

Vitality



Putting a new focus on community efforts

We're transitioning from individual to community-based development

By **Anne C. Kubisch**
President
The Ford Family Foundation



In July, Ford Institute Director Roque Barros and Associate Director Max Gimbel met with a community action team in Ontario. The group had identified 10 priorities after a Ford Institute partner-led Alumni Celebration. After deliberation, the group decided to move ahead with a family recreation center. They had already drafted a 90-day work plan, which included a pledge to listen to 1,000 community residents.

Roque asked them: "What role would you like the Institute to play?" Their response: "Come back in October to look at our community-listening results, help us consider next steps, and celebrate the work done to date."

In the meantime, the community would do the work.

Eventually, they might submit a grant application to the Foundation or request funding for technical expertise. But for now, they were listening to each other, engaging and making a plan.

This group action in Ontario serves as a real-life example of **Community-Based Change**. This approach to community building puts communities at the center by starting with where they are and building on their assets. It focuses on action-driven work while honoring the pace of the community and includes all community segments. More importantly, it focuses on creating the change the community wants, celebrating successes, and remaining flexible enough to adapt as the work progresses.

As you may have heard, the Ford Institute for Com-

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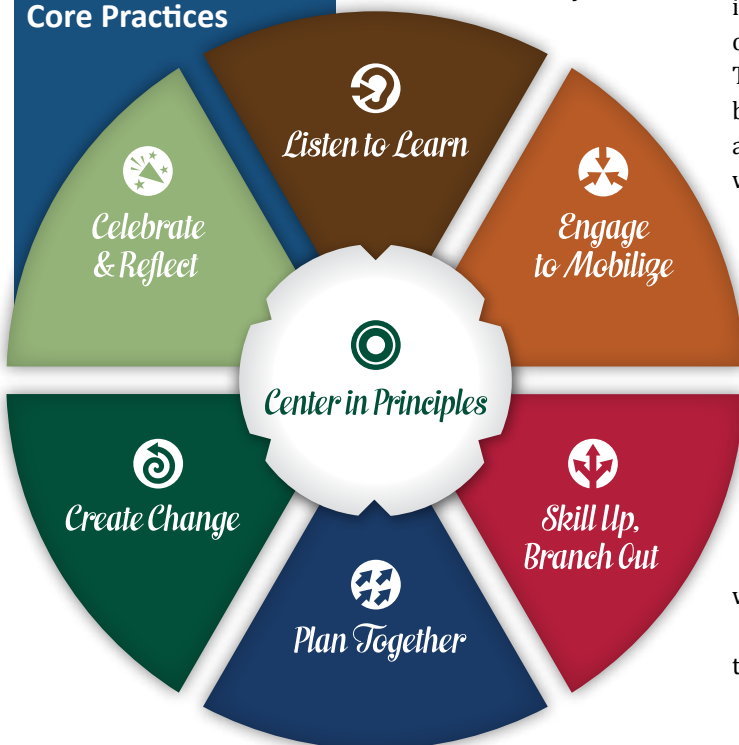


Handmade guitars in Sisters. See page 6.

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Community-Based Change Principles: Core Practices



➔ **Community Vitality has moved online.**
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The pressure of perfection

High expectations cause anxiety, depression among college students

Going to college can be a dream come true, but for an increasing number of students, the dream is turning into a nightmare as they struggle to cope with the expectations that higher education brings.

The New York Times recently reported on college suicides and the pressures students are under to succeed. "Suicide on Campus and the Pressure of Perfection" takes a hard look at what students are dealing with in today's educational environment.

The newspaper found that the pressure to succeed is so pervasive that schools have their own name for the behavior. At Stanford, for example, it's called the Duck Syndrome: A duck appears to glide calmly across the water, while beneath the surface it frantically, relentlessly paddles.

A survey of college counseling centers has found that more than half of their clients have severe psychological problems, an increase of 13% in just two years. Anxiety and depression, in that order, are now the most common mental health diagnoses among college students, according to the Center for Collegiate Mental Health at Penn State.

Nationally, the suicide rate among 15- to 24-year-olds has increased modestly since 2007: from 9.6 deaths per 100,000 to 11.1, in 2013 (the latest year available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

"This issue is very real," says Jeff Strickland, a counselor in the Ford Family Foundation Scholarship Office. "Like so many educational institutions nationwide, we've increased our support efforts around mental and emotional well-being. Plus, we try to identify scholarship recipients who are at risk and provide them with additional resources."

For a look at the Aug. 9, 2015 article, visit www.nytimes.com and search for "suicide on campus." ■

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When Guy Marchione quit his job as an electrician to become a shop teacher at Reedsport High School, he liked everything about his new job — except one thing. Every year, he watched talented students graduate, then flounder when it came time to find a job. "As shop teachers, we teach kids all the skills they need," he says reflectively, "and then when they graduate, we shake their hands and wave goodbye. Some

Ready to work

Reedsport High School career and technical program teams up with skilled trades

of my kids could actually run shops. They are great kids, but they don't know what they need to do to get a job."

Marchione decided his students needed the kind of support their friends who were headed to college got — targeted, with one-on-one preparation, practice and training. Instead of general shop classes



that taught basic construction skills, students needed specialized training that would prepare them for entry into skilled trades — electricians, heavy equipment operations, and surveying, for example. And, after conversations with industry and education officials and a summer of grant writing, that's what he got.

Armed with a state \$250,000 Career and Technical Education Revitalization grant, Marchione went to representatives of the

varied career interests of students. The Ford Family Foundation recognizes the value of a robust CTE curriculum in rural areas, recently funding a multi-agency program in Malheur County. The program enables youth to work full time toward their high school diploma, receive job skills training, inspiration, and develop a sense of self-worth.

In Reedsport, Marchione removed barriers by involving the local trades with providing

communication. "We need to do a much better job of getting information out to the public, not just in Reedsport but in North Bend and surrounding areas. We are not making the impact we could be."

He also has plans to develop an academic intervention program to ensure that his students have the credits and GPA to graduate. "We need to make this area stronger and develop a strategy to keep it going when the grant money goes away," he says.

