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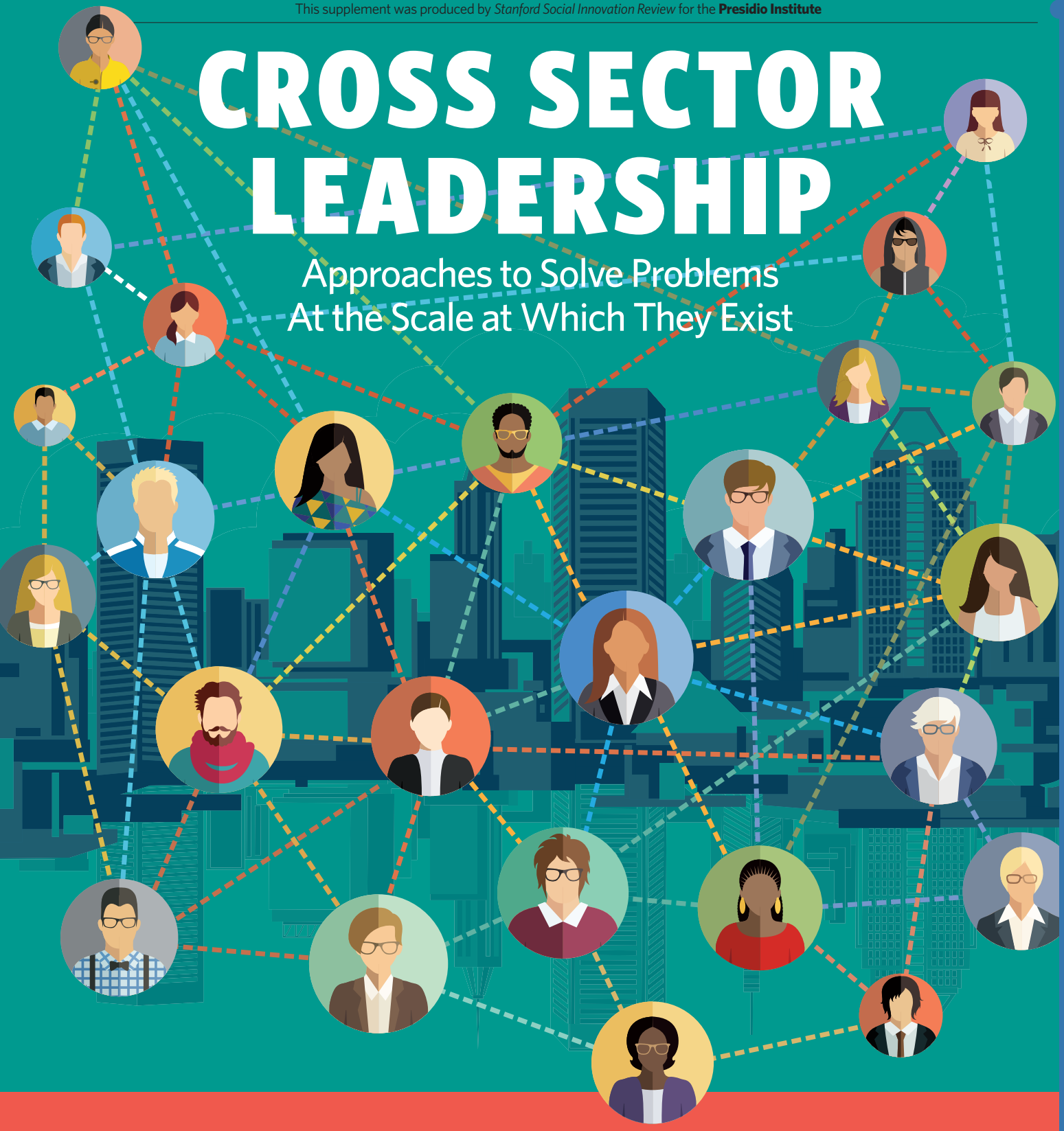
CROSS SECTOR LEADERSHIP

Approaches to Solve Problems At the Scale at Which They Exist



The Need for Cross-Sector Collaboration

Addressing today's most pressing challenges requires developing the capacity to lead collaboratively and to effectively work across sectors.

BY JEANINE BECKER & DAVID B. SMITH

The striking challenges of our time—such as health care, the environment, education, and poverty—are complex, whether on a local, national, or international scale. Yet all too often we approach these issues with piecemeal and even siloed solutions, and with efforts (however passionate, intense, and even exhausting) that aren't sufficient to address the problems at the scale at which they exist.

Think, for example, of the challenge that is most pressing to you, and consider the various individuals affected and the systems at play. Can a single policy, however finely crafted, or a social program, however well run, or a new technology, however innovative, by itself solve that problem?

Developmental psychologist Robert Kegan suggests that in dealing with an increasingly complex world we have two choices. Our first choice is to see the world as simpler. Our second choice is that we can increase the complexity of our own perspective to the extent necessary to meet the challenges. This means that we, as solution seekers, can choose to focus on a piece of the problem and tackle just that piece, or we can engage multiple stakeholders to craft solutions that are complex enough and possess the various perspectives and resources necessary to adequately address the challenges.

While the former can effectively address specific challenges, the latter approach holds the greatest potential for sustainable change in complex challenges at scale. The grand challenges of our time also present a striking opportunity for new processes of cocreating change and new outcomes. In recent years, we have seen increased focus on public-private partnerships, and the rise of complex collaborative structures, such as collective impact and pay-for-success models, in pursuit of such change.

In other words, we're seeing the rise of cross-sector collaboration—alliances of individuals and organizations from the nonprofit, government, philanthropic, and business sectors that use their diverse perspectives and resources to jointly solve a societal problem and achieve a shared goal.

In this century, society will confront obstacles of unparalleled complexity. Critical issues such as climate change and water scarcity, the widening gap between rich and poor, declining educational outcomes, and cultural conflicts demand our timely attention. Globalization and technology are exponentially increasing the scope, speed, and interrelatedness of our challenges. With that increasing speed come challenges that are more emergent, and so the capacity to quickly iterate and adapt will be even more essential.

The indispensable ingredient in determining whether we overcome our obstacles and seize the opportunity of these times remains the same as it has been throughout history: leadership.[1] With the rise in complex, interdependent, and emergent challenges, effective change to secure a brighter future will require transformative, collaborative leaders who can effectively lead cross-sector collaborations.[2]

DEVELOPING AS A CROSS SECTOR LEADER

Certainly one way for individuals to develop the capacity for cross sector leadership is to shift sectors purposefully as their careers progress—to become, perhaps, a tri-sector leader, gaining perspectives, insights, and experience directly from working in each sector. Earlier writing on collective impact has also suggested focusing on the five traits of an effective backbone leader—and has encouraged teams to hire for these capacities.

In this supplement, we explore how the capacity to be an effective cross sector leader is not merely the result of moving between sectors or a collection of traits to be hired for, but is the product of a series of mind-sets and skills that can be effectively developed.

Meeting the complexity, interdependence, and emergent nature of our current challenges requires leaders to choose to balance their attention between the people involved in the change effort (including multiple stakeholders) and the results needed to achieve impact. It requires effectively managing key polarities, and not falling into the false choice between focusing on a set vision or being adaptive and receptive to input. It requires choosing to be charismatic enough to lead through influence and humble enough to engage a diverse team. And it requires choosing collaboration instead of other means of addressing difference—such as competing, accommodating, compromising, or avoiding, precisely because as a style of engaging difference, collaboration requires both our highest degree of agency (our clarity and sustained action toward our own vision and strategy) and our highest degree of compassionate cooperation (our mind set and skills with empathy, curiosity, and focus on the needs of others).

The gift in cross-sector collaboration is that it is possible to use differences as an asset—differences in resources, experience, demographics, industry, and sector, as well as differences in perspective, such as assessments of risk, time, and scale. Cross sector leaders recognize that the most robust and sustainable solutions will come from designing with (and not just for) the communities most affected.

This means that effective cross sector leaders understand the human-centered design approach and engage key stakeholders with empathy, embracing an iterative process. But they go one step further: They have the capacity to map the system and commit to having those most affected at the table as co-designers, addressing critical power dynamics, such that all stakeholders engage with and buy into the co-designed solution.

To do so, cross sector leaders need to be able to address power dynamics effectively,

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build trust, and help team members address any breaches of the shared culture they are developing.

It is one thing to learn to approach diversity as an asset. But the challenge of cross sector leadership is navigating these differences effectively in the moments that matter most, such as a high-stakes conversation, where a leader will be tested to not merely react but creatively choose to engage. To make these choices when it matters most requires awareness of one's own default behaviors and perspectives—our leadership habits—and the capacity to override that default response as needed.

