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0006TC

Cross-Sector Collaboration

Five Cases

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12 for Life

JAN W. RIVKIN AND SUSIE MA

Introduction

The 12 for Life program was a partnership between wire and cable maker Southwire and the public school district of Carroll County, Georgia. The program centered on a dedicated factory staffed entirely by high school students who were at risk of dropping out of school. Students attended classes in the morning and worked a shift for pay in the afternoon. Launched in 2007, the program had, by 2018, dramatically improved the graduation rate among the county's most at-risk students.

Southwire and Carroll County, Georgia

Founded in 1950 in Carroll County, Southwire was one of the world's leading wire and cable manufacturers by 2018. One in three homes in the United States contained the company's wire, and half of the wire produced worldwide was made using a proprietary Southwire method.[1] Southwire employed 7,500 people internationally and had annual revenues of $5.5 billion.[2]

The company invested in the local community: it had, for example, endowed a nearby business school and created a volunteer program that helped with disaster relief, fundraising, and community beautification.[3] Stu Thorn, Southwire CEO from 2001 to 2015, described the company's approach: "First, we do things that are local. Second, we give money to causes where we can also give our talent. Third, there needs to be some benefit back to Southwire; that's what makes an effort sustainable."[4]

Southwire was one of the largest employers in Carroll County, which had a population of 117,000 and a median household income 12 percent below the Georgia average and 22 percent below the U.S. average. The Carroll County school system served 14,800 students across 500 mostly rural square miles.[5]

12 for Life's Origins and Structure

By the early 2000s, Thorn and Southwire's human resources head Mike Wiggins realized they had a problem. With increasing complexity in its factories, the company required that new hires have at least a high school diploma. But nearly one-third of Carroll County high school students dropped out. Worried about the future of their workforce, Thorn and Wiggins approached the school district with an offer to help. The offer eventually became a proposal to staff a factory with high school students.

The idea met with initial skepticism from both Southwire's board and school system leaders. The company's board worried about everything from exploiting child labor to possible student injuries.[6]

This case was developed from published sources and draws heavily on Jan W. Rivkin and Ryan Lee, "Southwire and 12 For Life: Scaling Up? (A)" HBS No. 714-434 (Boston: Harvard Business Publishing, 2015). Written for the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative, a collaboration between Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard Business School, and Bloomberg Philanthropies, it is to be used solely as the basis for class discussion. It is not intended to serve as an endorsement, source of primary data, or illustration of effective or ineffective management. Copyright © 2019, 2024 President and Fellows of Harvard College. (Revised 10/2024.) Attribution-noncommercial-noderivatives. creative commons

Then-Carroll County Schools Superintendent John Zauner was enthusiastic, but he faced resistance from school system officials concerned about scheduling, transportation, and state regulations.[7]

Despite these doubts, the partnership plowed ahead. Instead of putting students in the same factory as their full-time workforce, Southwire purchased a separate building in Carrollton and outfitted it with the machinery it used in its other factories, with some safety modifications.[8] The company paid for student wages, capital improvements, facilities, utilities, maintenance, and the salaries of ten Southwire supervisors.[9] Southwire invested $2.4 million in the building and another $700,000 to build classrooms onsite, including a science and computer lab.[10] The school system paid for an administrator and six educators to staff the program and covered student transportation and classroom equipment.[11]

To qualify for 12 for Life, students had to be at least sixteen years old and be selected by the school district based on student interest, parental approval, financial need, failing grades, and poor attendance. Southwire's only requirement was that participants pass a drug screening.

Each day, students took classes for four hours and worked for four hours at the factory. Student work included cutting wire from industrial-sized reels for consumer purposes and packaging that wire for shipment to hardware stores. Southwire leaders and schoolteachers jointly managed the factories. In 2015, students were paid $8 per hour and were eligible to earn bonuses of $0.50 per hour for perfect attendance and $0.50 per hour for successfully making production targets.[12] The U.S. minimum wage in 2015 was $7.25 per hour.[13] Students who missed class were ineligible for work that day.[14]

Southwire helped design the students' curriculum to include lessons in electricity and the properties of electric cable.[15] Students also took life-skills classes on budgeting, taxes, and mortgages.[16]

The first class of sixty-nine students started in January 2007.[17] In 2009, 12 for Life launched a program at another Southwire factory location in Florence, Alabama, in partnership with Florence City Schools.[18] Within five years, the program had 205 students in Carrollton and eighty students in Florence.[19]

12 for Life's Results

When 12 for Life was launched in 2007, the high school graduation rate in Carroll County was 55 percent among economically disadvantaged students like those participating in the program.[20] In 2013, 78 percent of 12 for Life students graduated, with 40 percent going on to postsecondary education.[21] Between 2007 and 2013, the overall high school graduation rate in Carroll County jumped from 67 percent to 77 percent.[22] The high school graduation rate in Georgia was 72 percent compared to a national graduation rate of 81 percent in 2013.[23]

