Energizing Rural Entrepreneurial Communities

Cue Slide

Philanthropy Southwest

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Energizing Rural Entrepreneurial Communities
Philanthropy Southwest

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Kick Off Exercise

Two Questions...

1. What kind of philanthropic organization are you?

2. Why are you in this workshop or what do you hope to learn?
Today’s Workshop

Part 1
Understanding Rural Communities

Part 2
Strategic Grant Making Implications

Part 3
Some Illustrations from the Field
Part 1
Understanding Rural Communities
Defining Rural?

- Metro – Non-Metro
- Metro – Micro – Rural
- At Least 3 Rurals...
  - Urbanizing
  - Stable for Now
  - Remote Rural and Challenged

- Defining Community?
  - County – City – School – Area
Drivers of Change?

- Urbanization
- Natural Resource Extraction
- Agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Tourism
- Second Homes
- Transportation Corridors
- Aging & Depopulation
- Diversifying
Considerations When Working with Rural

• Scale Issue
  – Low Density
  – High Cost

• Capacity Issue
  *Eroded capacity has been the price paid because of chronic and severe decline.*

• Trust & Challenge Community Intuitions

• Avoid the Triage Trap
Brain Drain Challenged

A quick review of the literature on rural American (or core city neighborhoods) will surface the “brain drain” concept.

Research actually shows that these places are not losing the “best and brightest” but their risk takers or their entrepreneurial talent. This trend is a bigger threat.
Rural Community MO...

- Rising Low Wealth Households
- Eroding Middle Wealth Households
- Small & Stagnate High Wealth Households
- Owner Disconnecting from the Community
If Small & Remote Rural...

Often Very Slow Change...
*Death by a Thousand Cuts*

Loss of Young & Aging Residents

**Depopulation**

Hopelessness – Paralysis – Conflict

Yet New Residents
If Urban Adjacent...

Growth can often be dramatic
Rapid change is hitting the community

Devolution as a Low Income or Working Poor Neighborhood

Population Growth

Emerging Acreages or Suburb

Social Fabric Change & Disruption
Fractured Landscape...

Multiple Players...
- Chamber Development Corp.
- City
- County
- Main Street
- Tourism
- School
- Non-Profits
- Community College

There are multiple plays engaged in the development of the community.

This infrastructure if over-organized and under-resourced.

Typically there is limited staff with high turnover and too little training.

Volunteers care, but are overwhelmed, thin in numbers and often untrained.
Hansford County, Texas

- 2010 Population – 5,913
- Three Towns: Spearman – Gruver - Morse
- 42 Registered Non-Profits
- Plus Non-Profit Equivalents: Government – Schools – Faith

**Over 100 Organizations**

Most are totally volunteer and operate on a shoestring budget. They play important roles but struggle to stay active and current.
But....

No Community is Destined to Die
No Community is Guaranteed to Exist

There are Champions

There is Love of Hometown

There is History, Culture and Opportunity

Any Rural Community Can Become a CAN DO Community
Attributes of a Can Do Community

- There is Hope
- There is Leadership
- Folks Work Together
- People Engage
- There is Knowledge
- There is a Vision
- Development is Occurring
- They are Entrepreneurial
Questions and Discussion...
Your Reality Exercise...

Take a few moments to collect your thoughts.

Focus on your rural community experiences and the challenges and positives you have encountered in working with these communities.

Share back and let’s have a conversation.
Part 2
Strategic Grant Making Implications
What is an Entrepreneurial Community?

• Has a Vision
• Investing in its Future
• Prosperous
• Thriving with Change

But at a Minimum...

• Demographic Renewal
• Economic Opportunity
Keys to Becoming an E Community

Business

Civic

Social
Strategic Grant Making Considerations

What Kind of Funder Are You?

• *Periodic or Strategic?*

• *Capacity Building Partner?*

• *Project or Program Funder?*

Do No Harm Ethic

How can giving a community funding do harm? Actually, how you fund in rural communities can build their capacity or divert and erode their ability to find their optimal solutions.
Building Capacity Process

- Resident Engagement
- Opportunity Assessment
- Community Readiness
- Community Engagement
- Implementation
- Learning Celebration
- Solution Finding
- Strategy Tactics
- Community Mobilization
- Action Planning

Community Capacity Building
As a funder it may not be your mission to build capacity in rural communities but you want to fund in rural places.

Recognizing potentially weak rural community capacity, you may want to consider finding capable partners who already have deep relationships with rural communities you want to serve.

A Story from the Turner Foundation
Working Well with Rural Communities

- Commitment
- Knowledge
- Relationships
- Right Staffing
- It Will Cost More
- Expect Some Failure
- Be Creative

*Partners & Donors?*
Questions and Discussion...
Part 3
Some Illustrations from the Field
Our Work So Far...

- Arizona Community Foundation
- Telluride
- Communities Unlimited
- East Texas
Amarillo Area Foundation

Community Development Philanthropy Initiative

• Texas Panhandle
• Amarillo – Rural Communities
• Harrington Challenge
• Community Affiliate Program

Prosperity Initiative

• Increase Economic Success
• Working Low Income and Poor
Communities Unlimited

COMMUNITIES
...Unlimited

About CU...

• Large & High Performing CDFI
• Serves the Mid-South
• Connect to Urban & Rural Places
• Focused on Economic Opportunity
  – Business Development
  – Infrastructure Development
• Committed to Prosperity

Partner Candidate
Community Foundation of Western Nevada

Rural Communities Strategy

- Based in Reno
- Supported Statewide TOW
- Working to Serve Rural
- Wanting an Affiliates Program
- Test – Deep Community Interest
- Partnering with USDA Rural Dev.
- Funding Challenges
Telluride Foundation

Paradox Trust

• Telluride & Other Communities
• Southwestern Colorado
• Unique Affiliate Strategy
• Resource Wealth

Business Accelerator

• Entrepreneur Development
• Innovative Model
• Diversify the Resort Economy
Rural Community Initiative

- West Texas South Plains
- Lubbock – Rural Communities
- Community Affiliate Program
- Community Conversations
- Community Capacity Building Vision
- Funding Challenges
- Working Low Income and Poor
Questions and Discussion...
This book explores America’s community transfer of wealth opportunity, this idea of community development philanthropy and how philanthropy can help your community prosper.

Workshop Resources

- Slide Presentation
- Our TOW Book
- Community Leadership & Change
- Leaders are Key
- Rural Development Guide
- Overview of Economic Development
- Organizing for Action Guide
- Jeff Yost Article
- USDA RD Report

If you share your email address we will make these resources available to you free of charge via a web portal/
Questions and Discussion...
Center Resources
New Book

Contents...
Case for Entrepreneurs
Entrepreneurial Community
Action Framework
Working with Entrepreneurs
Guiding & Tracking Progress

Paper & E Book
11 Packages available already!

Resources:

• Guides
• Tools
• Protocols
• Training Webinars
• Exercises & Illustrations
• Videos, Stories & More
Website & Newsletters

www.energizingentrepreneurs.org

Check out our resource-packed website with free resources and guidance to compensated resources. Also... sign up to receive our recently streamlined electronic newsletter for free.
Other Center Resources & Partners

NEW GENERATION PARTNERSHIPS

e2 SM

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PHILANTHROPY Transfer of Wealth

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE Community Strategies Group

Center for Rural Entrepreneurship energizing entrepreneurial communities

A partnership working to advance Community Development Philanthropy
To Learn More About:

Working in Rural
Growing Entrepreneurial Communities

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www.energizingentrepreneurs.org