Demand for skilled workers prompts new support for career education

Oregon public schools have cut the number of career and technical education programs nearly in half over the last 15 years, at a time when the demand for skilled workers is rising.

The state of Oregon is bridging that gap through initiatives such as the CTE Revitalization Grant, which was launched in 2011. Almost \$11 million was awarded in the last grant cycle to districts across the state. The 24 grants, awarded for the 2013-2015 biennium, benefit 140 schools across Oregon with programs ranging from agricultural sciences to manufacturing, marketing to engineering, building and construction trades to culinary arts.

The grants, administered by the Department of Education and Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, are designed to act as seed money to help engage local businesses as partners and leverage more funding.

The Ford Family Foundation has long supported education for young people in rural communities in Oregon and Siskiyou County, Calif. In addition to scholarships, the Foundation is exploring a new priority area focused on preparing rural young people for careers in their communities.

The research has focused on opportunities tied to awareness and exploration of rural careers, engagement and education for young people, and connections to work-based learning experiences in partnership with industry and community resources. The Foundation plans to announce funding guidelines for the new program in early 2016. ■

when they graduate

skilled trades and made his pitch: Tell me what I need to buy to train these kids and help me do it so they are ready to work with you when they graduate.

Rural challenges

Rural schools face special challenges when it comes to teaching specialized CTE skills, from a lack of qualified teachers to insufficient courses to meet

skilled instruction. Students interested in becoming electricians, for example, can follow a curriculum based on the actual needs of the career, as defined by local skilled tradesmen. They take classes, many of them taught by local electricians, to help them prepare for acceptance into the competitive apprenticeship program. Classes include OSHA-required training, such as CPR and first-aid instruction, and training in basic electrical theory and skills, such as bending electrical wiring.

"We then expanded to other trades, and now we have a deal with heavy equipment operators and surveyors as well," Marchione says.

Marchione has big plans for the future of the program at Reedsport, pending acceptance of a follow-up grant proposal to the state. His first priority is with

Finally, he is actively working to expand opportunities for students. For example, he wants to include such industries as marine fabrication.

"All my kids have jobs, all those that want them," Marchione says.

Career and technical education programs have been proven to keep students engaged in school and boost graduation rates. Marchione is pleased to notice that it also gives students a concrete stake in their own education. "If you have to earn the money, you are a lot more respectful of what you have," he says. His students practice their skills by making custom items for sale to the community, including trailers, log splitters, even portable buildings.

"When they earn money for ladders, they make sure the ladders are put away at the end of the day," Marchione says. "We used to have to lock everything up because kids would steal stuff from the shop. Now, everything is open." ■



GUY MARCHIONE

Reedsport High School students Mitchell Wallace and Jacob Mast construct a flooring unit during a career and technical education class.

High-energy ideas, coaching come

Startup Weekend provides a forum for bringing business concepts into reality

It's advertised as "all action — no talk." All over the world, groups of hopeful entrepreneurs are getting together for intense three-day sessions designed to give them a taste of what it takes to be successful in the business world.

Roseburg has hosted the event twice. The event, officially called "Startup Weekend powered by Google," is designed to inspire communities and give entrepreneurs a leg up on the arduous process of launching their own business.

In Douglas County, Startup Weekend is hosted by the Umpqua Community College Small Business Development Center. At last spring's event, about 70 local entrepreneurs, UCC students, faculty and business people gathered for three days of high-energy ideas and coaching.

"Startup Weekend brings people of all ages, education and experience together and provides a forum for working an idea into reality," says organizer Kemberly Todd. "It demystifies the entrepreneur experience



Umpqua Community College Small Business Development Center Program Specialist Kemberly Todd reviews the project ideas pitched at the Startup Weekend at UCC.

and provides real-time feedback to teams to focus their business plan, while keeping excitement high for the product or service being developed.

"Ultimately participants walk away more connected to area resources, people and know-how for how to develop a business idea."

The weekend starts with a fast pitch session, where participants are given 60 seconds to describe their idea for a business product or service. The Roseburg group's ideas ranged from online health clubs and emergency apps to power-generation systems and a healthy fast-food delivery service, as well as such futuristic inspirations as drones, robotic limbs and hover-boards.

Winning pitches

Once the pitches were made, participants voted on their fa-

avorites, and teams were formed around the top eight ideas. "Then the real work began," Todd says, "because the next 54 hours were filled with coaching experts, speakers and a lot of caffeinated work."

Coaching categories supplied to each team consisted of Patent and Trademark Law, Finance and Accounting, Operations, Creative Media Marketing, Technology Startup Consulting, and Business Planning and Consulting.

Local businessman Sam Gross served as one of the coaches, traveling between groups as they worked on refining the idea. "If they didn't have questions, I would drill into them about viability of revenue streams, where they thought they could make money, how they could improve their business plan."

Christina Kelley of Myrtle Creek works with her team on their business project during Startup Weekend.



together

Gross, the owner of Roseburg's Loggers Tap House, knows what he is talking about. A Roseburg native who returned to his hometown after military service and graduate school, Gross is also involved with several technology startups. He serves as a business adviser for the SBDC, where he talks with a lot of entrepreneurial hopefuls.

Quality increase

In the last several years, he has seen the quality of applicants increase. "People coming through have more of their ideas formed, and they are having better success than folks did before," he says. Gross credits the development to more support for entrepreneurs in the area, including events such as Startup Weekend and groups such as the Roseburg Area Investment Network, the Young Entrepreneur Society of Umpqua Valley and SBDC. "The

Continued on page 6

"It demystifies the entrepreneur experience and provides real-time feedback to teams to focus their business plan, while keeping excitement high for the product or service being developed."

—Kemberly Todd
Umpqua Community College

Focus on community building

Continued from page 1

munity Building is embracing the Community-Based Change (CBC) approach as we expand our community vitality programs in rural Oregon and Siskiyou County, Calif.

