‘Collective impact’ improves community building and camping

By Joyce Akse
Director, Ford Institute for Community Building

For many years, my family has taken camping trips with several other families. It’s a lot of fun, but it also was a lot of work. The process would start in midwinter, as we struggled to find a date and a place that everyone liked. Each family would then make campsite registrations, develop menus and buy food. Once we settled in at the campground, we built our own campfires, cooked our own meals and washed our own dishes.

Each family was putting a lot of individual effort into the planning and execution of each camping trip. There had to be a better way.

We wanted to expend our energies more efficiently — essentially, get more for less. We wanted our collective work to have the maximum impact.

The process we followed to make that happen is a simple but powerful example of “collective impact,” a concept explored in several articles written recently by nonprofit consulting firm FSG.

The authors cite five conditions that together create an effective strategy for achieving large-scale social impact: common agenda, continuous communication, mutually reinforcing activities, shared measurements.

Continued on page 15
N orm Smith, president and CEO of The Ford Family Foundation, will retire from the Foundation on April 15, 2013. He was the first employee hired when the Foundation commenced operations in 1997.

“Norm has been an outstanding leader in overseeing the growth and development of the Foundation,” says Ron Parker, chairman of the board of directors of The Ford Family Foundation. “He has also been an effective spokesman for the Foundation and helped establish it as a philanthropic leader in the Pacific Northwest.”

“My wife, Kathy, and I are both open to the next great adventure,” says Smith. “Perhaps there is an encore opportunity close to home or in the Pacific Northwest. Whatever it is, I know we’ll enjoy it.”

Max Gimbel, a former facilitator for the Ford Institute Leadership Program, is the new associate director for the Ford Institute for Community Building. In his new position, Gimbel is responsible for overseeing the leadership program. Before joining the Ford team, he served for five years as community development coordinator for Rural Development Initiatives. Gimbel, who is fluent in Spanish, was also involved in the development of the Institute’s Latino leadership offerings, as well as its rural youth programming. Gimbel earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy from Swarthmore College and a master’s degree in Spanish from the University of Oregon.

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Maury Forman, senior manager at the Washington State Department of Commerce, is the director of a nationally recognized program that has graduated more than 1,500 community and economic development practitioners throughout the Northwest. He has authored eight books on economic development.

M aury Forman is on a mission to rebalance the stool in rural communities. It’s the economic development stool—the widely accepted three-part theory for creating economically healthy communities. Traditionally, that strategy consists of community development, business retention and expansion, and business attraction.

That may have been successful during a strong economy in the 20th century. Forman says, but rural communities need to shift focus today to-

Rebalancing the stool

It’s time to de-emphasize the importance of attracting new business

Maury Forman
now turning to a new three-legged model: asset building, entrepreneurial development, and technical assistance.

First leg: Find your assets

Entrepreneurs are where the real job growth is in a community. Identify community assets in order to create entrepreneurial opportunities, Forman says. “Often, communities don’t recognize their assets — they want to be like other communities. That’s not what you want to do; you want to have a unique identity. The easiest way to do this is to bring people together to talk about the assets they have.”

Forman calls this “front porch development,” and says that is one of the most important things the Ford Institute Leadership Program accomplishes. “The leadership classes bring people from all walks of life together to talk about assets.”

There are many different kinds of assets. Arts and culture are huge attractions, and a driving reason for people relocating. (See story on page 6.) Infrastructure elements can also be valuable, particularly broadband which is a necessity in entrepreneurial communities. Educational opportunities, through community colleges or universities, can promote job diversity.

Second leg: Encourage entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship works for rural communities, and Forman wants to promote that mindset at a very early age. Realizing this, some communities participate in national Lemonade Day (lemonadeday.org). Last year, more than 150,000 children registered in 36 cities to “build a stand and spark a dream.”

“We need to allow our children to be creative,” he says. “Entrepreneurship is what creativity is all about. We need to allow them to understand that failure is part of the learning process. By the time kids are young adults, they have lost the capacity to take chances and that means they won’t succeed as entrepreneurs.”

Third leg: technical assistance

Technical assistance services can help communities prepare for economic development. Peer-to-peer mentoring between businesses, tutoring on marketing intelligence, staff assessment, training on how to access capital, export assistance — all can add to a skill base that helps position a community for growth.