Research indicates that these sophisticated leadership capacities and the capacity for leaders to choose their responses can be developed. My own (Becker) experience, teaching negotiation and collaboration at Stanford University for a decade and coaching purpose-driven leaders on their collaborative leadership capacities to align their team and build the partnerships needed to scale, supports this idea. And the Presidio Institute engaged four cycles of its Cross Sector Leadership Fellowship, teaching the mind-sets and skills of cross sector leadership to fellows over the past four years.

Experience and research shows that to effectively grow these leadership capacities and to shift leadership habits requires a framework, practice, and awareness of our default habits, along with the capability to discern and choose creatively in the moment.

Our intention with this supplement is to help you meet that challenge. In these pages, we aspire to provide frameworks, critical questions, and concrete examples that will ignite your awareness and inspire your practice of the mind-sets and skills to increase your cross sector leadership capacity. Indeed, the issues you most care about require it.

SUPPLEMENT ARTICLES

The first article in this supplement, "The Essentials of Cross Sector Leadership," on page 4, presents examples of cross sector leadership in action and details a framework, developed by the Presidio Institute, for cross sector leadership: building teams, solving problems, and achieving sustainable results.

The next article, "Cocreating a Change-Making Culture," by Community Wealth Partners President Sara Brenner, on page 7, dives deeper into the need to build trust and develop a change-making culture. Consistent with the famous Peter Drucker quote, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast," Brenner explores how this is also true for change makers, as "Culture is the great accelerant or deterrent for progress because it is complex human beings who make change."

In this article, Brenner highlights the core components of a change-making culture and makes the case for funders to support not only the strategic and programmatic work of change makers but also the culture building that is necessary for lasting impact.

The third article, by Heather McLeod Grant, "Creating a Cross Sector Leadership Network," on page 9, focuses on solving problems. With the financial support of the James Irvine Foundation, Grant and her team developed the cross-sector and place-based Irvine New Leadership Network to address cross-sector challenges in Fresno, Calif.

McLeod and her team analyzed the people most impacted and the systems at play and discovered that the nonprofit leaders on the front lines in Fresno often lacked the power and resources to shift systems by themselves. With that understanding, McLeod and her team adjusted their strategy and developed New Leadership Network to address the need for individual development, build trust among diverse stakeholders, and engage the larger community for systemic impact.

Another example of solving problems by effectively engaging both the people affected and the underlying systems is the work of Emily May, profiled on page 11. May is cofounder and executive director of Hollaback, a global nonprofit fighting street harassment through online platforms and offline organizing.

The next article, "The Progressive Resurgence of Federalism," by Lenny Mendonca and Laura D. Tyson, on page 12, explores the use of state and local governments as critical leverage points to further progressive causes. State and local leaders can utilize their roles and resources effectively through cross-sector collaboration to be the convener, the visionary, the weaver of many stakeholders, and often the funder with the capacity to take proven programs to scale.

We conclude the supplement with two additional profiles. The first, on page 13, is of Siobhan Foley, a FUSE fellow who is leading a cross-sector collaboration in New Orleans to address challenges associated with climate change. The article explores how Foley chose key leverage points for building momentum for climate action in New Orleans, to enable a quick win, meet a primary concern for local citizens, and build awareness of how individual actions make a difference.

The last profile, on page 14, is of Oakland, Calif., Mayor Libby Schaaf. Her efforts to create Oakland Promise, a cradle-to-career initiative to dramatically increase the number of Oakland youth completing college, demonstrates three leverage points that a government leader can bring to cross-sector work: embracing the bigness and complexity of systemic challenges in a way that coalesces many smaller initiatives into systemic change; convening and engaging both grass tops and grassroots in order to design funded and sustainable solutions with the community; and catalyzing local leadership and creativity by providing a clear vision combined with support, mentorship, and freedom to innovate.

CALL TO ACTION

- **Are you a business leader** who feels called to use the fast-paced, iterative, and scalable resources at your disposal to make a difference beyond merely the bottom line for your business?
- **Are you a nonprofit leader** who wants to utilize your programmatic expertise and community connections and who is also committed to broader systemic and scalable change than might be possible solely with your organization's programs?
- **Are you a philanthropic leader** who is exploring ways of fostering systemic change by moving beyond funding individual programs and individual organizations to funding systems change?
- **Or are you a government leader** who sees the big picture and is looking to use government resources to combine programs into scalable initiatives that can meet problems at the scale at which they exist?

If you said "yes" to any of these questions, there is a role for you as a cross sector leader. The complex, emergent, and interdependent challenges we face require transformative and collaborative leaders.

By developing their personal and organizational leadership capacities and by engaging with others practicing cross sector leadership (and those who study and chronicle the work), cross sector leaders have an opportunity to explore various approaches and the results they produce, and to utilize shared knowledge to meet the challenges with innovative, sustainable, and scalable solutions.

NOTES

1 Ronald Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Marty Linsky, "Leadership in a (Permanent) Crisis," *Harvard Business Review*, July-August 2009.

2 Curtis Ogden, "Roles of Collaborative 'Leadership,'" Interaction Institute for Social Change, January 26, 2011.

Essential Skills of Cross Sector Leadership

BY DAVID B. SMITH & JEANINE BECKER

Complex challenges are often approached through siloed solutions—whether policy, markets, or social programs. But rarely are these attempts sufficient because the challenges we face are the result not of one policy, investment, or program, but of the interactions between them. This is why we've been seeing increasingly urgent interest in cross-sector collaboration.

The question we face is: How can we best help such collaborations address our pressing challenges at the magnitude and complexity at which they exist? At the Presidio Institute we believe that developing effective cross sector leaders is a critical piece of the answer to effectively meeting these challenges. Leaders who have trained for and accumulated experience in leading a single organization, or in a single sector, often find the shift in perspective challenging and the learning curve steep.

To help flatten that curve, this article offers a framework and examples of the skill sets that cross sector leaders need and an invitation for new and experienced leaders to join their colleagues in a growing community of practice. This article is also helpful for leaders who are already deep into the collaborative process, and who want to continue to diagnose the challenges in their current efforts and think strategically about using diverse resources to scale their impact.

Building on the research and observations of Nick Lovegrove and Matthew Thomas from Prospect Madison, Alison Gold and Tynesia Boyea-Robinson from Living Cities, Neil Britto from Intersector, Lenny Mendonca, and Lisa Spinali, the Presidio Institute identified nine skill sets that are critical for cross sector leaders to shape collaborations and drive impact.

These nine skill sets are grouped in three broad areas: building teams, solving problems, and achieving impact. (See the trefoil diagram on page 5.) These skill sets were shared with leaders through the Presidio Institute Cross Sector Leadership Fellowship Program for four cycles.

BUILDING TEAMS

Michael Tubbs is the first African-American mayor of Stockton, Calif., winning his election at age 26 (and his prior City Council seat at 22). Tubbs was raised in South Stockton, where in 2013, 38 percent of the population was below the poverty line, more than 60 percent spoke a language other than English at home, 60 percent of residents lacked a high school diploma, and life expectancy was more than 10 years lower than the state average.

Michael Tubbs

Tubbs knew the numerous and complex challenges of his home community—but as a council member, he had only one shared staff person and few resources. What he did have was a bold vision, which he eventually called Reinvent South Stockton Coalition. He also had the capacity to be a neutral convener—to get Stockton's community organizations, faith-based organizations, government entities, and community residents together (whether or not they had previously gotten along)—and challenge them to work as a collective.

"At the very early stage it was me asking: 'How much more could you do if we did it together?'" says Tubbs. "And then listening to what happened, suspending my natural inclination to say, 'That is not where we are now,' and really just actually listening and empathizing, listening to the pain." According to Tubbs, it was this open and empathetic dialogue that began to weave connections and a new sense of what might be possible if community members and organizations worked together.

Tubbs knew that there was competition for scarce resources in the community, but he also let it be known that his intention was for the collective efforts to increase the size of the pie. It took more than two years for Reinvent South Stockton to receive significant funding, but those that stayed the course, especially those that applied for grants together, ended up seeing increased interest because funders were looking to support collective efforts.

In 2016, Tubbs moved from the City Council to the mayor's office, where he continues to champion Reinvent South Stockton's efforts. Tubbs and his team are beginning to track positive outcomes, and he is confident about the work. "I'm not too worried about metrics yet because the relationships are built and the trust is there and it took some time to establish—and the communities are excited. We all agreed to this process and strategy, so now the question is, how do you make it work for everyone?"

