project are profiled in the cover story of the July 22, 2013 issue of The Nation entitled ?Chicago Rising!? He has presented on how TIFs impact neighborhoods all over the city. Listen to this 47 minute podcast where Tom is interviewed about his background, civic work and the connections between creativity and democracy - http://tinyurl.com/Podcast-ADMCi.

Availability

Keynote, Moderator, Panelist, Workshop, Host/MC, Author Appearance, Corporate Training

---

Industry Expertise

Think Tanks, Education/Learning, Public Policy

Areas of Expertise

Community Organizing, Fighting Privatization, Co-Working, Civic Engagement, Training, Crowd Sourcing, Investigation, Citizen Science, Planned Serindipity, Tax Increment Financing, Non-Profits, TIF, Research, Public Speaking, Social Change, Creativity, Innovation

Affiliations

Leadership Greater Chicago, National Coalition for Dialog & Deliberation

Sample Talks

"TIF 101"
All about Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts work in Chicago. This is a 50 minute talk that details the history of TIFs in Cook County and describes the citizen-powered TIF Illumination Project (http://www.tifreports.com) that combines data mining, investigatory journalism, map making, graphic design and community organizing to reveal the details of Chicago's half-billion dollar annual TIF program.

Event Appearances

27th Ward TIF Illumination
27th Ward TIF Town Meeting

Civic Innovation Workshop
Civic Workshop Series

TIF 101
PTA Advocacy Workshop

Education

Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies
M.S. Urban Development

DePaul University

University of Illinois at Chicago

Leadership Greater Chicago
Fellow

Illinois Institute of Technology

The University of Chicago - Booth School of Business
Certificate Business Management

Roosevelt University
Certificate Nonprofit Management

Loyola University of Chicago

Please click here to view the full profile.

This profile was created by Expertfile.