“It’s no longer just about the public sector providing technical assistance,” Forman says. “It’s about working with the private sector through strategic thinking, stimulating conversations, new ideas and innovation entering the marketplace, and an understanding of a new way to create economic development in rural communities.”
Healthy Economies

Keeping health care close to home

Rural communities face challenges in providing health care locally

In the early 1990s, a group of residents in Condon began exploring the idea of establishing an assisted-living center. The facilities nearest to Condon, the seat of the northeastern Oregon county of Gilliam, were more than a hundred miles away in Pendleton.

A vigorous fund-raising campaign resulted in the opening in 1995 of the Summit Springs Village, an assisted-living center that provides a home and activities for 23 elderly residents. “The basic idea was for local people to be able to keep their family members local when it came time for that type of facility,” says Cindy Hess, managing director of the center, which is organized as a nonprofit corporation.

But Summit Springs offers much more than that — it also provides an opportunity for employment in a remote area where jobs are scarce. Two years ago, the center expanded by adding an eight-room specialized wing for memory care patients. Today, Summit Springs employs about 30 people. That makes it the largest private employer in southern Gilliam County.

Health-care facilities in rural areas are both a necessity for the good health of residents, and, as Summit Springs illustrates, a boon for the local economy.

The health-care sector is, in fact, one of the top three employers in rural Oregon and Northern California communities. In Oregon’s rural counties, the percentage of jobs related to health care range from 0.36 percent in Sherman County to a high of 15 percent in Wasco County. In Coos and Jackson counties, these jobs constitute 14 percent of the total county labor market; 13 percent in Lane, Josephine and Deschutes counties; and 12 percent in Douglas County.

Challenges

But rural areas face significant challenges when it comes to establishing these facilities, from building the necessary infrastructure to attracting and retaining the health-care professionals necessary to staff them. Consider this: About 20 percent of the U.S. population — more than 50 million people — live in rural areas, but only 9 percent of the nation’s physicians practice there. Shortages of skilled health-care workers are projected to worsen in the next decade. Rural areas, which traditionally have a harder time with...
attraction and retention than their urban counterparts, will feel the pinch even more.

The Oregon Healthcare Workforce Institute reports that health-care workforce shortages may not only impact access to care, but also may affect state and county economies and have an indirect effect on local businesses. Every health-care dollar that leaves a community is one less dollar supporting the local economy.

One critical aspect of the health-care conundrum that is often overlooked is a community’s ability to attract health-care professionals. “We have a health-care crisis in our county, and it’s exaggerated in the rural areas for a variety of reasons: lower median income, limited resources and fewer primary care providers,” says Chris Guastaferro, executive director of the Area Health Education Center of Southwest Oregon. “With the continued increasing workloads of clinics and small health systems in rural areas, along with the given disparity in lifetime compensation and student debt loads, it is no wonder future physicians may not choose to live in a rural area.”

A recent rural health-care study commissioned by The Ford Family Foundation recommends that rural communities develop a structured method to assess community needs, identify their strengths, and address their weaknesses in the critical areas of recruitment and retention.

Partnerships are one way that rural communities can address these recommendations and improve rural health status and economic vitality. For example, the Area Health Education Center of Southwest Oregon (an affiliate of Oregon Health & Science University) has formed collaborations in Southwest Oregon with 14 hospitals, 12 rural clinics, and eight universities and colleges.

**Health-care education**

Among its efforts to improve the health of people in Southwest Oregon, the center has worked to add a new health-care education coordinator or supplement an existing one at each area hospital. The goal is to promote health-care careers in schools and the community. Mercy Medical Center in Roseburg has piloted four health-care programs that were developed by the center: a teen volunteer program, an internship program, Diagnosis Day and a summer health-care career camp.

“One communities graft these programs into their schools and health-care communities, they become a launching pad for potential job growth in the health-care-career pipeline and catalyze incredible student energy,” says Guastaferro.

From creating jobs and boosting economies to providing family members with care close to home, keeping health care local promotes a healthy environment on many levels.

**SCHOLARSHIP PROFILE:**

**Scholar-entrepreneur achieves business success**

Zach Edwards knew he was taking a chance launching a new business in the middle of a recession. He found the confidence he needed in his education. “Having a business degree just gave me so much confidence,” Edwards says. “I knew that when I put together a business plan it was going to be pretty accurate.”