Tubb's and Reinvent South Stockton's success highlights the first dimension of the Presidio Institute leadership rubric—building effective teams. When it comes to building teams, there are three essential skills:

1. Developing Trust | Trust is important in any transaction, and it is critical in a collaboration, where parties must rely on one another to achieve something they cannot accomplish on their own. Developing trust can be a time-intensive process, but it is the foundation for any team or partnership.

Key questions to ask are:

- How do we create space to both imagine (perspective taking) and inquire (perspective seeking) to understand one another's experiences, desires, and pressures?
- How do we build and maintain empathy for one another and commitment to the work?
- How do we build the resilience to speak frankly with courageous authenticity?
- How do we demonstrate honesty and integrity while tailoring communication to meet the perspectives of various stakeholders?
- How do we take small steps and produce early wins to build trust and momentum?

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MICHAEL TUBBS

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2. Managing Power Dynamics and Conflict | Leaders must understand the power and privilege that they own, based on their personal and professional demographics, background, institutional resources, and social network. They must also try to understand others' expectations based on their own backgrounds, roles, and experiences. Challenging conversations and conflict can destroy or enable deep relationships depending upon how they are addressed. Agreement is not always the goal; an environment that allows for uncomfortable conversations and encourages curiosity can deepen connections by creating a space for empathy and for understanding differences.

Key questions to ask are:

- How do we acknowledge and address power dynamics and various forms of privilege?
- Who needs to be at the table, and how do we bring a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion to the work that we are doing?
- How do we ensure that relevant voices are heard and respected?
- How do we approach and enable conflict to occur productively, and how do we address and repair breaches of shared cultural norms?

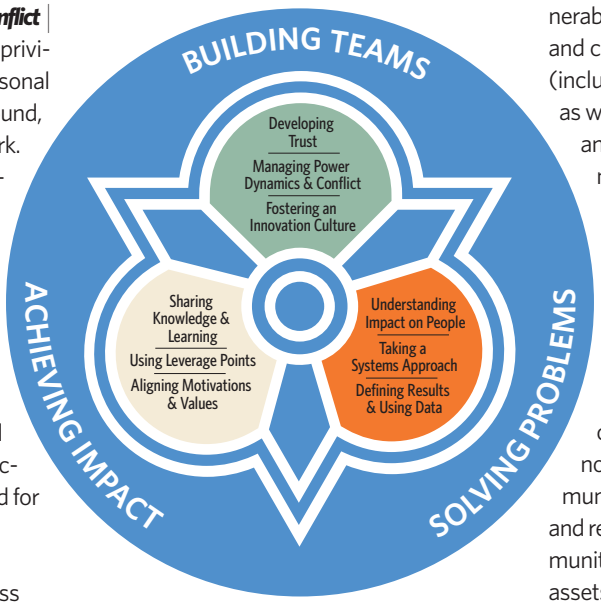
3. Fostering an Innovation Culture | Self-imposed feelings of what may (and may not) be possible can limit the scale of success. Therefore, it is also essential to create an environment of suspended belief of current realities and encourage outside-the-box ideas, question perceived limitations, and imagine a new reality where audacious, system-wide goals can be achieved.

Key questions to ask are:

- How do we create a culture of learning and continuous improvement that embraces failure?
- How do we make ourselves open to new information, ideas, and ways of developing solutions?
- How do we imagine solutions that redefine the system we are working within?

SOLVING PROBLEMS

Three years ago, the American Red Cross was conceiving of a new program, Prepare LA, to set a strategy for preparing the Los Angeles region for the next big disaster. Originally, the problem was defined with an internal lens—defining the number of cots, blankets, and other Red Cross resources that needed to be made available within the region. Spearheaded by Jarrett Barrios, a 2014 Presidio Institute Fellow, Red Cross leaders shifted the definition of the problem from an inward focus to a community focus—how best to prepare local communities most in need for the next big disaster. In order to more clearly define the problem and arrive at a strategy, the Red Cross utilized the three core skills of the cross sector leadership approach to solving problems: understanding impact on people; taking a systems approach; and leveraging data.



The Red Cross team began by analyzing US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) public health mapping data for Los Angeles County, assessing which neighborhoods were most vulnerable based on social factors such as poverty, race, and immigration status. Barrios hypothesized that the same areas vulnerable in a public health crisis were also likely to be the most vulnerable in a natural disaster, and the Red Cross team was able to validate that assumption with its own data. While the CDC's demographic maps were not predictive of the locations of disasters (liquefaction could occur in both poor and rich neighborhoods), they were often predictive of vulnerability (the oldest homes in the poorest neighborhoods were least likely to be retrofitted). Even single family house fires, where the Red Cross assisted, matched the CDC public health map for the most vulnerable neighborhoods.

With the data providing an indicator of the geographic areas of most concern, the Red Cross analyzed the systems of support available for those vulnerable communities, mapping the key assets and challenges of the identified communities (including mass transit needs and hospitals), as well as identifying key community leaders and the resources in the system that would need to be employed to meet the challenge of a local disaster.

Finally, Barrios' team convened community leadership coalitions, composed of grass tops local leaders, that were essential to spreading the word of preparedness. To date, the Red Cross of Los Angeles has convened 10 coalitions and five more are ramping up now in some of the most vulnerable communities, providing a community of practice and resources for shared learning. These communities are connected to the Red Cross, the assets are understood and deployable, and they are already yielding benefits in the local communities. For example, the coalition in East Los Angeles has recruited and trained 20 people for Community Emergency Response Team training (CERT) and has provided the first CERT trainings in Spanish in the region, ensuring that there are local leaders trained and engaged if and when search and rescue capacity is needed.

By utilizing data, mapping the system, and building engagement with local community leaders, the Red Cross has done more than stage its own resources—it has mobilized the most vulnerable communities so that they will be better prepared and more resilient when a disaster might strike.

Correctly identifying and solving problems requires the following three skills:

4. Understanding Impact on People | Social challenges are as intimate as they are big. Design should focus on understanding users' needs and solving the challenge they are encountering at an individual or family level, as well as at a systems level. In communities it is critical to engage people directly affected by a problem, as their experience can unveil other challenges upstream, and solutions previously undiscovered by experts. Engaging beneficiaries as co-designers creates ownership for solutions that will require community buy-in to implement, improving problem identification and solution generation, and engaging an often-underutilized source of human capital for implementation.


Jarrett Barrios

Key questions to ask are:

- How do we better under-

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF JARRETT BARRIOS

stand the problem by understanding the experience of those it directly affects?
- How do we help people and organizations see how they are contributing to the problem?
- How do we engage the people directly affected by the problem as co-designers to identify and implement the appropriate solution?

5. Taking a Systems Approach | Systems are perfectly designed to produce the results they produce. To achieve different results, leaders need to map the full system and acknowledge where various components interact. By understanding the system that is producing an undesired outcome, collaborators can alter inputs, redefine the system, or activate their networks to achieve more desirable results.

Key questions to ask are:
- How do we support one another to see the system, to see our contribution to the system, and to identify those stakeholders in the system that must be at the table?
- How do we enable all collaborators to take off their organizational or individual hat and put on their systems hat?
- How do we examine the system to see how current outcomes are produced, where the key leverage points are, and what alterations might produce alternative outcomes?

6. Defining Results and Using Data | Collaborations must be clear about what they are trying to solve, how they will measure success toward those collective goals, and how that data will inform future decision making. Reaching clarity around the shared desired outcome empowers collaborators to work in unison even if their motivations and strategies differ.

Key questions to ask are:
- How do we help a cross-sector effort define its results and identify leading indicators?
- How do we use qualitative and quantitative data to inform decision making?

ACHIEVING IMPACT

2015 Presidio Fellow Tiffany Manuel is vice president of Knowledge, Impact, and Strategy at Enterprise Community Partners, a nonprofit committed to creating thriving communities by providing capital, policy support, and solutions to community issues. Manuel and her team at Enterprise gather the data and parse the practices that achieve the greatest impact. Her team engages with more than 50 cross-sector community-led collaborations around the country to effectively distribute information on best practices and build their capacity to use data and evidence in their efforts to address the most pressing issues facing their communities.

As a Presidio Institute alum, Manuel uses the cross sector leadership framework to identify the key leverage points and foster knowledge sharing. For example, in Seattle an existing coalition was attempting to work on the issue of income and resource disparity in the region with a campaign contrasting King County with the surrounding communities. While this perspective highlighted the inequalities in the system, Manuel and her team helped to identify that this framing was causing disengagement by key stakeholders needed to shift the system.

Tiffany Manuel

The key pivot was to reframe the outreach to a "story of us"—a story of how the region and each stakeholder would benefit from having a thriving King County. With this key pivot, Manuel was able to help the Seattle coalition align the motivations and values of the core constituents, employers, and other stakeholders so that they could see their own success as intrinsically linked with a thriving King County. As a result, the coalition was able to successfully request the state to outline a specific set of grants for health disparity, engaging local hospitals to provide the needed data on where the resources were most needed, and the relevant communities were able to receive the needed resources.