Roque Barros and Max Gimbel based the draft framework of CBC on 25 years of experience and lessons learned from community-building efforts across the country. Then, through dozens of conversations with rural residents and development professionals in Oregon and Siskiyou County, it truly came to life.

And after more than a decade of investing in leadership development, we have an incredible base to build on and support the shift to Community-Based Change.

In 2003, the Foundation launched the Ford Institute Leadership Program. Our goal was to provide leadership training to more than 5,000 rural community residents in 80 hubs in our region. It seemed incredibly ambitious, but 12 years later, we exceeded that goal. More than 6,000 people in 88 rural hubs have benefited from the training. So, what's next?

Now, we have another goal:

to support our region's talented leaders as they create and lead the change they want in their communities. We will focus more of our resources on supporting community-based efforts that promote rural community vitality and the well-being of children, youth, adults and families.

It's a natural transition from investing primarily in individual "leadership development" to investing in broader "community development."

We will provide the final Leadership Program classes in Spring 2016; however, we are launching the Community-Based Change work as a way to continue to support people dedicated to their communities.

An even stronger commitment

The next phase of the work will allow us to strengthen our commitment to rural communities. We intend to invest more of our staff time, funding and other resources in Community-Based Change work. The diagrams on the cover and below provide an introduction to the principles and practices of Community-Based Change.

What will all of this actually look like in rural communities? We don't have every answer yet because we are taking our lead from community leaders, people who have been through

the Leadership Program, Ford Community Fellows, Community Ambassadors, and our key organizational partners: RDI, the Nonprofit Association of Oregon, Community Systems, and Oregon State University.

Right now, we are listening and learning.

Expansion

We are looking forward to the expansion of the Community-Based Change work. Of course, we won't be able to work deeply in every rural community in our region, but we will be able to make grant funds available, or we might help a community connect with technical expertise to help take action on a local priority.

We encourage you to visit our website, www.tfff.org, to check out our grant opportunities. We are always on the lookout for high-quality programs that improve outcomes for children, youth and families.

We are also creating a new grant-making program to support economic vitality and employment in rural communities. We expect it to be in full swing in 2016. And, of course, we maintain scholarship programs to help individuals succeed in postsecondary education.

Positive change

We want to build on the investment that has been made in training 6,000 leaders. We want to help you take action and make positive change in your communities. ■

Community-Based Change Principles: Sustaining Practices



Startup Weekend

Continued from page 5

different pieces are starting to come together,” he says.

Still, there is work to be done by the community at large. “When you look at places like Bend and Eugene and Portland, folks are much more small-business-oriented,” Gross says. “In Roseburg, the first places people think about are the chain stores. Whatever we can do to help people support local business is hugely important.”

The Winner: TreeShields

John Blackwood, a UCC Computer Information Systems faculty member, and his team were the winners at Startup Weekend for his “TreeShields” idea, a sheet-metal product that would wrap around the base of trees to keep animals from climbing and damaging trees. The judges cited his product as the one most ready to hit the market in 30 days.

“What was learned here could not be learned in a classroom,” Blackwood says. Students had to speak in public, and consider time management, profit and loss, and cash flow. They had to present their final project in front of judges and potential investors, and learn how to accept and use criticism.

“They had to learn how to become flexible in problem solving, and to just generally get along with a group of people previously unknown to them,” he says. ■

View a short video on the weekend: <https://youtu.be/DJtNOZTsfb0>

When Preston Thompson decided to relaunch his custom guitar-making business, he didn’t have to look too far from his Bend home for the right location. A musician-friendly environment, the right light-manufacturing site, and a supportive community — he found it in nearby Sisters.

Thompson, whose hand-crafted guitars have been played by musicians since the 1970s, took a 20-year break from the business to work in marketing for two local resorts. After he began fielding inquiries for his instruments via the Internet, he decided in 2008 to relaunch the business. “By 2010, I really jumped back in,” he says. He began by operating out of his house in Bend, but, after taking on a couple of partners,



A music-friendly

Preston Thompson finds rewards and challenges after moving his guitar business to Sisters

relocated the shop to Sisters in October 2013.

Thompson and other entrepreneurs shared their stories at last May’s Sisters Country Economic Vitality Summit. “Shaping Sisters: Pioneers on the Frontier of Innovation” was one in a series of economic vitality summits across the state organized by local communities with the help of Rural Development Initiatives and The Ford Family Foundation (see sidebar, right).

“The intention was to bring the community together and show off what we are doing,” says Caprielle Foote-Lewis, Sisters manager of EDCO, a Central Oregon economic development

nonprofit organization. “We wanted to engage the community in embracing change, and looking at different ways to grow into the future.”

The summit event

A series of panel discussions featuring local students and businesspeople sparked discussion on topics ranging from workforce and livability issues to entrepreneurial opportunities and challenges. Participants also talked about Sister’s current community assets, including its cultural heritage and large, established events, such as the Sisters Folk Festival, Sisters Rodeo and the Sisters Quilt Show.



ROSS CHANDLER

The benefits of being in Sisters outweigh the challenges, says Preston Thompson. He shared his story at the Sisters Country Economic Summit in May.

2,000-square-foot building next door for a manufacturing facility as well as a small retail storefront.

Housing

But Thompson also acknowledged the challenges of operating an international manufacturing business in a rural area. Housing, as many on the summit panel noted, is a problem. He commutes from Bend, as do several of his employees who would prefer to live in Sisters.

"The commutes add some challenges and expense," he says. Shop workers make regular runs into Bend for supplies when they can't find what they need at the local hardware store. His building is lacking a few features that would be found in an industrial-park setting.

Still, Thompson says, the benefits of being in Sisters outweigh the challenges. He is working with students in the Sisters High School Americana Community Luthier Program, and he continues to be involved with the Sisters Folk Festival and other musical events.

"I think we just want to really sink the roots deeper, and that is happening all the time," he says. "This cool, quaint town is an important ingredient and builds on the international brand that we have established." ■

Economic Vitality Summits generate ideas, invigorate rural communities

Over the past five years, nearly a dozen Economic Vitality Summits have been delivered around the state by Rural Development Initiatives, in partnership with The Ford Family Foundation. Summits were held in communities such as Sisters, Klamath Falls, Coos Bay, Silverton, Ontario and La Pine. The summits' goal was to share resources and generate new ideas to invigorate rural communities.