In 2004, Edwards found himself a single parent with an associate’s degree from Rogue Community College and the desire to design cars. He’d just gotten fired from his job at an Ashland auto dealership. “I have never been fired before, but it was the greatest thing that ever happened to me,” says the Ashland resident.

He enrolled at Southern Oregon University and, midway through his first year, was named a Ford Opportunity Scholar. The Ford Opportunity Scholarship Program is designed for single parents who are heads of household and who are pursuing a bachelor’s degree.

In 2008, he graduated from SOU with a business management major and a minor in economics. As he was finishing up his degree, his sister died of brain cancer, and Edwards says her death inspired him to reprioritize his life. “She motivated me to take better care of myself, which allowed me to be more successful as a business owner,” he says.

Edwards did a lot of homework before he invested his time and dollars. “I knew that the trend was going to be that people would stop buying new cars and instead fix up their old ones. And that’s what happened — car sales fell through the floor.”

That was in January of 2009. Today, Ashland Automotive has two mechanics, a service writer and plans for its own building. Edwards has seen a doubling in business revenue every year. Edwards is able to step away and take the occasional vacation, as well as spend time coaching his 12-year-old son’s baseball team. He was there last spring when his son pitched a no-hitter in the district championship.
Cultural Tourism

Heritage, arts drive local

Thousands of visitors will flock to the Southern Oregon town of Grants Pass this October, drawn by a free outdoor festival that features dozens of local and national chalk artists. Besides the chalk creations drawn on downtown streets, Art Along the Rogue includes live music, a doggie parade and prizes. It’s just one of the many events the town stages each year to draw visitors. Many of them incorporate art, including a summer display of painted bears and a winter display of Christmas murals.

Art and culture have a valuable place in vibrant communities, one that supports jobs, generates big revenues and provides the quality of life that positions communities to succeed. Cultural tourism, which includes arts and heritage attractions, is one of the fastest growing segments of the travel industry. Public art demonstrates civic pride and adds to a town’s desirability. In some instances, arts and culture even provide the town’s identity. Ashland, for example, is known worldwide as the home of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

The latest Arts & Economic Prosperity study, released in June, reveals that the nonprofit arts industry produced $135.2 billion in economic activity during 2010 in the United States. This spending — $61.1 billion by nonprofit arts and culture organizations plus an additional $74.1 billion by their audiences — supported 4.1 million full-time equivalent jobs and generated $22.3 billion in federal, state and local tax revenues.

“This study shines a much-needed light on the vital role the arts play in stimulating and sustaining economic de-
The Pendleton Round-up is a 113-year-old tradition that draws about 50,000 visitors each year, tripling the town’s population of 16,700.

Pendleton Roundup

The Pendleton Round-up is a 113-year-old tradition that celebrates the town’s Wild West heritage. More than 50,000 visitors come to the Round-up each year, triple the town’s population of 16,700. It takes a community to make it successful. Every year, volunteers — some of them 30-year veterans — devote about 20,000 hours of hard work to put it on. In 1931, Round-up President Henry Collins refused an invitation to take the event to Washington, D.C., famously saying: “It would be necessary to take the whole city of Pendleton, people and all… For the Round-up is not just a Wild West show, it is the product of … community spirit.”

Talent mural

Downtown Talent now has a graphic reminder of what a community is all about — its residents. The Talent-Phoenix cohort of the Ford Institute Leadership Program chose as its class project an 11x31-foot mural depicting a town scene. The mural, which was painted by class members, portrays a contemporary town scene, with families hiking and riding bikes, people walking dogs, a skateboarder, a horse and rider, cats, a goat and chickens. “The main theme is that it’s people who create a community,” says artist Karen Rycheck, a member of the leadership class.

Historic preservation in Astoria

The north coast town of Astoria is perched at the mouth of the Columbia River, built on the site of John Jacob Astor’s fur trading post — the first permanent U.S. settlement on the Pacific Coast. In recent years, community leaders have chosen to develop and promote Astoria’s rich heritage. Clatsop Community College complements that strategy by offering training in historic preservation and construction. Students can earn a one-year certificate or two-year associate’s degree, and will graduate qualified to work as subcontractors and general contractors specializing in renovation and historic preservation. Students have worked on the 1924 Astoria Train Depot, the Griffin Building downtown, the Fort Astoria replica of Fort Clatsop and several historic residences.