Manuel and her team at Enterprise Community Partners were able to achieve this impact because they were able to identify a key leverage point based on learning from other cross-sector collaborations. They aligned motivations and values in such a way that they were able to engage stakeholders with the resources necessary to achieve a lasting impact.

Achieving impact requires the following three core skills:

7. Aligning Motivations and Values | Creating a strong virtuous cycle drives the sustainability of any solution. Collaborations can achieve greater impact by paying attention not only to collective goals and what each partner contributes, but also to what each partner organization gets out of the effort. Rather than looking only for similarities, it's equally valuable to identify and articulate the differences in motivations and perspectives that allow a collaborative effort to create value. This approach of creating value for individual partners and the collective is called "community-centered selfishness."

Key questions to ask are:
- How do we understand one another's motivations and values?
- How can the differences in parties' motivations, values, and resources create value?
- How do we align financial, intellectual, human, and social capital to achieve impact?

8. Using Leverage Points | Collaborations influence systems by applying pressure at leverage points to alter the flow and achieve alternative results. Leverage points include capital flows, policies and regulation, public opinion, and behavior change. Identifying the highest-value leverage points requires collaborators to have a deep understanding of the system and map the best use of the collective assets of the partners.

Key questions to ask are:
- How do we identify the highest value leverage points to produce the intended results?
- How do we develop strategies relating to those leverage points?

9. Sharing Knowledge and Learning | Collaborations should aim not only to achieve a tangible result, but also to pave the way for future partnerships. This longer-term view of impact encourages partners to view themselves as part of an experiment where lessons learned can inform future experiments. This lens can allow for more open feedback and sharing of failures, successes, and suggested improvements.

Key questions to ask are:
- How do we build mind sets and create a culture where collaborators can share what they're learning in as close to real time as possible?
- How can we learn from communications and behavioral research to tell our stories effectively?
- How do we make what we're learning open and accessible to others?

CONCLUSION

With the increasing need for the sophisticated leadership capacities necessary to meet complex challenges at the scale at which they exist, our intention is for these examples and the rubric of skill sets provided to be a catalyst for your own exploration and to serve as a starting point for an ongoing community of practice. Join the movement at www.xsectorleadership.com

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF TIFFANY MANUEL

Cocreating a Change-Making Culture

When collaboratives get intentional about culture, they can more quickly and more effectively tackle social problems at the magnitude at which they exist.

BY SARA BRENNER

Six years ago, when I met Karen Ortiz, vice president of early-grade success initiatives at Helios Education Foundation, I quickly realized that she was one of the most courageous and passionate early childhood advocates of our time. She was championing the Arizona Early Childhood Alliance, a statewide collaborative effort with the goal of developing an integrated early childhood system to help children succeed and to transform educational and health outcomes.

Most of the collaborative's members had previously worked together on early childhood issues, and understood and trusted each other. The collaborative had been functioning for two or three years and was making excellent progress, with thoughtful, strategic objectives and priorities.

Ortiz knew, however, that to make a dramatic change in the lives of Arizona children, and to pivot from strategy to action, the collaborative would require a new type of leadership: one owned by several community organizations and stakeholder groups representing nonprofits, foundations, government agencies, and local businesses that embraced the shared outcome of early childhood success. She knew that a shared culture was necessary to achieve their desired results.

Enter culture-building, or the practice of building trust, aligning a group to believe in the change, defining ways of working or sets of behaviors that will lead to the desired results, and creating the space to take risks, innovate, and give and receive feedback to productively evolve the culture.

BUILDING CULTURE IS CRITICAL

Ortiz was right. As the late management guru Peter Drucker once said, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast." Research backs up his assertion in business, as well as in large-scale change. In 2011, Community Wealth Partners (where I serve as president) set out to understand why some social change efforts achieve dramatic impact on a problem while others do not. A subsidiary of the national nonprofit Share Our Strength, Community Wealth Partners supports foundations and nonprofits nationwide in solving problems at the magnitude at which they exist by partnering with leaders and communities to design and implement bold strategies, strengthen their capacity to make change, and learn and evaluate their efforts along the way.

We drew insights from various transformational initiatives, including the anti-malaria movement, which contributed to a 66 percent reduction in malaria deaths across Africa between 2000 and 2015; and the anti-smoking movement, which led to a 50 percent decrease in the smoking rate among US youth between 1997 and 2011. Our research isolated the elements most common among initiatives that achieved transformational change. In every instance, culture—one that is deeply understood and lived by stakeholders and connects specific behaviors to specific results—emerged as a necessary element in achieving transformational results.[1]

Culture involves the articulation and consistent, long-term promotion of the values, norms, and daily behaviors that allow people, organizations, and communities to align their actions in a disciplined way that contributes to progress. Culture is the great accelerant or deterrent of progress because complex human beings make change. Yet, culture is present, whether or not we are explicit about recognizing and developing it. Culture, therefore, is as much a part of the large-scale change process as developing strategies, engaging stakeholders, securing capital, and other work. If collaboratives are to truly transform communities, funders must finance collaboratives' culture-building efforts.

Many collaborative leaders have begun to embrace culture as a critical part of their efforts, but culture is complex and difficult work. It requires leaders of diverse groups to be vulnerable with each other, be open to change—within themselves and within their organizations—and be honest about how power dynamics can distract us from what matters, or deter the pace of change. Therefore, culture work can help us deal with interpersonal dynamics between leaders, and relations among organizations and within the community.

COCREATING PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES

Our research and experience suggest that, while no two cultures will be the same, the primary characteristics of change-making cultures are transparency, authenticity, collaboration and partnership, racial and gender equity and inclusion, continuous learning and improvement, openness to risk and change, and, ultimately, outcomes. Rather than working in isolation, these values, or subsets of them, work dynamically to reinforce each other and create a stronger whole.

How can a collaborative develop such a culture? A first step is to facilitate a conversation about partnership principles—the core values that are the bedrock for collaboration, guiding how participants will interact with each other. They need to be clear, brief, and few in number (no more, say, than five), so that people can remember them easily. For example, they might include respectful dialogue, trusted partnerships, or equity and inclusion. While they should support all interactions, they will become particularly important in moments of conflict or heightened power dynamics; acknowledging them explicitly can help groups productively work through tense times.

After establishing principles, the next task is articulating the behaviors, or specific actions, that demonstrate how the principles are lived out and how they will lead to the group's desired results. The most important outcome of these steps is a commitment by all collaborators to hold themselves and others in the group accountable to what has been established.

To facilitate commitment and accountability, the discussion can begin with this question: What are the behaviors we expect of our partners and to which we are also willing to hold ourselves accountable? For example, one of the principles that Ortiz's collaborative created was "respectful dialogue." One of the associated behaviors was to "seek first to understand and then to be understood."

Answering this question reinforces a cocreative process, which is essential in building the deep commitment and longevity needed for individuals to take aligned action and sustain the work of solving social problems. This process helps collaborators recognize that in working together, they are building a culture that utilizes

Sara Brenner *is president of Community Wealth Partners.*

Ten Steps to Build and Maintain Culture

1. Use a cocreative process that engages all partners in the articulation of values and behaviors that drive results.

2. Start with a powerful question: "What are the behaviors you expect of your partners and to which you're also willing to hold yourself accountable?"

3. Address and manage power dynamics as part of the work.

4. Integrate the principles into all meetings, such as with a reminder or creating time for praising those who uphold the principles.

5. Create space for members of the collaborative to provide feedback to each other on specific behaviors and to have open, respectful conversations about areas of conflict.

6. Invite new members of the collaborative to inform the culture. You may even want to ask all participants to sign an agreement to uphold the principles.

7. Include the principles in agreements.

8. Integrate the principles into your external communications.

9. Establish a process to evaluate how well the collaborative is living the culture and to celebrate the culture.

10. Create space every few years to revisit the values and behaviors that are most needed to achieve results.

the talents and values of the different entities involved and is distinct from each participant's own organizational culture.

The most effective collaborative cultures manage through the challenges when cultures collide and form a shared sense of identity and belonging that helps them to address common roadblocks, such as the speed of decision making and action, the level of transparency desired and allowed, and the willingness to take risks. Cocreating the collaborative's culture also allows the group to harness and utilize the unique contribution of each participant and more easily identify distinct roles, which leads to more effective working relationships and greater progress. Nascent collaborative groups are often tempted to set up complex structures. Yet these efforts require much higher levels of trust. Starting small can be a more effective alternative. What's more, it can help collaborative efforts build a critical baseline of trust.