In May, a sellout crowd of about 175 residents of the Santiam Canyon near Salem gathered for "North Santiam Economic Vitality Summit: Imagine the Possibilities."

The group of business owners, economic development directors and students heard from a pair of speakers who explored ideas for building a vibrant economy.

Lanie McMullin, executive director of economic development for the city of Everett, Wash., told the group that the Santiam Canyon's economic situation mirrors that of many rural communities nationwide: a region once dependent on natural resources that is now evolving into an information-based economy.

McMullin listed seven critical elements needed to achieve that transition: valuing education at all levels; embracing diversity; maintaining gathering places, such as restaurants, theaters, pubs, parks, libraries; art and culture; philanthropy; partnerships; and a strong and centered sense of community identity. ■



environment

The event was instrumental in highlighting challenges currently faced by business owners. For Sisters, one of those challenges is lack of housing for workers.

"One of the top challenges for rural communities that are seeking to expand their economic diversity relates to the workforce housing and livability issues," says Alexa Carey, an RDI facilitator. "Participants of the summit repeatedly highlighted how affordable housing for local community members is severely lacking."

"Discussions got very loud, people got very engaged," says

Foote-Lewis.

Rural challenges

In many ways, Sisters is an ideal location for Preston Thompson Guitars. The town had what Thompson was looking for: a focus on the arts, convenience for his partners who live there, and just the right location.

"What pushed it over the hump," he explains, "is that the Belfry is right next door to us."

The historic Belfry, an old church on Main Street, today serves as a popular musical venue for well-known performers. The city granted Thompson a conditional use permit that allowed him to lease the

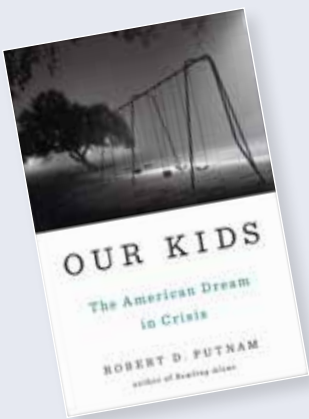
“I am optimistic because our country has successfully addressed problems like this before,” says author and social scientist Robert Putnam. “Worrying about other people’s kids is really a form of enlightened self interest.”



MARTHA STEWART/HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL

‘they are on their own’

Renowned social scientist Robert Putnam discusses the widening gap between well-off and poor children



Here’s the good news: Upper middle class youth are doing better than ever before. Community activities are up. Shared family time is increasing. College attendance rates are holding steady.

“Those are my grandchildren, and it’s wonderful,” renowned social scientist Robert Putnam told an Oregon audience recently. “But it’s dangerous for society. We are rapidly becoming segregated along social class lines and that has powerful implications for future society.”

While opportunities are steadily increasing for the upper middle class, exactly the opposite is happening on the other end of the scale. And that is the bad news, and it’s very bad.

“Poor kids in America are increasingly on their own and alone. They have less connection with schools, churches, Scouts and the community; they are on their own, and they know it. Many are unbelievably cynical,” Putnam said.

Putnam was speaking in Portland at an event co-sponsored by The Ford Family Foundation’s Back Fence Speaker Series. The talk was simultaneously broadcast to a Roseburg audience of about 30 gathered in the Foundation’s conference center in Roseburg.

Putnam is the author of 14 books, including the well-known *Bowling Alone* and, most recently, *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*. (See book review, page 16.)

“Air bags inflate when

affluent kids make mistakes,” Putnam says. “For poor kids, it’s one strike and you’re out.”

It didn’t used to be like that. In the 1950s and 60s, when Putnam was growing up, the middle class was expanding. Moreover, there were a lot of community members who could step in when kids needed support — coaches, church leaders, Scoutmasters. Many of those institutions have vanished for these kids, with pay-for-play sports becoming more popular, and with church attendance (formerly a strong support) taking a precipitous dive.

Everyone’s problem

Why should we worry about kids on the downside track? Because ignoring the problem puts our entire society at risk. The lifetime cost of caring for

neglected children runs into the trillions, Putnam says, in criminal justice system, health care and welfare costs.

And, maybe most important, ignoring the problem costs us missed opportunity. “The most distressing paragraph in my book looks at college completion,” Putnam says. “There are a lot of smart kids who don’t get a college degree, and the rest of us are forgoing the contributions they could have made. We are, as a society, worse off because we are not using all the smart kids.”

It’s time for things to change. Putnam predicts that the growing schism between rich and poor will become the most important issue of 2016, and even with all the bad news floating around, he’s hopeful.

“I am optimistic because our country has successfully addressed problems like this before,” he says pointing to societal changes that were undertaken during the Progressive era (1890s to 1920s), including the establishment of public schools and child labor laws. “Worrying about other people’s kids is really a form of enlightened self interest.”

He believes that a good place to start is with considering the cost of the burgeoning

movement toward pay-to-play extracurricular activities. These activities — sports, music, art — are where students learn the soft skills they need to succeed, and they are also a critical source of mentors.

“It’s just wrong to charge kids for activities that were invented so they could get the skills to take part in the economy,” Putnam said to thunderous applause from the audience.

“And it’s cutting kids off from exactly what they need: mentors.”

Community-led efforts

Putnam expects the solution to come from community-led efforts. “I am very hopeful. I know how much civic intelligence and goodwill there are in our cities,” he says, “and I think there are enough communities in America who could get engaged with this problem and be creative.”

The concept struck a chord with the Roseburg audience. “It’s our personal responsibility, whether it’s in Roseburg, in Douglas County or in this room. It needs to look different, and it won’t until we do something at the local level,” said a community member in the discussion following Putnam’s talk. “You can’t look to leadership; we need to look to ourselves.” ■

Lane County works to reduce child abuse and neglect by 90% by 2030

Community leaders in Lane County, frustrated by rates of child abuse and neglect, two years ago launched an innovative program that aims to reduce these rates by 90% by the year 2030.