Touchstone (Peter Frechette) entertains the audience in "As You Like It" at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland. The Festival sold nearly 400,000 tickets in 2011.
Outdoor recreation: a natural economic boost

When the timber industry declined in the late 1980s, many people left the town of Oakridge to find work elsewhere. “Having the mills closed ripped a hole out of the town, and for a long time, Oakridge was the place where people didn’t want to be,” says Ben Beamer, who first moved to the town when he was five years old.

Things started to change about 20 years ago. That’s when the new sport of mountain biking came into its own, and Oakridge, surrounded by national forest perfect for bike trails, was discovered.

Gradually, Oakridge came alive again. Drawn by its natural attractions, people moved to the area with their families; some of them brought their businesses as well. Others established second homes in the area. Stores catering to the bike industry opened, as did restaurants, a bakery and a brewery. Instead of loggers in the woods, there were mountain bikers. And instead of being known as the “Heart of the Timber Empire,” Oakridge became known as the “Mountain Bike Capital of the Northwest.”

“There is a great story unfolding here in Oakridge around trails and recreational tourism,” says community leader Erika Coyer, a graduate of the Ford Institute Leadership Program’s Oakridge cohort.

Outdoor recreation is a huge draw for visitors, and the Northwest’s list of activities is almost endless. Visitors come to the area for world-class golfing, cycling, fishing, kayaking, skiing, rafting and windsurfing. For rural communities, situated in some of the most stunning areas, these natural assets are an invaluable economic driver.

Siskiyou County biking

In recent years, many rural communities are leveraging the popularity of biking to bring stability and vitality to their towns. In Siskiyou County in Northern California, business owners, community leaders and residents are uniting to promote outdoor recreation and create a community of cyclists.

Oakridge, surrounded by a national forest, is perfect for bike trails. It has become known as the “Mountain Bike Capital of the Northwest.” Other communities in rural Oregon and California are taking advantage of the growth of bicycle tourism.
Outdoor recreation: a natural economic boost

Leaders and cycling enthusiasts recently gathered to discuss bicycle tourism, an event spearheaded by the volunteer Economic Growth Group and sponsored by The Ford Family Foundation and Mt. Shasta Ski Park. Participants spent a day identifying goals and resources that could help promote bicycle tourism, and a second day developing an action plan.

The plan included tasks such as identifying existing mountain bike trails, developing trail maps, encouraging local businesses to be more bicycle-friendly and securing funding to establish a bicycle tourism organization.

“Siskiyou County has some of the most beautiful terrain in the west, and so much of it is accessible by bike,” Jim Mullins, president of the Mt. Shasta Chamber of Commerce, told the Siskiyou Daily News. “The potential for bike tourism is practically endless, and it can play a vital role in the recovery of the county’s economy.”

In Oakridge, the town looks a lot different than it did in the 1980s. “We’re changing the view of the former timber town to a mountain-bike mecca, and the sense of place is very different,” says Beamer, who moved back to Oakridge in 1994 while attending school at the University of Oregon.

Volunteers

Beamer is the chairman of GOATS (the Greater Oakridge Area Trail Stewards), a volunteer group that spends thousands of hours every year maintaining trails and planning and building new ones. Today, Oakridge has one of the largest trail networks in the Northwest and sponsors several mountain bike events that regularly sell out months in advance.

The town was recently designated a “ride center” by the International Mountain Biking Association, a designation that recognizes its importance as a mountain-biking venue.

That designation helped it win $400,000 in federal funds for parks and trail infrastructure.

The town is even featured in the documentary film Pedal Driven (www.pedaldriven.com), which recognizes Oakridge for its ability to create solutions between mountain bikers and land managers, and for how mountain bicycling is transforming the community.

“I see economic development as a giant jigsaw puzzle with lots of little pieces,” Beamer says. “For Oakridge, mountain biking is a key piece.”

Joseph Hardware store capitalizes on growing bicycle tourism

James Johnson began operating the historic Joseph Hardware store about 10 years ago. What he didn’t know at the time was that he was going into the bicycle business. But an opportunity opened up when the only bike shop in Wallowa County closed, and the hardware store soon began offering a few simple repair services.

That was about seven years ago, right around the time the demand for bicycle-related services began growing as visitors flocked to the wide-open spaces of Eastern Oregon, bringing their bikes with them.

