



BOB RINGHAM/SUN-TIMES

Daniel F. Bassill, president and chief executive officer of Cabrini Connections, talks with Tangla Smith about his organization's tutoring program.

He Traded Ward's Job for Tutoring

Daniel F. Bassill was a young advertising executive at Montgomery Ward when he began tutoring students at the nearby Cabrini-Green housing complex for purely romantic reasons.

"I was standing in the cafeteria line with a woman I was attracted to when she saw a sign asking for tutors," said Bassill, who joined Ward's in 1972 as an advertising copywriter. "She said we should sign up and I said, 'Sure.'"

He's been doing it ever since.

In 1975, he became president of Cabrini-Green Tutoring, a program for stu-

dents in the second through seventh grades. Seventeen years later, he resigned from Ward's to become president and chief executive officer of Cabrini Connections, a tutoring program for students in the eighth through 12th grades.

And Bassill recently founded the Tutor/Mentor Connection, a citywide network of tutoring organizations that has a goal of reaching 200,000 students.

Cabrini Connections and the Tutor/Mentor Connection are on the 21st floor of Ward's corporate headquarters, 535 W. Chicago.

"There are about 240,000 children who are at risk in Chicago because they live in poverty," Bassill said. "If we can provide tutoring, they will see other alternatives open to them instead of just joining gangs."

Frederick H. Lowe



Bassill has advocated for use of maps to support distribution of resources since T/MC formed in 1993.