It’s a bold goal, but one that community leaders are convinced is realistic, given the strong work of groups already working in that area.



Barkhurst

“A key part of 90by30’s plan is to act as a bridge between individuals and groups across rural

and urban Lane County who are already working in various ways to address child abuse and neglect,” says Phyllis Barkhurst, director of the 90by30 initiative.

Collective Impact model

In order to decrease child abuse and neglect in Lane County 90% by the year 2030, 90by30 adopts a model that defines a prevention role for every person in the community. This Collective Impact model makes it possible for a diverse group of individuals and groups to work together to help solve a complex social problem, Barkhurst explains.



At the heart of the effort is the belief that the problem of child abuse is one that belongs to everyone. The Lane County effort uses a three-pronged approach based on this philosophy: We each have a role (in providing a safe community); we know what to do (each of us needs the knowledge and skills to combat the problem); and we will act (each person will take action to promote the safety of children).

“The 90by30 initiative is going for nothing less than a total culture change. Prevention is up to all of us,” says Keavy Cook, director of The Ford Family Foundation’s Children, Youth and Families department, which provides support to the Lane County initiative. ■

The 90by30 initiative is going for nothing less than a total culture change. Prevention is up to all of us.

— Keavy Cook
The Ford Family Foundation



Back Fence is an occasional speaker series sponsored by The Ford Family Foundation. Speakers range from scholars to neighbors. They share their knowledge and answer questions. Topics focus on issues that impact rural communities. Back Fence events are free and open to the community. See The Ford Family Foundation website (www.tfff.org) for more information.

Preventing child abuse, neglect

Ford Scholar brings personal experience to her work at the Children's Trust Fund

The foster care system is too familiar for Pamela Heisler. She knows firsthand the type of struggles families face before they lose their children.

That's why she accepted a new position in January with the Children's Trust Fund of Oregon, which aims to prevent child abuse statewide by providing parents the resources they need to create safe, stable homes for their children.

The former Pamela Butler lived in about eight different foster homes from the age of 7. Prior to that, she stayed with her mother and stepfather; both had untreated mental illness. Her family spent a lot of time living in cars. Her parents were involved in criminal activity.

By age 14, she was living with a wonderful family who wanted to adopt her.

Suddenly, a court decided to send her back to live with her mother.

"That was ridiculous," Heisler, now 30, recalls. "It was like being with strangers. I was ripped away from my home."

The arrangement didn't succeed. From the knowledge she's gained during her career in child-abuse prevention, she knows why. "None of the risk factors had been dealt with."

Heisler explains that child abuse and neglect have a broad definition: It can be lack of housing, food, stable electricity, medical attention.

Add in other risk factors like poverty, unemployment, substance abuse, recent divorce, lack of education, untreated mental illness, and the chance of abuse only increases.

"A lot of this is preventable," she says. "If we can work with families at this point, a lot of them can be addressed."

Through her work as a child abuse prevention specialist with the Children's Trust Fund, Heisler says she believes Oregon is on the right path. She joined a group of advocates that was successful in persuading the Oregon Legislature to invest \$9.4 million toward home visiting programs.

"Home visiting has one of the highest evidence bases of any program," she notes.

Reducing risk factors

Studies show the parent or caregiver is responsible for about 94% of confirmed cases of child abuse or neglect. Home visiting programs aim to reduce families' risk factors by meeting with them from pregnancy through the child's first two years of life.

The Trust Fund's work helped land another \$27 million for pre-kindergarten programs, such as Relief Nursery programs, early learning hubs and more.

Heisler says the minimum cost of putting a child in foster care is about \$27,000 annually. Rather than taking such a drastic move, it's more cost effective to



Nicole Stapp and Pamela Heisler (right) work the registration table at a Children First event.

help families pay the rent, get an education or obtain treatment for mental health issues.

Teenage years

After a disastrous couple of teenage years with her mother, Heisler returned to foster care and also picked up a mentor through the Court-Appointed Special Advocates program.

Her CASA mentor insisted Heisler attend college. The teenager applied for every scholarship she could find. As she graduated from Centennial High School in Gresham, she was named a Ford Scholar.

"It was huge, and not just financially," she says, remembering the many notecards of support she received and the fellowship and inspiration generated at the summer conferences. "It was pretty cool for a foster kid in college."

Heisler graduated from the University of Oregon with a bachelor's degree in Spanish



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PAMELA HEISLER

As a child growing up in Oregon's foster care system, Pamela Heisler never imagined that she would create a stable family of her own. "I didn't see relationships that were happy," she says. But Heisler found her "rock" when she married David Heisler a year ago.

and business administration. Then she began working as a child welfare policy manager for Children First of Oregon. She also founded and directed the

Resources offer insights

Oregon Foster Youth Connection Program.

Graduate school

She decided graduate school should be the next step of her journey. She earned her master's degree in public administration and nonprofit management last summer.

She also achieved a personal milestone she once thought inconceivable. She married David Heisler, a paramedic, last September.

"I didn't grow up dreaming about a wedding. I didn't see relationships that were happy," she says. "I didn't think I could connect with people like that, but he's my rock — steady and secure."

Still, the traumatic experiences of her childhood have left her with a lot of fear and anxiety. She has a tough time trusting stability. "There are very few things I take a hard stance on. There's no black and white," she says. "Life is complicated."

With her husband's support, and the great therapists and mentors she's had in her life, Heisler feels stronger every day. Strong enough, that one day she expects the couple will have a family of their own. ■

There are very few things I take a hard stance on. There's no black and white. Life is complicated.

—Pamela Heisler

Get the tools you need to help make a difference in your community with Select Books from The Ford Family Foundation. 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 Select Books:

The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study: How Are the Findings Being Applied in Oregon?, by David Mandell. 16 pages. © 2014.



A landmark study demonstrated strong links between Adverse Childhood Experiences and a host of adult problems. In this 16-page report, based on phone interviews and online research, author David Mandell explores how the study is informing work with children and families in Oregon.