Soon, Joseph Hardware added bike rentals, then bike sales. Johnson sent himself and two employees to school—the United Bicycle Institute in Ashland, one of the best bike-mechanics schools in the country.

Community leaders recognized the potential for bicycle tourism, and Wallowa County served as the pilot for Oregon Rural Tourism Studio, a four-month training program sponsored by Travel Oregon for regional leaders interested in sustainable tourism development.

Joseph Hardware today employs two full-time and one part-time bike mechanics. “We definitely see a bunch of tourism, and so many people are here to bike,” Johnson says. “We’ve seen an increase in business. Last April, the place next door opened up, and we punched a hole in the wall and expanded our bike shop.”
Not so long ago, students could go to work in the mills directly out of high school and be making more money than their teachers in a few short years. Things are different now—in many communities, those jobs have disappeared. The mills that survived have tooled up, and desirable workers are the ones with advanced certifications and qualifications.

It’s a new paradigm that is pushing education to the forefront of community survival. Rural areas face special challenges—the scarcity of educational resources nearby, a reluctance to send children away from home, and a lack of awareness of the necessity of post-secondary education for today’s workforce.

“We have a chicken-and-egg situation in rural communities: In order to grow local and attract outside businesses, we need a qualified workforce, but without local jobs, it’s hard to retain workers who flee to more populated areas,” says John Amoroso, program officer for The Ford Family Foundation. “I believe the solution lies in providing opportunities and access to training beyond high school for local students, while working with businesses to come up with programs that meet their needs locally.”

That is the goal of organizations such as GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs), which works with middle schools and high schools around the state to prepare students for post-secondary education.

Focus on rural schools
Activities are concentrated in 36 rural Oregon schools in two groups. The first cohort receives funding from the U.S. Department of Education, and the second group is supported by The Ford Family Foundation.

“One of the interesting things we discovered in our work in the rural areas is that they have higher graduation rates than urban environments,” says Stephanie Carnahan, GEAR UP’s director. “What that means for us is that it is really fertile ground. We aren’t fighting two battles — increasing the graduation rate and then getting students into post-secondary education. We can concentrate on the second piece.”

That piece is challenging enough, with students in rural areas facing significant barriers to post-secondary education. GEAR UP seeks to narrow that rural gap. “A major factor for rural communities is that
In Elkton, 12 of 15 graduating seniors are headed for post-secondary education, all with scholarships of some kind.

they are often passed over for opportunities like GEAR UP,” Carnahan says. “What works in an urban environment often doesn’t scale for rural. We talk to rural students a lot about challenges, and we hear from them that they don’t feel prepared to go on to school because they don’t have opportunities.”

The schools participating in the program are organized into geographic clusters made up of a high school, one or more feeder middle schools and a university. Activities revolve around five primary focus areas that help increase college-going behaviors — the five “Rs” — rigor, right classes, relevance, relationships and raising awareness. The school clusters receive assistance in planning and implementing activities to address all five areas, including after-school tutoring, professional development for teachers, college campus visits and financial-aid awareness nights.

Each community adapts the available resources to fit local needs, and community engagement is a priority. “The program looks different in each area,” Carnahan says. “We lay out the framework of the five ‘Rs’ and encourage them to do an assessment of where they are lacking and where they are strong.”

Encouraging results

The first group of students doesn’t start graduating until June 2014, but results are already encouraging. “We are changing the culture of academic performance and increasing the number of students who have an expectation of going on after high school,” Carnahan says. “We are seeing test scores increasing, and already high graduation rates are even higher.”

In Elkton, for example, 12 of 15 graduating seniors are headed for post-secondary education, all with scholarships of some kind. Of the three remaining students, two are entering the military, and one is headed on a religious mission.

“Many students say ‘I don’t know anyone who has gone to college — why do I need to?’” says Stephanie Carnahan, director of the GEAR UP program. “When they see people they know wearing gear from their alma maters, it really brings it home to them.”

The GEAR UP program operates differently in each community in order to meet local needs. In Yoncalla, schools are working together for the first time, with the middle school sending students to the high school once a week to work on higher-level math and help them transition to the new environment. The high school principal is “changing the culture” around post-secondary education by moving the athletic trophy case to the back of the school to make room for pictures and stories of students who have graduated and gone on to earn degrees and start careers.