For example, Newman's Own Foundation supported food access and nutrition-focused grantees in establishing a collaborative, hypothesizing it would lead to better programmatic results. The grantees formed a learning network to foster trust and collaboration, and strengthen their leadership and outcomes. Preliminary findings demonstrate promising and unexpected outcomes: Collaborative members all reported benefits from participation, and two-thirds are formally collaborating with each other outside of the learning network.

ADDRESSING POWER DYNAMICS

To build a healthy change-making culture, collaboratives are adopting new practices and processes to recognize, equalize, and manage power dynamics. These power dynamics inevitably exist between funders and grantees, as funders hold the checkbook and the power that often comes with it. But power dynamics can also emerge around race, gender, sexual orientation, class, and other identities. However unintentional and unwanted power dynamics may be, they require our attention because they are a central part of what holds back progress. To make progress, we need to welcome those hard conversations, not just acknowledging the elephant in the room but inviting it into the work and offering it a seat at the table.

The Arizona Early Childhood Alliance looked to shift power dynamics by creating a flexible shared-leadership structure. It created roles for three co-leaders and set up a system whereby the individuals filling these roles could change on a rotating basis, which enabled different organizations to lead as the group shifted focus to different priorities and advocacy issues. Other funder collaboratives have adopted a one-vote policy allowing all funders, regardless of the size of their grant or their power, to have the same influence in decision making.

While some may avoid addressing power dynamics for fear of damaging relationships, those hard conversations actually build trust. Delving into conversations about power dynamics requires vulnerability and risk taking, ultimately helping build intimacy, grow trust, and strengthen relationships. While these methods do not eliminate funder-to-grantee or funder-to-funder power dynamics, and they certainly don't remove systemic race and gender power dynamics, they do invite conversations that can create greater trust and more productive working relationships, precisely because they allow for an explicit acknowledgment of the power dynamics that are present.

CULTURE IS A JOURNEY

Creating a change-making culture isn't a onetime task. Collaboratives must continually nurture their culture, intentionally modeling the behaviors they value, giving new members of the collaborative the opportunity to shape the culture, and developing mechanisms to recognize situations when the culture is not being upheld, discuss them safely, and move to resolve tensions.

A collaborative's culture will be tested as it responds to new dynamics, evolves its strategies, and engages new stakeholders. In our work with collaboratives, we've found it helpful to deliberately revisit the culture as often as every three years, to ensure that it is leading to the collaborative's desired results. As Kelly Giordano, managing director of Newman's Own Foundation, says, "Collaboration is a process, not a static state."

As for Ortiz and the Arizona Early Childhood Alliance, the culture-building process has proved fruitful. As of this writing, the collaborative has 75 members representing 40 organizations. It recently hosted an early childhood advocacy day at the state Legislature, successfully preserving funding for the Move On When Reading program, which resulted in a $20 million funding increase as well as increases to childcare assistance and other human services programs. It has also designed recommendations for the Arizona Department of Economic Security to improve the reauthorized Child Care and Development Block Grant and developed an indicator and goal for Expect More, Arizona's early childhood indicator tool that establishes statewide, mutually agreed-upon measures of educational progress.

The alliance has also confronted and eased challenges. Just this year, the group faced confusion about the roles and responsibilities of task force and subcommittee participants. However, the cultural norms established by the group helped them follow a clear decision-making process, resolve the confusion, defuse the tension, and move on productively. While the work can still be messy at times, the alliance's culture and flexible leadership structure has helped the collaborative establish a unified platform that incorporates diverse voices and drives change in Arizona's policies, programs, and services.

We all—foundations, nonprofits, governments, and corporations alike—have a role to play in creating the cultures that will facilitate the type of change we want to see in the world. If we do this well, we will have a better chance of building healthy communities and a just, equitable society.

NOTE

1 Amy Celep, Sara Brenner, and Rachel Mosher-Williams, "Internal Culture, External Impact: How a Change-Making Culture Positions Foundations to Achieve Transformational Change," *Foundation Review*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2016.

Creating a Cross Sector Leadership Network

The James Irvine Foundation's New Leadership Network provides lessons about how to foster civic innovation.

BY HEATHER MCLEOD GRANT

In 2012, the James Irvine Foundation hired Monitor Institute, where I was then employed, to research the potential for a nonprofit leadership network in California's San Joaquin Valley. The area was of particular interest to the foundation because it is rich in challenges—high unemployment and poverty, poor air and water quality, and health inequities, among others—and it has relatively few philanthropic resources with which to address these problems. In Irvine's conversations with local nonprofit grantees, the foundation had uncovered an interest in more capacity building to help nonprofit leaders tackle these challenges.

However, after our team conducted more than 50 interviews with local leaders from all sectors in Fresno County, we came to a slightly more nuanced conclusion. We realized that if Irvine only invested in local nonprofit leaders, they wouldn't actually move the needle on important issues in the community or in the region.

While local nonprofits provide a source of social innovation and deliver important front-line services, they often don't have enough power or resources to take on larger systemic issues by themselves. Specifically, we found that local business, government, and nonprofit leaders were working in silos, which kept them from tackling more complex, systemic issues. We also found that the younger generation of emerging nonprofit leaders was excluded from more powerful business and government networks in the city of Fresno, which hampered their ability to have greater impact.

Finally, the community seemed to be at an inflection point, with growing momentum for change. Under the leadership of then-Mayor Ashley Swearengin, Fresno was beginning to revitalize a destitute downtown, which had been commercially abandoned during decades of growth. Additionally, several collective impact projects had recently been launched to address cradle-to-career education and workforce development, and public health issues. Many younger people were reversing the historical brain drain by returning to the region after college to start their careers and families. And lastly, the anticipation of a new high-speed rail line coming through Fresno within a decade promised to change the calculus of housing, jobs, and transportation by more effectively linking Fresno and the Central Valley with the Los Angeles and San Francisco metropolitan regions.

Participants in the Stanislaus County New Leadership Network gathered in the Sierra Foothills in the fall of 2016.

Armed with these findings, Irvine tapped our team to design and implement a cross sector leadership network. To do so, we drew upon the most impactful elements of existing legacy programs, including the Barr Fellows in Boston and the American Leadership Forum (ALF) in Silicon Valley, and combined them with new content. The Irvine New Leadership Network, or NLN, officially launched in Fresno in spring 2013.

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS AND CHOICES

To design our network, we used what we call the I/We/It framework, which we developed by drawing on concepts pioneered by philosopher Ken Wilber of the Integral Institute. We didn't want this to become yet another leadership development program that focused only on helping individuals build their skills (the "I"); rather, we wanted it to be a *network* (the "We") of local cross-sector civic leaders who were interested in learning new approaches and collaborating to change their community (the "It"). Additionally, our theory of change posited that real impact mostly happens on the ground, in a physical place. By connecting leaders in one city and county, helping them create shared approaches to the work, building deep trust, and expanding their ability to work across boundaries, we thought we could reach critical mass.

With this framework in mind, we also wanted to integrate several important—and relatively new—approaches to social change. To that end, we drew on everything we'd learned at Monitor and elsewhere about catalyzing and developing collaborative networks, underpinned with a focus on building trusting relationships. Additionally, we approached our understanding of the local context, and the ultimate "end game" of community change, with a systems lens—seeing the larger whole and finding leverage points for intervention.

We began integrating design thinking, working with colleagues from Stanford University's d.school and others to see how this method could help simplify big problems, provide insights about

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PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF OPEN IMPACT

end users, and create a human "container" for civic innovation and community problem solving. For the most part, we set aside frameworks related to management and individual leadership development. We also approached the work with a sense of urgency. Rather than having each cohort last a year or more, our program constituted nine days of convening over six months.

Last, we designed an intentional arc of learning for participants: The first three-day convening was about understanding their local context and community through a cross-sector and systems lens. We also used that weekend to go deep very quickly: Through three-minute speeches, participants shared their personal stories and the "why I do what I do" behind their work, getting to know one another and building trust.

The second three-day session was a learning journey designed to be disruptive and encourage experimentation with new ideas. Participants traveled to either Portland, Ore., or the San Francisco Bay Area, looking externally for sources of innovation. Participants also received training in design thinking. The final three-day weekend brought it all home: These leaders began putting what they had learned into action through collaborative projects that emerged organically.