Energizing Entrepreneurial Communities: Pathway to Prosperity, by Don Macke, Deb Markley and John Fulwider. 196 pages. © 2014.

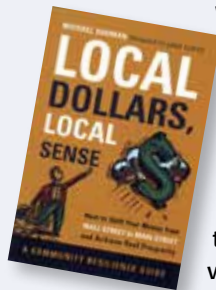
"Not too be overly dramatic, but the content of this book is crucial to your community's future success." With that sentence, authors of the book launch a comprehensive strategy for developing and supporting the systems that you need to find and retain entrepreneurs. The book offers a compelling argument for investing in an entrepreneur-



ial culture, provides you with a framework that will expand your economic development toolkit, and finds a strategic edge in a more robust, systems-based approach.

Local Dollars, Local Sense by Michael Shuman. 249 pages. © 2012.

Michael Shuman explains how moving your money from Wall Street to Main Street is a sound business decision — not just for the investor, but for the future and vitality of our communities.



It's not a popular strategy. "The reality today is that even though local businesses comprise more than half the economy, almost

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none of our savings support them," Shuman says. No stranger to the economics of rural towns (he is also the author of the *Small-Mart Revolution*), Shuman lays out a reasoned, logical argument for achieving real prosperity by investing in businesses closest to you. ■

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‘a desperate water-supply situation’

When times are dry, rural residents often get hit the hardest

“Streams across the state are breaking historic lows on a daily basis.”

—Alyssa Mucken
Oregon Water Resources Department

Holders of junior water rights in Douglas County know the routine well: When the yellow postcards from the watermaster get delivered, they have to shut off their irrigation water. The water-use regulation happens regularly to protect senior rights, but this year the unpleasant news came extra early and covered a bigger area.

“We had to regulate water users much earlier in the summer, one-and-a-half to two months ahead of normal years,” says Douglas County Watermaster Dave Williams. “And we are regulating on streams that haven’t been regulated in 10 to 15 years, including the North Umpqua River.”

It’s just one small sign of this region’s very big problem: a severe drought that shows no sign of easing. Oregon Gov. Kate Brown has declared drought emergencies for Douglas County and 23 other counties (as of August). In California, Siskiyou County is one of 27 counties in a drought emergency.

The situation

The National Resources Conservation Service reports that Oregon’s snowpack this

winter peaked at the lowest levels measured in the last 35 years. Snow melted much earlier than usual — up to three months early in some parts of the state. That means late-summer water is not coming down from the mountains to replenish streams.

“Streams across the state are breaking historic lows on a daily basis,” says Alyssa Mucken, program coordinator for the Oregon Water Resources Department’s Integrated Water Resources Strategy. “Managers are relying heavily on stored water releases, more so than an average year. Hot weather in June, for example, placed a stronger demand on storage from reservoirs.”

Although precipitation since October 1 has been normal to near normal in many areas of the region, it came in the winter. Finally, warmer-than-average temperatures made the situation even more dire.

“What we are seeing is a constellation of events that are trending toward a desperate water-supply situation,” Williams says.



The impact

When times are dry, rural residents often get hit the hardest. Towns using smaller, community water systems relying on tributary streams are easily influenced by a lack of rainfall or snow. Rural areas are also more likely to see a higher percentage of individual wells or springs, which are often the only source of water for residents.

Agriculture, an economic pillar of rural Oregon, is heavily dependent on the availability of water. “In many places, irrigation districts are key players, making real-time decisions about how to stretch water supplies throughout the summer season,” Mucken says. “A drought, such as the one we’re experiencing, can mean reduced water deliveries to farmers.”

Low flows can pose challenges for fish. Recreation and tourism also take a hit in drought years, with low lake and river



NORA VITZ HARRISON

August 2015: Extremely low water levels have exposed old tree stumps and stranded boat docks at Detroit Lake (east of Salem). INSET: In July 2013, the lake was near capacity.

levels deterring prospective visitors. And drought conditions fuel wildfires.

What to do

This year's drought looks like it is not going away anytime soon, and there are many steps, large and small, that can help mitigate its effects. At the local level, community water systems should be prepared for dry conditions later on this year, including identifying back-up water supplies. Water conservation programs can be established.

Groundwater also can be impacted by drought, so well users should conserve water. In addition, well owners should make sure their pumps are lowered and maintained to reduce the likelihood of an interruption in supply.

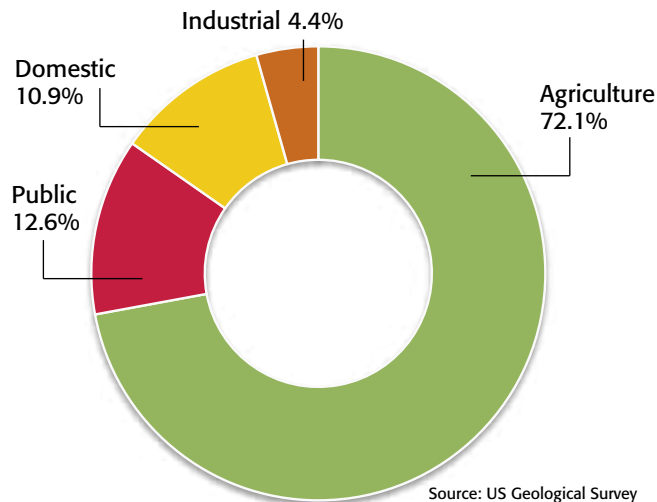
At the state level, Mucken says agencies are now at work outlining areas and issues to

update Integrated Water Resources Strategy, due in 2017. The current plan contains more than 40 recommended actions for achieving the state's water-related objectives, many of which support better response mechanisms to drought conditions.