In Drain, about 80 middle and high school students visited eight college campuses across the state. Recently, 250 students, teachers, parents and community members came together to celebrate eighth-grade graduation and reinforce GEAR UP activities. When asked how many of the kids are going on to education beyond high school, a blizzard of hands shot up.

Next time you visit Sweet Home, don’t be surprised by the shop owners, teachers and random residents sporting college gear. It’s part of the community’s commitment to raising student awareness of the importance of college.

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Author promotes the importance of nurturing young innovators

You will need more than a comfortable place on the couch and your reading glasses to get the most out of Tony Wagner’s new book, Creating Innovators: The Making of Young People Who Will Change the World. Also required: a smartphone to instantly access more than 60 web links that supplement the written text with video, audio, websites and other online material via Quick Response (QR) codes.

It is, after all, a book about innovation. More specifically, Wagner has developed a roadmap for creating the change makers of tomorrow, beginning with the children of today.

“The long-term health of our economy and a full economic recovery are dependent on creating far more innovation,” Wagner says in his introduction. The evidence illustrating that necessity is compelling: In 2009, 51 percent of U.S. patents were awarded to non-U.S. companies.

“If we are to remain globally competitive in today’s world, we need to produce more than just a few entrepreneurs and innovators,” Wagner says. “We need to develop the creativity and enterprising capacities of all our students.”

He sets out to illustrate how that can be done by exhaustively examining how today’s young innovators have found success. He devotes an entire chapter to Kirk Phelps, product manager for Apple’s first iPhone. Readers scanning the QR tag will hear Phelps’ take on innovation first-hand.

Also profiled is Jodie Wu, a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Wu founded a company that builds bicycle-powered corn shellers in Africa.

The text also offers a fascinating glimpse at what goes into the making of an innovator, particularly parenting techniques and influences.

Teachers and students

Wagner devotes considerable space to the challenges of teaching and learning in the 21st century. The teachers and students he interviews make it crystal clear that teaching methods have to change to encourage creativity in students, and schools must be flexible in providing support to students who may learn in ways not conducive to traditional instructional methods.

And it’s essential to incorporate new ways of creating knowledge—instead of
Five Ford Institute Leadership Program graduates have been honored for their work in rural communities in a new recognition program sponsored by The Ford Family Foundation.

New Ford Community Fellows are: Amy Callahan, Cottage Grove; Kelly Poe, Ontario; Amy Reiersgaard, Tillamook; Kathy Rementeria, Burns; and Janet Zalewski, Mt. Shasta, Calif.

The award is given to rural residents in Oregon and Siskiyou County, Calif., who have demonstrated a commitment to community service and a dedication to the pursuit of rural community vitality.

In addition to participation in the Ford Institute Leadership Program, these Fellows have volunteered as Ford Community Ambassadors and assisted with the delivery of leadership development sessions in their communities.

Each Fellow receives a $12,000 annual unrestricted monetary award and is eligible for up to two renewal awards. Fellows are expected to develop their own plan to explore, learn and practice the art of community building.

For example, Ford Community Fellow Amy Callahan is putting together a synopsis of the community’s social needs and will share that with her Cottage Grove community.

Fellow Amy Reiersgaard is working on creating a visualized asset map of Tillamook County. “I have begun to collect data from interviews and plan to follow up with a mass survey,” she explains. “Once I have a map made, I plan on hosting community forums to look for opportunities from our map.”

Reiersgaard is seeing a couple of community benefits emerging from her fellowship. “The most obvious is the discussion of the community assets within the community, building unity and recognizing what good we have,” she says. “But the more exciting benefits are the ones I didn’t foresee going into this—particularly re-engaging the leadership program graduates. And then there are community members who have not been a part of the Ford Institute who are looking to us to be a sounding board/think tank in the community.”

If we are to remain globally competitive in today’s world ... we need to develop the creativity and enterprising capacities of all our students.

—Tony Wagner

Ford Community Fellows
Select Books provide practical approaches to community building

Get the tools you need to help make a difference in your community with the Ford Institute for Community Building Select Books. We provide these resources at no charge. Keep them, share them. The only requirement is providing us with your feedback on the publication ordered.