LESSONS LEARNED AND CHANGES MADE

Fresno was a pilot site, so at the end of two years and four cohorts, we stepped back, analyzed data, and reflected on what we might do differently, were we to run the program again. We had that chance when the James Irvine Foundation invested in replicating the program in another San Joaquin Valley community: Stanislaus County, about 100 miles north of Fresno. Given this opportunity, we were able to tease out our lessons learned. These lessons are as follows:

Balancing the I, We, and It | In the first program, we put more emphasis on building the network (We) and changing the larger community (It)—partly to differentiate it from other leadership programs—but we deliberately downplayed the role of individuals' own leadership. In so doing, we missed important opportunities for participants to give and receive feedback about how they "show up," and to work on attitudes or behaviors that undermine or support their own effectiveness. We learned that when these three dimensions are balanced, they work together and reinforce one other.

Adding individual coaching | As a result of the insight above, we deliberately added individual coaching to our next program, hiring certified professional coaches to give each leader at least five individual sessions. While this added to the budget, the cost wasn't significant, and it has proved to be helpful for these leaders to address their own developmental challenges.

Integrating design thinking | Originally, we only had a half-day session on design thinking. But when we realized that this training led to a number of organic projects and collaborations, we decided to integrate this topic more fully into the program. Now, we introduce it at the first weekend, have participants do empathy interviews before the second convening, do a deeper dive at Stanford's d.school during the learning journey, and have them work on projects throughout the program. We've realized that design thinking—in addition to being a great problem-solving process—can help create the "container" for civic innovation.

Addressing race, equity, and power | It may sound naïve, but in the first program, we didn't tackle issues of class, race, power, and equity head-on. Plus, while the participants we recruited were diverse (across sectors, race, gender, age, education, socioeconomic status, etc.), our initial facilitation team was all white, albeit diverse on other dimensions. The second time, we seized the opportunity to address this imbalance by deliberately recruiting people of color to our training and coaching team, and by beginning to raise conversations about equity, power, and privilege. We have made a conscious commitment to explore how these issues show up in our facilitation team and how we model vulnerability and fierceness. We're still on a learning curve, but we believe that the program is more relevant and powerful as a result.

Embed in the community | Another big shift was learning to find a community partner to act as our backbone organization, from the outset. In Fresno, there wasn't an ideal institution to play this role, and as a consequence, when the cohort program ended, it was harder to maintain momentum in the network. This time around, we partnered on the grant proposal with the Stanislaus Community Foundation, which has helped with recruiting, program logistics, network weaving, communications, and more. Not only does the partnership help build capacity, but we're hoping it helps maintain greater momentum after the program's planned cohort convenings have ended.

Recruit for attitude, not position | Lastly, when we recruited NLN participants in Fresno, we didn't really know whom we were looking for. We now know that it is better to recruit participants based on their having a civic innovation mind-set—i.e., change makers who are passionate about disrupting the status quo. Ultimately, we think there's as much or more value in finding and supporting the civic innovators in any community than in trying to change members of the established power base.

SUMMING UP

We launched the NLN in Stanislaus County in fall 2016, but we're still on a learning curve. We have just completed a summative evaluation in Fresno. Based on this evaluation data, the NLN has had real, concrete impact at all the levels of the I, We, and It:

I (Leaders) | NLN leaders in Fresno have grown because of this program and the network of relationships, developing new tools, mind sets, and connections. Many have progressed in their careers, being promoted to more important roles at larger organizations. Additionally, many have advanced in their community leadership: they have joined local boards and commissions, started new innovative initiatives, or stepped into larger community leadership roles.

We (Network) | The NLN network remains a strong core-periphery network: At least half remain actively involved with the network, while others are more on the periphery. Additionally, due to relationships created through the NLN, there has been lots of cross-fertilization, with members recruiting other members to join one another's boards and promote shared causes.

It (Community) | It's incredibly hard to move the needle on important issues, so it would be unrealistic to expect that the network would have done so in four years. However, the NLN has had measurable impact on creating innovative initiatives in the city: At one point, more than 80 collaborations were counted in the group. Additionally, members say the NLN has given a lift to collective impact initiatives; and they point to important signs of Fresno's overall progress, of which the NLN is one significant part. The program has helped build real capacity for collaboration in the community.

In reflecting on this larger, growing body of cross-sector work, it's clear that many of us are using slightly different language but effectively talking about the same thing. Regardless of what language we use, there is a real need for more of this leadership and work in the world. The issues we're facing today are complex and systemic, and can't be solved in silos, nor by our traditional, bureaucratic, centralized institutions. We need our institutions and our systems to adapt. Spearheading this charge are community-based leaders such as those in the NLN in Fresno and Stanislaus counties; they are fearlessly going where none have gone before in search of a better future for their communities and, ultimately, our nation.

PROFILE:

Hollaback Cofounder EMILY MAY

BY JEANINE BECKER

Emily May moved to New York City after college with the intent of working for social change. Initially, she focused on anti-poverty work. But it was her experience of street harassment that became the catalyst for her cofounding what is now a global nonprofit—Hollaback—which May now leads as executive director. She was with a circle of friends in 2005, all living in New York. And one after another, they shared stories of being harassed on the street. May shared her own story. One of the men in the group then said, "You live in a different city than we do."

As May explains, the man's comment opened her eyes. "He helped me understand movements to address domestic violence and workplace harassment," she says. And she realized, "If it is not okay in the home and not okay in the workplace, why is it okay on the streets?"

May resolved to change that—to bring a voice to those being harassed and to shift the perspective on street harassment. With a group of friends, she launched Hollaback, providing an online platform for women to share their stories of harassment as well as offline organizing for individual and system change.

Then, in 2012, May was in a moment of personal crisis in attempting to sustain Hollaback, and she attended the American Express Leadership Academy. Hearing the personal stories of key mentors' own struggles, combined with the community's support, empowered her to persevere to reach her vision. Now, 12 years later, what started as a small project is a global nonprofit sharing more than 5,000 stories in more than 14 languages.

May and Hollaback have created this large-scale impact—individually for the women who contribute their stories, collectively on the perception of street harassment, and systemically on the institutions that address harassment—by adhering to three key cultural values:

Focus on both individual empowerment and systemic change | The Hollaback platform enables individuals to post stories of their harassment and photos of the harasser—giving an immediate experience of agency, shifting the power dynamics of street harassment, and serving as a catalyst for behavior and system change. According to Hollaback's research, May notes, "When people tell their story, it creates a framework shift—people go into telling their story on Hollaback thinking 'This is something terrible that happened to me' but come out thinking 'Wow! This is about the messed-up world we are living in.' And as a result, [those telling their stories] are more likely to take action."

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF EMILY MAY

Hollaback is looking to change the narrative and sees storytelling as a powerful lever—particularly when paired with movement building. In this political moment, where there has been a 20 percent rise in harassment globally and a 50 percent rise in the United States since the 2016 election, there also has been a significant increase in awareness and desire to mobilize. With Site Leaders, Hollaback has a pipeline approach for engagement beyond storytelling. Its Site Leader program has trained leaders in more than 50 cities in more than 30 countries to ignite this movement—to inspire others to share their stories, to be potent allies as bystander advocates, and to create system change as community organizers.

See the complexity of identities and build a movement across differences | In the Site Leader program, new leaders are expected to lead one campaign and partner with another organization on a second. This required collaboration is purposeful, as it reflects Hollaback's values. May explains the requirement by quoting the late activist-poet Audre Lorde: "There is no such thing as a single issue movement because there is no such thing as a single issue person."

By leading one campaign and partnering on another, Hollaback leaders bridge into other movements, such as Black Lives Matter, as well as issues of deportation, ICE raids, and bullying. As May explains, all of these movements are "values aligned with our work, and we can't ask others to show up for us if we are unable to show up for others. I want our movement to be strengthened by a complex understanding of how our different identities play a role but understand ultimately we are all aligned."

Collaborate for systemic change | Site Leaders often partner with other nonprofits and activists, but as they gain momentum in their communities, they also start partnering regularly with systems, such as school districts. May is intent on effecting systemic change with partners outside of the nonprofit sector, spearheading partnerships such as online harassment training for *BuzzFeed* staff, ongoing training to New York Police Department recruits, and a training program for Lyft drivers to assist them in being effective bystander advocates.

May's furthest-reaching collaboration is just emerging; in 2013, Hollaback started a pilot project, HeartMob, whose mission is to provide a hub for the reporting of online harassment. The initiative's goal is to enable each victim to report once, enabling HeartMob to compile an aggregate picture of online harassment by a perpetrator on many different social media platforms. HeartMob launched the pilot in January 2016, and women can post their stories now, but to date, social media companies have not agreed to share the data needed to allow for robust coordination and collective action.

Undaunted, HeartMob is now partnering with a large product review and rating organization to achieve its goals. May is hopeful that together—with HeartMob providing the key metrics for effective policing of online harassment (such as how long a company takes to reply to a report of harassment) and the powerful rating platform to compel action—they can catalyze a system change in the way that social media companies address online harassment.

