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## Executive Summaries

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# Executive Summaries

## Results

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### Community Navigation as a Field of Practice: Reframing Service Delivery to Meet the Needs of Communities' Marginalized Populations

*Joby Schaffer, M.A., Spark Policy Institute; M. Julie Patiño, J.D., P. Barclay Jones, B.S., and LaDawn Sullivan, B.S., The Denver Foundation*

The Denver Foundation launched the Basic Human Needs Navigator Learning Community in February 2014 to help navigators working with local organizations and community members improve their practice and identify similarities and differences in their approaches. This article discusses the multiyear, peer-learning project, including the general lessons the foundation learned about both navigation and the use of a learning-community approach to reach its field-building goals. Reports from participating organizations and community members over four years suggest the efficacy of both navigation as a model for addressing gaps in service provision and of the learning-community approach in driving early-stage field-building outcomes.

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### By Us and For Us: A Story of Early Childhood Development Systems Change and Results in a Rural Context

*Lisa Payne Simon, M.P.H., and Clare Nolan, M.P.P., Engage R+D; Kirsten Scobie, M.A. and Phoebe Backler, B.A., New Hampshire Charitable Foundation; Catherine McDowell, M.A., Coös Coalition for Young Children and Families; Charles Cotton, M.S.W., Northern Human Services; and Susan Cloutier, B.S., White Mountains Community College*

The Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund – a donor-advised fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation – invests in early childhood development in Coös County, New Hampshire's largest and most rural and economically disadvantaged county. Local community members joined forces with the fund to create an integrated early childhood development system for Coös' children and families. The evaluation documented increased capacity and quality and surfaced lessons for funders and others pursuing systems change efforts in early learning, and in rural areas more broadly.

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## Tools

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### A New Tool for New Times? Using Geographic Information Systems in Foundations and Other Nonprofit Organizations

*Jeffrey L. Brudney, Ph.D., and Christopher R. Prentice, Ph.D., University of North Carolina Wilmington*

This article examines how a tool relatively new to nonprofits — geographic information systems — can support community building. Three trends — rising use of GIS overall and potential for technology transfer to nonprofit organizations, the decreased cost of GIS

software and relevant data, and the increased number of public servants trained in GIS — present a convincing case that nonprofits, and particularly foundations, will be able to make greater use of this valuable technology to increase public participation, incorporate diverse stakeholders, improve organizational operations, increase market efficiencies, and build stronger communities.

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## Creating Habits for Inclusive Change

*Pennie Foster-Fishman, Ph.D., and Erin Watson, Ph.D., Michigan State University*

The act of transforming community outcomes requires diverse stakeholders across an array of settings to become actors of change. Drawing from the ABL<sup>e</sup> Change Framework systems-change model, this article presents four processes used in numerous communities across the United States to effectively engage diverse stakeholders in taking actions to improve local systems. This article introduces the ABL<sup>e</sup> Change Framework tools, which are used to promote these action-oriented habits, and then discusses how foundations can use them to create the conditions that promote inclusive community change.

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## Thriving Communities: A Model for Community-Engaged Grantmaking

*Mary Francis, M.A.E.D., Colleen Desmond, M.P.H., Jeffrey Williams, B.S., and Jennifer Chubinski, Ph.D., Interact for Health; Jennifer Zimmerman, M.S.W., bi3; and Ashlee Young, M.P.H., StrivePartnership*

Interact for Health, a health conversion foundation serving the three-state region of Greater Cincinnati, Ohio, supports Thriving Communities a community-learning model. The goal is to embed health promotion and advocacy work in communities while building an equitable infrastructure to spread evidence-based practices. This article describes three tools developed for the Thriving Communities initiative: Success Markers, the Developmental Pathway, and Relationship Mapping. Interact for Health has found that these tools build core competencies and confidence among grantees as well as a process for community engagement that produces results at the local level.

