

Overview of Pikes Peak United Way's Work with the Harwood Institute March 2014

Efforts to "Turn Outward":

Pikes Peak United Way has conducted more than 40 community conversations in an effort to turn outward and listen to the community's ASPIRATIONS as well as CONCERNS. Each conversation involved 8-12 people and took place from August 2013 until now. We made an effort to reflect the diversity of our community. These conversations reflect qualitative information which supplements the quantitative data gathered in the 2013 Quality of Life Indicators Report.

Question #1: What are YOUR aspirations for your community?

We identified three major community conditions that need to be strengthened to support change:

- People want to live in a connected community with a diversity of cultures, lifestyles and careers but with much more collaboration and engagement. CONNECTIVITY.
- People want a community where there is trust and respect for everyone, with less focus on personal agendas and more on the community's interests. TRUST.
- People say that the identity of the community is important and that they want to live in a welcoming, innovative, and lively community where people stay or come back to raise their families. COMMUNITY IDENTITY.

Six major themes emerged as issues/areas of concern:

- People want JOBS at all levels of the community. But its not just about creating jobs, people talk about the need for WORKFORCE EDUCATION/TRAINING, and pipelines of opportunity.
- People say that kids need opportunities to safely try new things so they can grow/develop into productive and engaged young people and leaders. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT.
- People said that there is a need for more affordable and permanent HOUSING for people of all income-levels. There is especially the need to have housing and/or shelter for HOMELESS individuals and families.
- People said that access to quality MENTAL HEALTH care would help individuals but also strengthen families, schools, and whole neighborhoods.

- People talked about the need for TRANSPORTATION to get them to jobs, services and bring people together. They see its availability and access as an opportunity to strengthen the economy of the whole region.
- People want SAFE neighborhoods where children, seniors, families and individuals can feel secure and healthy as they come and go to work, school, or engage with friends and community opportunities.

Question #2: Which of these themes interest YOU? Share those community narratives.

Next Steps

- Sharing to see if what's been heard - reflects what others are hearing or experiencing (that's why this meeting is being had)
- Continuing discussions organized by PPUW around what we're learning from what we've heard
- Identifying community success stories to highlight existing progress as well as potential partnerships for addressing issues/conditions
- Gathering at community-wide lunch with Rich Harwood (founder of Harwood Institute) who will talk what he's hearing nationally and how some communities are "Reclaiming Main Street". Also there will be an afternoon Aspirations to Action workshop. (May 1, 2014 – lunch at 11:30am and workshop at 1:15pm – both at the Pinery on the Hill)
- Establishing task forces around 1-3 issues/conditions to set community goals and metrics (June 2014)

Question #3: How and where do you see YOURSELF and your organization in the next steps?

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