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The Progressive Resurgence of Federalism

With a US federal government divided and unable to address key social problems, state and local government leaders have a critical role to play in fostering local social innovation.

BY LENNY MENDONCA & LAURA D. TYSON

At the political level, the United States seems inexorably divided. There are heated ideological divisions among red and blue states; among cities, states, and the federal government; and among citizens. These divisions reflect deep fissures in underlying beliefs about the appropriate roles for the federal government and about basic standards of social justice. But are we doomed to the inevitable results of more federal gridlock? Or will state, city, and local leaders from the public and private sectors, drawing and building on the principles of federalism, step up to offset the damage by becoming more powerful cross-sector champions of social change?

Under President Trump, most federal government programs (with the notable exception of those related to the military) are on course to be slashed. But the major social and economic problems addressed by federal programs will not disappear; they will only intensify. The market alone can't solve these problems; indeed, it sometimes causes or exacerbates them. Nor can nonprofits, philanthropic organizations, or social sector organizations fulfill these public sector responsibilities, though they can play important partnership roles in researching, catalyzing, advocating, innovating, and delivering programs. Government action at the federal, state, or local level is essential in such critical areas as education, climate change, and health insurance.

The answer to a deadlocked and divided federal government is "progressive federalism"—the pursuit of progressive policy goals using the subnational governments in the US federal system.

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Laura D. Tyson *is a distinguished professor of the Graduate School and faculty director of the Institute for Business & Social Impact at the University of California, Berkeley, Haas School of Business. She chairs the Blum Center for Developing Economies Board of Trustees. Tyson served in the Clinton administration as the chair of the Council of Economic Advisers (1993-1995) and as director of the National Economic Council (1995-1996).*

This solution is embodied in the 10th Amendment: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." The Constitution explicitly recognizes the rights of individual states to function as what US Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis called "laboratories of democracy," experimenting with innovative policies without putting the rest of the country at risk.[1] And states have the authority to delegate many of their powers to cities and other local governments.

Federalism is not intrinsically conservative or progressive—yet it can be a powerful tool for progressive change now. As Heather Gerken, distinguished scholar of progressive federalism, argues, progressives can respond to President Trump and congressional gridlock by using the substantial powers of federalism both cooperatively to shape national policies, and uncooperatively to resist national policies at odds with progressive goals.[2]

THE RATIONALE FOR FEDERALISM

There are several compelling rationales for a federalist approach to policy design and delivery, and for the role of government in cross-sector efforts for social impact. The first is administrative capacity. The federal government, with three million workers and a 2016 budget of $600 billion, relies on state and local governments, with 14 million workers and combined budgets of $2.5 trillion, to administer many of our most important national policies—such as health care and education.

The second rationale is that a federalist approach can encourage the local sourcing of ideas and partnerships with nongovernmental actors. Local pilots and experimentation allow for innovation and fast pivots, enabling rapid closure of approaches that don't work and scaling up those that do. Although there are deep political disagreements on the responsibilities of government, there is strong agreement that there should be a shift from top-down programs to community-based programs and that programs should be evaluated and changed on the basis of their results.

The third rationale is that it can enable a more transparent and accountable delivery of programs and services, bolstering citizen trust in government institutions and elected officials. Even as trust in the federal government has plummeted, annual Gallup polls show that a majority of Americans trust their state governments and their local governments to handle problems.

COLLABORATIVE EXPERIMENTS, COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS

In a progressive federalist approach, the federal government can act as a venture capitalist, soliciting, supporting, and scaling innovative solutions developed by state and local governments. As a venture capitalist, the federal government has many tools at its disposal to sponsor innovation, including waivers, conditional challenge grants, pay-for-performance contracts, competitions, and prizes.

The Obama administration used all of these tools to encourage innovation and local design in the delivery of federal programs—linking billions of dollars of federal funding to programs that demonstrated success in maternal and child health, preschool and K-12 education, and skill development in colleges and work programs.

Progressive federalism has a long, rich history of successful experiments. State and local governments were leaders in establishing public primary and secondary education systems as well as state colleges and universities. Today, there are numerous examples of progressive federalism in red and blue states and localities, as governments collaborate with data-driven philanthropists such as the Laura and John Arnold Foundation and Ballmer Group and innovative nonprofits such as FUSE Corps and Social Finance.

The 2016 election year may be remembered as the year when distrust in the US federal government triggered a resurgence of populism. But it may also be remembered as the start of a new era of progressive federalism and resistance, championed by state and local governments, trusted by their citizens, and working in cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve progressive goals.

NOTES

1 US Supreme Court, *New State Ice Co. v. Liebmann*, 1932.

2 Heather K. Gerken and Joshua Revesz, "Progressive Federalism: A User's Guide, *Democracy: A Journal of Ideas*, Spring 2017, no. 44.

PROFILE:

FUSE Fellow SIOBHAN FOLEY

BY TINA BARSEGHIAN

In 2015, on the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans became the first city in the world to complete a comprehensive resilience strategy. Doing so marked the beginning of a new era for New Orleans—one in which the city is as actively engaged in its future as it is in responding to present challenges and celebrating its storied past.

As part of its strategy, New Orleans Mayor Mitchell Landrieu opened the Office of Resilience and Sustainability, and a year later, he brought in FUSE Corps Executive Fellow Siobhan Foley to develop the city's first Climate Action Strategy, working in conjunction with Deputy Mayor and Chief Resilience Officer Jeffrey Hebert and a wide range of stakeholders.

It was a critical moment for the city. By partnering in 2016 with FUSE, a fellowship program that places executive-level, entrepreneurial leaders with cities to increase capacity to work across sectors and develop actionable strategies to take on systemic challenges, New Orleans could start to make major strides toward its ambitious plan. And in July 2017, the Climate Action Strategy was officially launched.

Foley had many years of experience working on programs and educational initiatives to combat climate change in California, Oregon, and New York, and was drawn to the New Orleans fellowship because of the team's expertise in resilience, and because of Mayor Landrieu's leadership and commitment to the issue.

The strategy team's biggest challenge, at the outset, was to lay the groundwork for a holistic approach that connected systems, contextualized climate action, and focused on developing and supporting sustained community leadership. With that challenge front and center, Foley's first task was to reach out to stakeholders within local government agencies and throughout the community to glean a clear sense of the big picture. What did "climate action" mean to them? What did they know?

"Cities like New Orleans are critical in leading action against climate change, as we are a city on the frontlines of its effects," says Foley.

What did they need? Their answers would help the team identify an action plan and prioritize their activities.

Foley found that one primary message about climate adaptation in the city's overall resilience strategy had resonated: New Orleanians generally understood the importance of "living with water"—embracing the city's changing environment and adapting to effects of climate change, such as sea level rise and increased flooding. She learned, however, that they lacked a clear understanding about the critical connections between climate change and energy, transportation, and waste, and their ability to take action to help slow climate change.

A HUMAN-CENTERED APPROACH

To communicate those connections, Foley, Hebert, and other team members drafted a strategy that was clear and direct, and focused first on framing the city's challenge and current systems and resources, and then on shifting the values in the system and the behaviors they encourage, and finally on identifying specific ways that people could engage with these issues to effect change. They were intent on making sure that the strategy would use a voice and tone accessible to anyone, no matter their existing understanding of the issues. To that end, they designed easy-to-grasp, visual representations that clearly depicted risks to the city and city systems—energy, water, transportation, and waste. Their goal was for the strategy itself to be a learning tool as well as a road map for action.

"Cities like New Orleans are critical in leading action against climate change, as we are a city on the frontlines of its effects," Foley says. "And with such a rich culture and history, connecting our action on climate change to our culture is critical to our success."

To encourage behavior change, the team is partnering with local arts and culture organizations, nonprofits, and neighborhood groups to engage residents and visitors. They want to be sure that climate action and community preparedness become part of the city's cultural identity and cultural expression. To ensure that equity remains as much a focus in implementation of the strategy as it was in developing it, they have also partnered with the Greater New Orleans Foundation to engage subject-matter experts, residents, and local businesses to delve into the strategy and develop detailed approaches to achieve its goals through human-centered design workshops.

Foley, Hebert, and the team were strategic in what they prioritized. Waste represented only a small part of the city's greenhouse gas pollution, but the team's early research revealed that it was an important issue in the community. In a city known for its cocktail culture and festivals, residents and visitors alike regularly point out that glass is not recycled, food waste is not composted, and mounds of Mardi Gras beads go to landfill. The city reinstated some curbside recycling after Hurricane Katrina, and the team felt that reducing waste in the coming years would help demonstrate that every person's actions can make a difference. What's more, the mayor's office has greater control over the city's waste-disposal activities than it does, say, in effecting change in energy and transportation systems, where it relies heavily on leadership from other elected officials and agencies. This meant that decisions could be made relatively quickly, and action could soon follow.