Here are details on three of the books on the Select List:

**Creating Innovators: The Making of Young People Who Will Challenge the World** by Tony Wagner. 288 pages. © 2012. This book has been described as groundbreaking, and education expert Tony Wagner certainly delivers on the title. His book about encouraging our young people to become innovators contains an element not found in more traditional treatises: an e-book edition containing 60-some videos of interviews with young innovators, writers, CEOs, teachers and entrepreneurs. The videos are accessible in the print version via QR codes or at www.creatinginnovators.com.

All of the cool technology aside, the book offers a strong argument for developing an innovation-driven economy. Wagner looks in depth at what we all — parents, employers, teachers — must do to encourage the capacity of our youngest citizens to be creative, a necessity for the growth of innovation. And it’s innovation, he argues, that holds the key to a strong economy.

Robert’s Rules of Order by Alice Collier Cochran. 306 pages. © 2004. Meetings are the backbone of most nonprofits, but they are also the setting for some of the most contentious encounters groups can endure. Author Alice Collier Cochran draws on her years as a meeting facilitator to re-create a meeting process that, for many, has been stuck in the days of Robert’s Rules of Order (first published in 1876). “Let’s deep-six the laborious meetings and heavy formal structures,” Cochran writes in her preface. Instead, she lays out seven beliefs, starting with the idea that people support what they help to create. These beliefs lead to 10 key strategies nonprofits and other teams can use to conduct meetings that create buy-in and lead to stellar results — without reaching for the gavel.

Good to Great and the Social Sectors by Jim Collins. 42 pages, ©2005. Designed as a complement to the bestselling business book Good to Great, this publication takes a look at what it takes to be successful in the social sectors, as opposed to the business sectors. The answer may not be different at all. “The difference between successful organizations is not between the business and the social sector,” writes Jim Collins, the author of both books. “The difference is between good organizations and great ones.” At 42 pages, this is more of a booklet than a full-on book, but Collins manages to cram it with the real-life examples that make both the books in this series such good reads.
Collective impact

Continued from page 1

and backbone support.

The first thing we did was acknowledge that we had a common agenda for creating a great trip: campsites on the water, plenty of firewood, great food, a relaxed pace, recreational opportunities and the chance to spend a few days together in community.

Then we decided to look for ways to reduce duplication—to mutually reinforce strategies. One member of each family would be the backbone support by serving in an organizing role. Right off the bat we agreed that the main campout for the year would always be over Labor Day weekend, and we would use group email as a planning tool for continuous communication.

Each family agreed to plan and prepare a breakfast and a dinner to share with the entire group. This reduced each family’s meal responsibility, significantly increasing relaxation time and reducing food costs—shared measurements.

Best of all, there was more time to sit around the fire and tell stories. We used every concept of collective impact in our quest for more s’mores.

Community vitality

Collective impact directly relates to the Ford Institute’s work toward community vitality. To us, community vitality is the large-scale social challenge that most deserves our attention and our resources. Independent efforts, however robust, cannot offer the same impact as the alignment of multiple strategies across organizations, all pointed toward the same goals. In an era of needing to do more with less, collective impact is essential. Strong community leaders working with high-performing organizations are essential—not only to community survival, but to their ability to thrive for generations to come.

Successful strategies

Economic development, in particular, can benefit from this approach, since successful strategies affect all facets of community life. In this issue of Community Vitality, we see how different strategies look in different areas. Many of them incorporate aspects of collective impact.

We are now introducing leaders from early Ford Institute Leadership Program communities to the concepts of collective impact through Pathways to Community Vitality, a program designed to help identify strategies and create momentum toward creating vibrant communities.

As I write this article, our annual Labor Day Campout is fast approaching, and we have every confidence that this year’s event will be another memorable gathering. Perhaps we should call it our “collective campout.”

In an era of needing to do more with less, collective impact is essential.

— Joyce Akse

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An evaluation/feedback form is included with each book mailed. If you have an evaluation/feedback form pending from a previous Community Vitality or the Select Book form, please return it so that we may process your new request. The full list of Select Books offers more than 25 other books. View the list at www.tff.org or call (541) 957-5574 to receive a copy of the list and request form. Books can be sent only to addresses in Oregon and Siskiyou County, Calif.

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For the past three years, we’ve offered both digital and printed editions of this publication. Beginning with our next issue (Spring 2013), we no longer will mail the printed edition to our mailing list.

We will print a limited number of copies that will be available by individual request only.

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