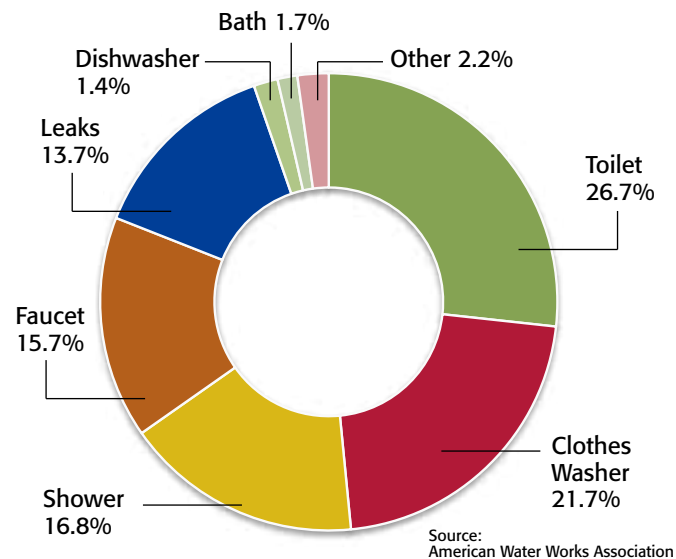
For instance, Mucken says, the strategy recommends expanding the state's network of stream flow and groundwater monitoring sites, and adding real-time monitoring capabilities. It also provides funding for collaborative water resources planning efforts at the local level.

"This year's drought has shined a spotlight on the need for better drought planning at all levels," Mucken says. "Oregon can expect to see new drought resources and tools in the next iteration of the strategy." ■

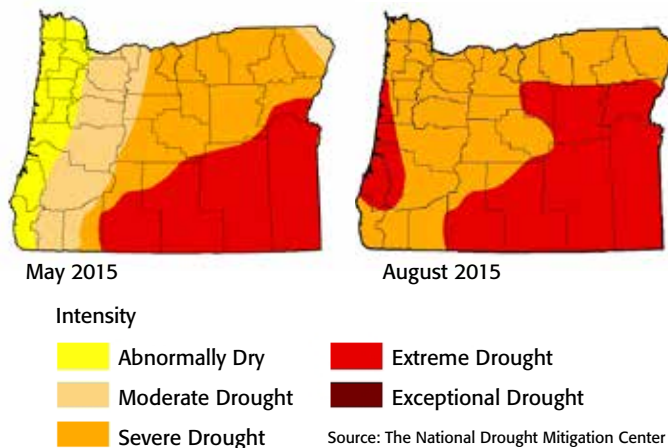
How water is used in Oregon



How water is used in a U.S. home



U.S. Drought Monitor: Oregon



She survived Cambodia's

And now she treats U.S. veterans as the first female general surgeon at Overton Brooks VA Medical Center in Louisiana

Being alive is a miracle Ford Scholar Dr. SreyRam Kuy is grateful for every day. Having her mother still living is an even greater joy.

Both barely escaped the “killing fields” of Cambodia, where 2 million others perished under the Khmer Rouge regime in the 1970s. Kuy’s mother, Sovanna Soeung, survived severe injuries, near-starvation and the constant threat of execution, yet she prevailed and eventually brought her family to the United States.

To honor her mother for her bravery, resilience and ever-positive attitude, Kuy regularly writes newspaper and magazine columns and has composed a book, *The Heart of a Tiger*, about her family’s remarkable journey to freedom.

She finds the time despite the hours she puts in caring for the nation’s veterans as the first female general surgeon at the Overton Brooks Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Louisiana, where she is director of the Center for Innovations in Quality, Outcomes and Patient Safety.

SreyRam Kuy (lower left) in a refugee camp with her family after escaping from Cambodia.

She also teaches at Louisiana State University in Shreveport.

“I wanted to honor the lives of the 2 million people who lost their lives during the killing fields,” Kuy says. “The mass killing of people should not happen. If we remember and understand the reasons, I hope we can prevent this from happening again.”

Forced at gunpoint

Kuy was born during the Cambodian genocide, when the communist Khmer Rouge regime had forced people out of the cities at gunpoint and into the jungles. Because of her mother’s courage, hard work in the rice fields and stubborn will, Kuy said her family managed to survive four years before escaping Cambodia to live in refugee camps for another 18 months.

When Kuy was two years old, their refugee camp was bombed. Her mother suffered



PHOTO COURTESY OF SREYRAM KUY



HANNAH O'LEARY, OREGON STATE MAGAZINE

“It’s really a privilege to get to care for the veteran who sacrificed for us and who fought for the freedoms I have,” says SreyRam Kuy, pictured at the Overton Brooks VA Medical Center in Louisiana.

critical injuries and Kuy’s ear was partially severed. A German surgeon with the Red Cross stitched Kuy’s ear back in place. He also operated on her mother, but she remained seriously ill for months.

That story is one of many Sovanna Soeung would tell SreyRam Kuy and her sister, SreyReath Kuy, while they were growing up in Corvallis after the Seventh-day Adventist Church sponsored and brought them to the United States.

The kindness and generosity of that doctor inspired both women to enter the medical field. SreyReath Kuy is a podiatrist in Houston, Texas.

“That story was a fabric of our being,” SreyRam Kuy says. “It amazes me that someone would leave their home and help someone they don’t even know.”

Because she was so young

when her family was in Cambodia and the refugee camps, the stories in her book are based on her mother’s recollections.

Through the stories, she recognizes how fortunate she is to be an American. For example, her mother was a teacher in Cambodia, but she had to deny she was educated to avoid execution.

“This is an incredible country to live in that anyone can get an education, whether a boy or girl, rich or poor, from a rural background or a city.”

SreyRam Kuy got top grades while attending Crescent Valley High School in Corvallis and achieved valedictorian status. Landing a Ford Family scholarship was crucial to paying for her microbiology and philosophy degrees at Oregon State University, but she says it was just as important to have someone believe in you.

'killing fields'

"That gives you the strength to keep going," she says.

Kuy went on to earn a master's degree at Yale University and attend medical school at Oregon Health & Science University, then completed her general surgery residency.

When she thought she might not survive her general surgery residency, all she had to do was remember the obstacles her mother overcame.

"I hope in *The Heart of a Tiger*, people will realize that no matter how difficult circumstances are, nothing is insur-

Top: SreyRam Kuy receives her Ford Scholar certificate from Kenneth Ford in 1996.

