

**PRI Steering Committee
Tuesday, June 17, 2014
1:00-2:30pm, MI Works
MEETING NOTES**

NOTE MEETING DATE CHANGE to 3rd Tuesday of the Month

*Bringing the power of our collective knowledge and energy together to prevent and reduce poverty by **Inspiring, Advocating, and Connecting** through convening and incubation.*

Welcome and Introductions

- Christi Nowak will be assuming the role at Munson filled by Diane Butler in a few weeks.
- Gladys Munoz has been a local medical interpreter working with the Hispanic community locally for 27 years. Works with schools, law enforcement and the WRC as well. Tries to respond to requests for assistance 24/7. Finds that the needs of the year-round Hispanic community vary from those of the seasonal migrant worker community.

Agenda: approved

Meeting Notes from May 20, 2014: reviewed with no changes.

Project Reports

- Mentoring: 5th annual Mentoring Breakfast held 6/11. Joe Lisewski (?) talked about Collective Impact as relates to mentoring organizations, and Ryan Hannon spoke. About 46 attendees, who were surveyed. GT and Leelanau seem well-covered, the Benzie, Antrim, Kalkaska less so. Even distributions between those with more, the same, or less mentors or mentees.
- TCAPS mentoring program has ended for the first year. About 12 matches were made and will continue next school year. There is hope the project will expand.
- Tom Emling is looking for help on 9/19 9am-noon to be role-players for the poverty simulation.
- Steve Wade: surveying PRI-related programs to see what they need in the future to survive and thrive over the next few weeks.
- Tom White is getting an e-newsletter out in the next few weeks – if there is any info people would like to have included, please get it to him ASAP.

Employment Convener Workgroup Session – Janie McNabb & Sakura Raftery:

Update on Workgroup activity

Thoughts on how to structure action

Lessons from Iowa, Tamarack

- Discussing how to progress towards goal achievement
- Discussing what is most impactful in helping to move people out of poverty
- Learned from the HR guidance book from the Tamarack Institute (?). Could guide discussions with local employers known to be supportive of employees who are living on the edge. Would like to convene a discussion group about how more employers can employ these strategies.

- Worked with Chris Mohrhardt at Incredible Mo's on a joint employment skills training with MIWorks and Goodwill. Will be interviewing him about how he creates a culture in his company that supports employees in poverty. Goal: be able to articulate to other businesses why a culture supporting low-income employees makes good business sense.
- Good policies are not just for low-income workers, but support all employees in family friendly ways.
- People in poverty need help positioning themselves to get the jobs – skills training.
- How can this be connected to the poverty simulation - invite some employers to come?
- What are areas for concern of employers?
- Response to 2006 employer survey through the Chamber are available on the PRI website. About 100 employers participated. All noted that the costs of dealing with recruiting, training, and repeating the cycle in high-turnover situations are a problem.
- Teamwork Northwest: provided a mentor so that people could be successful at their jobs under difficult circumstances. Fairly successful at Crystal Mountain; limited success at the Grand Traverse Resort. Worked particularly because the mentor was a neutral party located on-site – workers could seek help without having to share uncomfortable details with their employer.
 - Crystal Mountain started providing brief seminars on helpful skills during the lunch hours every two weeks at the same time paychecks were available for pickup. Sessions open to everyone without distinction.
 - Similar past program at Cascade Engineering in Grand Rapids
 - Providing helpful programs to everyone without distinction is a Tamarack philosophy.
- How can HelpLink help people navigate to needed supports and services?
- Asset orientation: being mindful of what collaborating partners have to offer, identify gaps, fill gaps.
- Timing for introducing these concepts to employers may be excellent, as many are having a hard time recruiting and retaining employees for available positions.
- Strong work ethic: many people perceive that it's something you either have or not innately or through upbringing, rather than being a teachable skill. So, also need to overcome perception that those currently without the skill are lazy rather than untrained.
 - Research indicates that learning good soft skills as early as possible is a huge factor in eventual success.
- How does each program focus on how their program addresses desired outcomes?
- How do we measure effectiveness once the desired outcomes are identified?
- Collective Impact talks about whether a problem is simple, complex, or complicated. Perhaps we should also consider where solutions and outcomes fit into these categories, particularly as we are trying to intertwine different programs effectively. One example of complexity: those who want and need to work but can't afford the commute to the available jobs from the available housing.
- Tamarack finds it helpful to be a learning, rather than linear organization. Learn, make mistakes, bring others along on the journey, employ a continuous information stream, and have everyone learn and grow together.
- Framework for our Future/Regional Prosperity Plan are utilizing input from a wide variety of sources, including but not limited to: one-on-one surveys PRI had performed by Tina Allen; Progress Village; and the Creating Opportunities Summit. The final report is expected to be ready in August. Most of the \$35,000 in PRI-related grant money for this project went to making it possible for members of Progress

- Village to attend local input sessions and putting on the Opportunity Conference and the Creating Opportunities Summit.
- Dubuque, IA: Steve Wade is still learning about their model. Big elements: trial and error as a valuable and productive; Linking groups and what they are already doing through information sharing and common measurement systems, but not collective funding, to a common agenda.
 - Create a key goal for the year? Make it as simple as possible. Measure each initiative against whether or not it impacts a solution and mutually reinforces the common agenda. If it does not, should we refocus effort and energy elsewhere?
 - How can the county collaborative bodies and the Regional Collaborative Alliance connect to the effort?
 - Should we spend more time identifying who is in poverty and why? Brandon may be able to assist with this over the summer, and Framework for our Future may also contain useful data.

What else is powerful and urgent?

Adjourned 2:20 p.m.

Next meeting 3rd Tuesday, July 15th 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.