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RESULTS

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Strengthening Youth Leadership in a Metropolitan Region: Examining Lessons From a Multiyear Community Foundation Initiative

Katie Richards-Schuster, Ph.D., University of Michigan, and Katie G. Brisson, M.A., Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan

Foundations have invested in youth leadership in local and regional decision-making over the past 20 years. In Michigan in particular, investing in youth leadership has been an important part of philanthropic practices. This article examines the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan's launch of a broad-based strategy to promote youth leadership in the region. Six key insights emerged - the essential voice of youth, partnerships with subject-matter experts, buy-in from organizational and initiative leadership, capacity building, creating sustainable networks and wide-ranging impact of youth leadership.

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Community Innovation Network Framework: A Model for Reshaping Community Identity

William P. Moore, Ph.D., REACH Healthcare Foundation; Adena M. Klem, Ph.D., Klem Consulting; Cheryl L. Holmes, M.P.A., University of Kansas; June Holley, M.A., M.Ed., Network Weaving Institute; and Carlie Houchen, B.S., M.P.H., Kansas Health Institute, Graduate Student, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and Intern with REACH Healthcare Foundation

Limited access to health care has produced rural communities whose residents are older, poorer, sicker, and have a life expectancy that is two years shorter than their urban counterparts. The REACH Healthcare Foundation created its Rural Health Initiative to encourage the development of innovative strategies to improve access to health care and reduce health inequities in three rural counties in Missouri and Kansas. This article discusses the foundation's original approach to the initiative and how it adjusted that approach in response to its rural partners' experiences. It reflects on the challenges encountered in rooting the four conditions and capacities of community change and innovation – supports for implementation; foundational structures; skills and processes; and community engagement – into the work of community health improvement.

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SECTOR

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Foundation Support of Immigrant Communities: Insights From a Survey of Immigrants in Minnesota's Twin Cities

Nicole MartinRogers, Ph.D., Ryan Evans, B.A., and Paul Mattessich, Ph.D., Wilder Research

Worldwide trends suggest that immigration will continue on a major scale, with implications for nations and for their constituent regions and communities. Immigration brings both challenges and benefits to communities. This article provides insight into the needs of these communities and offers suggestions for how foundations can consider immigrant and refugee communities in their work. This article combines information from Minnesota Compass, a foundation-governed social-indicators initiative, and *Speaking for Ourselves*, a study of immigrants and refugees in Minnesota's Twin Cities metropolitan area that identifies the needs and strengths immigrants bring to our communities. The results can help guide foundations and their grantees on how to improve a community's quality of life for immigrants and refugees – to the benefit of all residents.

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Following the Money: An Analysis of Foundation Grantmaking for Community and Economic Development

Keith Wardrip, M.A., Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia; William Lambe, M.P.P., and Mels de Zeeuw, M.A., Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Grants from foundations, while a relatively small but growing slice of overall philanthropic giving, are an important source of support for local community and economic development. The primary goals in this study were to examine why some metro areas attract more grant capital than others and determine whether the size of the area or its level of distress has any explanatory power. The density of nonprofit organizations and the presence of large, local foundations are shown to be consistently significant predictors of grant receipt. After controlling for these and other factors, analysis indicates that, compared with smaller metro areas, more populous ones receive a greater level of grant capital from the largest foundations. Contrary to expectations, the same is true for places with higher poverty rates.

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Knowledge as Leadership, Belonging as Community: How Canadian Community Foundations Are Using Vital Signs for Social Change

Susan D. Phillips, Ph.D., Carleton University; Ian Bird, Laurel Carlton, M.P.A., and Lee Rose, GradD, Community Foundations of Canada

The concept of “community” in community foundations is being reframed – less strictly tied to the specific locales that originally defined their boundaries and increasingly about a process of engagement and a resulting sense of belonging. The greatest asset of a community foundation is not the size of its endowment, but rather its knowledge of community and ability to use this knowledge for positive change. This article explores the Canadian network of community foundations’ use of the reporting tool Vital Signs to implement a knowledge-driven approach to leadership, and how it is using this knowledge in more inclusive, engaged models of community to drive change agendas in their own communities and, collectively, at a national scale. In implementing knowledge as a leadership tool, there remains a vast difference between what is feasible for the large community foundations and the small and new ones, particularly those in more isolated places.

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Partnering for Impact: Developing The McKnight Foundation’s Carbon Efficiency Strategy

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This case study challenges us to redefine our definitions of community and philanthropic practice as we tackle global climate change — one of the most Wicked Problems facing our planet and our people. Driven by a deep commitment to “walk the talk,” CEO Kate Wolford and McKnight Foundation leadership committed \$100M of the foundation’s endowment to find solutions to global warming. This bold step required building a new type of partnership with McKnight’s team of financial advisors — Mellon Capital Management, Mercer, and Imprint Capital (now Goldman Sachs). McKnight and Mellon Capital had to build a new cross sector partnership that would change the role of philanthropy and financial sector to develop new market-driven solutions — specifically, a Carbon Efficiency Strategy. Using a Deliberate Leadership framework, the case follows the partners’ journey as they seek to build community and find collaborative solutions. We witness their tensions and evolution in their thinking and relationships. While the case seems unusual, it represents future trends in which impact investing is drawing a new pool of funders — beyond traditional grantmakers — into innovative social change solutions to address global Wicked Problems.

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REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

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A New Domain for Place-Rooted Foundations: Economic Development Philanthropy

Deborah Markley, Ph.D., and Don Macke, M.A., Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, and Janet Topolsky, M.P.P., Travis Green, M.C.R.P., and Kristin Feierabend, M.A., Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group

This reflective practice article suggests a new domain for place-rooted foundations – economic development philanthropy – and highlights the important system-actor role that these foundations can and are playing to advance economic development that produces better outcomes for families and communities. Economic development philanthropy requires foundations to play integrating or missing roles to advance regional economic development – that they act to fill gaps that other organizations and agencies in the community or region are not addressing. The reflections shared in this article come from the collective field experience of the Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group and the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship. This article also offers some initial insights into what it will take to build a movement of place-rooted foundations embracing social entrepreneurship to advance an economy that works well for all.

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