Bottom: Today, she works as a surgeon in Louisiana.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SREYRAM KUY



HANNAH O'LEARY, OREGON STATE MAGAZINE

mountable," she says. "There is a God who is amazing, and if He doesn't give up on you, you can't give up on yourself."

In her work at the Overton VA, Kuy wants to make sure veterans know how much caring for them means to her.

"It's really a privilege to get to care for the veteran who sacrificed for us and who fought for the freedoms I have and so many people don't have," she says.

In the future, she plans to continue teaching the next generation of doctors, and she has a strong interest in health-care policy.

"We need to have physicians help shape our health-care system," she says.

She also enjoys spending time with her mother, who splits her time between her daughters' homes in Houston and Shreveport. And she's hopeful she will find a publisher for her book so others can read of her mother's strength.

"She's an amazing woman," Kuy says. "She has so much courage. She is so strong and has such a heart to serve." ■

"I wanted to honor the lives of the 2 million people who lost their lives during the 'killing fields.' The mass killing of people should not happen."

—SreyRam Kuy

Book Review: Our Kids

Continued from page 16

In the other family, living just five miles away, things are much different. The parents have had prior relationships and marriages, and the family is more fragile. The daughter is depressed and neglected, had difficulty with school and does not have much hope that things are going to get better.

What do these differing situations mean to our society at large? "Increasingly, parents from different social classes are doing very different things to and for their kids, with massively consequential results," Putnam says.

Widening gap

The upper middle class, Putnam says, exhibits significant investments of time, money and thoughtful care in raising their kids. That is often not possible in families on the other end of the scale, and children in poorer circumstances are increasingly being subjected to stressful environments from an early age, which often has lifelong consequences that are costly for our society.

The widening class-based opportunity gap among young people is real, but it's not without hope for a better future, Putnam says. The solution starts with the acknowledgement that the problem affects every one of us. "For America's poor kids do belong to us and we to them. They are our kids," he says. ■

Read an excerpt (right) from *OUR KIDS: The American Dream in Crisis* by Robert D. Putnam. Copyright © 2015 by Robert D. Putnam. Reprinted by permission of Simon & Schuster, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

OUR KIDS: An American Dream in Crisis

By Robert Putnam

An Excerpt: As my classmates and I marched down the steps after graduation in 1959, none of us had any inkling that change was coming. Almost half of us headed off to college, and those who stayed in town had every reason to expect they would get a job (if they were male), get married, and lead a comfortable life, just as their parents had done. For about a decade those expectations were happily met.

But just beyond the horizon an economic, social, and cultural whirlwind was gathering force nationally that would radically transform the life chances of our children and grandchildren. For many people, its effects would be gut-wrenching, for Port Clinton turns out to be a poster child for the changes that have swept across America in the last several decades.

The manufacturing foundation upon which Port Clinton's modest prosperity had been built in the 1950s and 1960s began to tremble in the 1970s. The big Standard Products factory at the east end of town had provided nearly 1,000 steady, well-paying blue-collar jobs in the 1950s, but in the 1970s the payroll was trimmed to less than half that, and after more than two decades of layoffs and givebacks, the plant gates on Maple Street finally closed in 1993. Twenty years later, only the hulking ruins of the plant remain, with EPA signs on the barbed wire fence warning of environmental hazard. ■

PHOTO OF ROBERT PUTNAM, BACK COVER: MARTHA STEWART/HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL

BOOK REVIEW

The haves and have-nots

Author argues that widening income gaps bring profound changes to family life



Robert Putnam

The best clue to the subject matter of social scientist Robert Putnam's latest best-selling book is in the title, *Our Kids*. As Putnam surveys the growing schism between the haves and have-nots in America today, he pounds this concept home: Until we think of children — all children — as our own, our society is in trouble.

Putnam takes readers on a journey of discovery all over America, from his Ohio hometown to the Central Oregon town of Bend; from Atlanta, Ga., to Orange County, Calif. The book is a series of stories about the people in these towns, the families and their children. Putnam's book seeks to answer one essential question: Do youth today coming from different social and economic backgrounds in fact have roughly equal life chances, and has that changed in recent decades?

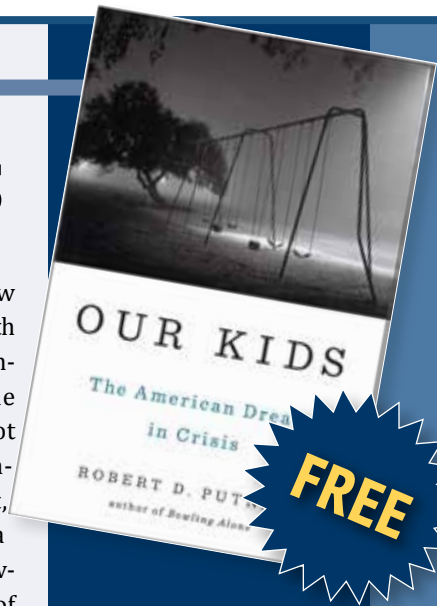
That is, after all, the American dream — that everyone

can succeed, no matter how humble their beginnings. With our society undergoing a fundamental class shift as the income gap widens, it is not surprising that Putnam unequivocally concludes that, yes, Americans are facing a crisis today. There is a growing gap between the lives of rich and poor children, and those coming from poverty are facing horrifyingly reduced prospects.

Differences in Bend, Ore.

Putnam illustrates class differences with a revealing portrait of two different families in Bend, a town that underwent a rapid shift in socio-economic makeup when it was "discovered" in the '70s. One Bend family has two college-educated parents. The dad runs a thriving construction company and the mom stays home. The two children are successful students with established work ethics and a happy outlook on life.

Continued on page 15



FREE

Yours for the asking

See page 11.



MISSION

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- Integrity:** Promoting and acknowledging principled behavior
- Stewardship:** Responsibility to give back and accountability for resources and results
- Respect:** Valuing all individuals
- Independence:** Encouraging self-reliance and initiative
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