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## Reflective Practice

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## Equity for All: Building the Infrastructure for Change Through Community-First Funder Collaboratives

*Ellen Braff-Guajardo, M.Ed., J.D., Kaying Hang, M.P.H., and Leslie Cooksy, Ph.D., Sierra Health Foundation; Monica Braughton, M.P.P., Harder+Company Community Research; and Fontane Lo, M.P.H., James Irvine Foundation*

In recent years, funder collaboratives have become more common as a tool for increasing and coordinating philanthropic investments to address the root causes of inequity, while staying responsive to shifting needs and political priorities. This article describes a “community first” model, which emerged from the experience of a funders collaborative created to advance equity through policy and systems change in California’s San Joaquin Valley. Initial

findings indicate that the fund has helped to seed a regional movement for change. When philanthropy aims to advance equity, it makes sense to use a model that seeks to create a partnership between funders and community — a model that seeks to act equitably by putting the community first.

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## A Partnered Approach to School Change in a Rural Community: Reflections and Recommendations

*Sara E. Rimm-Kaufman, Ph.D., University of Virginia; Mary Fant Donnan, M.Env.St., and Dianne Garcia, B.S., Alleghany Foundation; Melinda Snead-Johnson, M.Ed., Covington City Public Schools; Eugene Kotulka, M.Ed., Alleghany County Public Schools; and Lia E. Sandilos, Ph.D., Temple University*

With so many education policies and practices made at the local level, community-based foundations are in a unique position to support their local school districts in taking a comprehensive, systematic approach to improving the lives of young people. This article describes a research–practice partnership designed to produce school improvement in a rural community in western Virginia and reflects on a three-year collaboration among The Alleghany Foundation, two school districts, and the University of Virginia. The collaboration provided clear evidence that sustained change will occur only if it aligns with the goals of school leaders and fully engages members of the community, and it sheds light on the unique challenges and strengths present in a small rural community that will influence foundation work. The process produced five recommendations for foundations that seek a partnered approach to school change.

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## An End to Business as Usual: Nurturing Authentic Partnerships to Create Lasting Community Change

*Jeffrey Sunshine, Ph.D., and Bernadette Sangalang, Ph.D., David and Lucile Packard Foundation*

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation created Starting Smart and Strong, a 10-year place-based commitment to early learning in three California communities. This article offers key insights into the foundation’s experience, three years into implementation, with managing this complex initiative and how program officers were compelled to think differently about the best roles staff can play to support grantee communities and amplify constituent voice. Program officers also had to develop new capacities that both focus on the development of systems that are locally designed and driven and work in service of the foundation’s broader strategy goals.

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## Fostering Change and Fresh Voices: Vancouver Foundation’s Youth Engagement Journey

*Trilby Smith, M.M., Vancouver Foundation*

Since 2011, Vancouver Foundation has invested significant time, energy, ideas, and money in bringing together immigrant and refugee youth and young people with lived experience of the foster care system in British Columbia. Through its Fostering Change and Fresh Voices

initiatives, the foundation has listened and worked in partnership with these young people to address the issues that affect their lives, and important progress has been made in the forms of meaningful policy changes and improved political engagement. The foundation is now in the process of returning these initiatives to the communities that inspired them. This article describes the roles the foundation played in these inclusive community change efforts, and reflects on the commitments, mindsets, and capacities necessary to effectively perform each of those roles.

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## Book Reviews

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### *The Goldilocks Challenge: Right-fit Evidence for the Social Sector* by Mary Kay Gugerty and Dean Karlan

Reviewed by Veena Pankaj, Innovation Network

The spotlight on performance and accountability throughout the nonprofit sector has made it more important than ever for nonprofits to understand and demonstrate their effectiveness and impact. Through a series of illustrative examples and case studies, the authors present a framework to guide the selection of a “right-fit” evaluation approach. The framework introduced in this book incorporates four principles, referred to as the CART principles.

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### *Decolonizing Wealth* by Edgar Villanueva

Reviewed by Juan Olivarez, Ph.D., Grand Valley State University

Part I, “Where It Hurts,” introduces the notion that it’s not just the distribution of dollars in grant making that perpetuates the colonizer virus, but also where the corpus of the foundation is invested. Part II, “How to Heal,” describes Seven Steps to Healing with ideas for creating a better financial and philanthropic field. The author believes that radical changes are necessary if we are to create a new paradigm of connect, relate, and belong. Reading *Decolonizing Wealth* may be uncomfortable for those who share the hurt or for those offended by Villanueva’s direct accusations. However, this is a must read.

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