To that end, Foley partnered with Cynthia Sylvain-Lear, the city's director of sanitation, to

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PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SIOBHAN FOLEY

engage a broad array of businesses, nonprofits, residents, and community groups to assess the barriers to and benefits of increased recycling and composting. The group is working to formulate a plan to build a better recycling ecosystem—seeking to increase participation rates along with business and job opportunities.

DIVERSE SKILLS, COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Foley's background helped shape how she approached developing and implementing the city's first climate action strategy. A key piece of the puzzle was to connect the right people to each other, to find and tell the right stories, and to build capacity in the community for the work, which is both an urgent need and a long-term endeavor. To do this, Foley first connected with her colleagues in the city's Office of Resilience and Sustainability to shape an approach for climate action that would build upon that work.

Foley used her skills and background in strategic communications, social marketing, and community education to interview a wide range of stakeholders, to convene the key stakeholders, and to make connections among their areas of focus to weave the connections and find the stories. By taking this approach, Foley was able to quickly learn about the city's energy, waste, and transit systems, and identify aspects that were less understood by stakeholders and most connected to climate-change effects. These skills also helped her develop relationships with private sector partners and work with colleagues in the city and throughout the community to build a narrative for the work and secure resources to help spark action.

Importantly, her experience and skills complemented those of her FUSE host champion Jeffrey Hebert. Hebert's knowledge of the city shaped the scope of the work, and his background in urban planning and resilience brought in the necessary expertise to connect the team to best practices in other cities and to give feedback on New Orleans' strategy, with emphasis on equity, social connection, and community activation in implementing the strategy over time.

"We are working with dozens of local companies and organizations to collect and use critical information about our energy, transportation, and waste systems, and engaging hundreds of community leaders on the issues," says Foley. "As a result, we're much better prepared to help all New Orleanians take action on our climate action goals in the coming years. I'm excited to work with FUSE and the city for a second year to get under way with implementation."

PROFILE:
Oakland Mayor LIBBY SCHAAF

BY JEANINE BECKER

Oakland, Calif., Mayor Libby Schaaf's career wound its way through multiple sectors, starting when she was an attorney at the city's largest law firm, always seeking a way to make an impact. While Schaaf worked as a litigator, she and her mother launched Oakland Cares, a volunteer program providing busy professionals with one-shot volunteer opportunities.

Then, during one of Schaaf's own volunteer experiences with Oakland Cares—tutoring children at a local school—she hit a tipping point. When Nathan, a 9-year-old boy she was tutoring, ran across the gym to greet her with a hug, she recognized that her real joy was in public service. Schaaf decided to leave the law firm to start a centralized volunteer program for the Oakland Unified School District.

When searching for her next position, Schaaf received a dream job offer to be a nonprofit program officer. At the same time, in the course of speaking to her network about her passions and interests, she became aware of another opportunity: to serve as a legislative aide to the president of the Oakland City Council, Ignacio De La Fuente.

Schaff was torn—the positions would take her down very different paths—but her love of her native Oakland and the idea of working with the City Council was just too intriguing. In addition, the job would utilize what she enjoyed most about her legal background: the ability to analyze and craft policy solutions.

So Schaaf made the pivot into government work. "What I love about the government is that you have both the privilege and the responsibility to look at the bigness, the comprehensiveness, and the interconnectivity of all of the issues that you care about. It's hard sometimes because you have to make the tough choices, you have to analyze the trade-offs, but it also is very empowering because most problems are complicated, and they involve many levers in order to make meaningful change."

Schaaf committed to the public sector, successfully running for Oakland City Council in 2010, and then in 2014 being elected as Oakland's 50th mayor. With her election, many people approached Schaaf with their personal vision and their particular program for her to champion.

Oakland School Superintendent Antwan Wilson described his vision for more and bigger college scholarships and persistent support based on Future Centers, an in-school program pioneered in Denver, offering students guidance through the college application and financial aid process, and access to scholarship opportunities.

School Board and City Council members approached Schaaf as well, proposing to replicate a kindergarten-to-college initiative with roots in San Francisco that encourages college aspirations, removes barriers to saving for college, and starts family savings earlier by providing every child in kindergarten a savings account with $50. (While the city sponsors the initial contribution, local businesses, corporate and philanthropic foundations, and individuals provide additional funds and matching incentives for increased savings.)

The Walter & Elise Haas Fund proposed a Brilliant Baby program offering combined financial support and coaching for families with babies born into poverty.

LAUNCHING OAKLAND PROMISE

And then, as Schaaf puts it, "it suddenly came to me: All of these individual good ideas were components of a comprehensive great idea."

With that realization, the bold vision for Oakland Promise was born. Launched in 2016, the comprehensive initiative aims to triple the number of college graduates from Oakland within the next decade by offering an interrelated series of programs that provide students

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and families with critical support from cradle to career.

As Schaaf notes, the need was clear, and she was positioned to convene and catalyze the collaboration needed to realize the bold vision:

> I love, in particular, local government. I always say we fly at the right altitude because we live in the communities that we serve. We're closer to the people whose lives we're impacting, and so our decisions are informed every day by what we see and feel and touch in the communities that we represent. Right now, my ninth-grade class of public school students have only been getting 10 percent of that cohort through a college education by the time they're 24. In this economy, that is unacceptable. It's shameful. You cannot tell me that 90 percent of my children are not brilliant and talented and have incredible contributions to make to this region. I see this as my life's work; this is the thing I am most passionate about.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS DUFFEY

Oakland Promise incorporates four initiatives spanning the period between the beginning of life and a successful launch after high school: Brilliant Baby combines college savings accounts seeded with $500 and financial coaching for parents; Kindergarten to College combines a $100 college scholarship, savings incentives, and activities to instill a college-bound mind-set; Future Centers provides consistent support for a career and college plan, college applications, scholarships, and internships; and College Scholarships & College Completion offers financial support to address the cost barrier to attending college.

Early results of Oakland Promise are encouraging: Already, 700 former Oakland students and program participants are in college. Here are three insights from the program:

Embrace the bigness and the complexity | Often, complex coalitions with many different players representing different stakeholders have difficulty moving from concept to action. But Oakland Promise has built a robust coalition in a short period of time; every single elected official in Oakland has endorsed the initiative.

"We're never going to cure unjust inequities if the people who have suffered from that system aren't at the table crafting the solution," says Schaaf.

"I believe that often we fail because we aren't ambitious enough," says Schaaf. "I certainly have gotten some hesitation from folks because they worry that this is too much to succeed at, but most people actually see that you can't be successful unless you truly take on the complexity and the comprehensiveness of what needs to be done to produce different outcomes."

Leverage the power of combining grass tops and grassroots | The "secret sauce" behind Oakland Promise's success is the combination of grass tops and grassroots, says Schaaf. At the grass tops, the steering committee is composed of institutions, donors, and top public officials, including the mayor, the executive director of the Oakland Public Education Fund, and the executive director of the East Bay College Fund.

The initiative engages the grassroots in two ways: as a connector and catalyst for existing implementation partners in the nonprofit and government sectors; and by organizing its own eyes and ears on the ground through the Oakland Promise Ambassador Program.

Design with the community, and set the context for local leadership and innovation | The reasons for grassroots engagement are clear to the mayor. "The fact that we don't have all the talent and passion and capabilities at the table to advance the society means that we all lose. We're never going to cure unjust inequities if the people who have suffered from that system aren't at the table crafting the solution," says Schaaf. With that commitment, Mayor Schaaf and the Oakland Promise team engage the Ambassadors as on-the-ground "truth tellers" who provide valuable feedback on the impact and communication efforts of the initiative.

Oakland Promise and its Kindergarten to College Program are about more than scholarships and savings accounts and even system changes. They are also about changing a belief that college is not within reach. It's why each of the 16 participating schools has a team: the principal, a kindergarten teacher, a parent, and a community member tasked with devising its own college-going culture and supported by city-wide convenings, an ongoing learning community and partnerships with veteran schools. The bottom line is this: The local schools are determining their own path for creating a college-going culture.

That local initiative is creating results. Schaaf recalls the day she visited an elementary school for a bike-to-school day unrelated to Oakland Promise. (At this particular school 90 percent of the students speak a language other than English at home.) In a school district where in the past only 10 percent of students would be expected to complete college, and where one of her own staff members didn't hear the word "college" as a student in the district, it was notable that as Schaaf walked into the building, she was mobbed by kindergarten students saying, "Mayor Libby, Mayor Libby, come take a picture with us in front of our K-to-college bulletin board!"

Presidio Institute

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