The program was not only good for the students, but the students were also good for the company. Southwire found that 12 for Life students were 30-40 percent more productive than their adult counterparts working 12-hour shifts. Matt Plemmons, 12 for Life plant manager from 2008 to 2012, said, "When we opened, we felt 12 for Life would be a win-win if we broke even after five years. In

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fact, three months after opening we were already making money."[24] In 2014, the 12 for Life plant in Carrollton created $1.7 million in pre-tax profit, which the company reinvested in the program.[25]

Since the start of the program, 50 of the 12 for Life's graduates went on to work for Southwire after graduating from high school.[26] Ashley Jordan, a 2009 graduate, worked first as an intern at Southwire, then full-time, and eventually was promoted to a supervisory position in 2013. She spoke about the impact of 12 for Life: "During my early high school years, I was about to give up. I was a young mom with no plans, no goals, and no foreseeable future ahead of me. Through Southwire, 12 for Life, and the vision of Stu Thorn and so many others at Southwire with the same passion to provide opportunities for people like me, I have developed a really strong drive for success."[27]

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Golden Triangle Development LINK

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Introduction

Between 2003 and 2018, a group of leaders in the Golden Triangle region of rural Mississippi—leaders from government, business, the nonprofit sector, and education—took a generations-long downward economic spiral in their region and turned it into an advanced manufacturing boom. Anchoring the turnaround was an economic development partnership named the Golden Triangle Development LINK (LINK). By building and touting the region's labor pool, infrastructure, and tailored workforce development programs, LINK attracted $5.9 billion in investment from manufacturers of steel, aircraft, tires, and other products and created 6,000 local jobs.[1]

The Golden Triangle

The Golden Triangle region covered nearly 15,000 square miles in northern Mississippi. It comprised Lowndes, Oktibbeha, and Clay counties, whose major cities—Columbus, Starkville, and West Point, respectively—formed the triangle's corners. The region's population was 125,000 in 2003, when a predecessor to LINK was formed.[2] At the time, median annual household income in Mississippi was $32,000, the lowest of any state in the U.S., and 18 percent of the population lived below the poverty line.[3]

The Golden Triangle had a labor pool of 500,000 within a 60-mile radius. Only 6.6 percent of workers in Mississippi were represented by unions, compared to the national average of 14 percent.[4] Multiple modes of transportation served the area. The region had been home to factories that produced sleds, bacon, cement, and even marble headstones in the mid-20th century, but a series of factory closures started in 1980, with some companies moving their operations overseas.[5] Between 1993 and 2003, the Golden Triangle lost 40 percent of its manufacturing jobs.[6]

LINK's Origins and Structure

LINK grew out of a series of expanding partnerships. In 2001, Lowndes County and its county seat, Columbus, created the Columbus Lowndes Economic Development Authority to foster economic growth and retain businesses. In 2003, the group merged with the local chamber of commerce to pool resources, forming CLD-LINK. They hired Joe Max Higgins, an economic development professional working in Arkansas, to head up CLD-LINK. When Higgins started, the mayor of Columbus told him he would be a success if he could get the town a new movie theater.[7] Higgins, an energetic individual whose email signature included his motto, "Live every second like your a** is on fire," had greater ambitions.[8]

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LINK was funded by The Trust, a private investment organization of eighty area businesses that paid a minimum of $1,000 a year to support LINK's initiatives. Each of the three counties also contributed $350,000 annually to LINK.[9] These combined resources gave LINK an annual budget of $2.5 million.[10] Higgins and his staff of five all worked on economic development for the region.[11] The organization was governed by an executive committee whose members represented each county and a board of directors composed of business leaders and county officials.[12]

LINK's Efforts and Results

LINK's efforts to attract advanced manufacturers to the Golden Triangle were distinguished in a few ways: by rapid and aggressive pursuit of large manufacturers; by efforts to certify the infrastructure in the region; by creative use of economic development incentives, especially those offered by the state of Mississippi; and by collaborative efforts to develop the local workforce.

In 2004, the federal government's Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) aimed to identify and designate potential "megasites"—properties with at least 1,000 acres within the seven southern states of the TVA's geographic reach that could support large-scale development. Applying to be a megasite was challenging. Higgins recalled: "All the candidate regions were asked to provide simulations of how they would handle major new investments, and to provide specs on every economic, infrastructure, labor-market, and environmental consequence of economic growth."[13]

Higgins and his team pulled together one of only two successful bids for megasites that year. Winning a TVA megasite certification for a large site near the regional airport made Lowndes County more attractive to potential investors because it signaled that the site had infrastructure, environmental clearances, soil testing, and permits ready to go for buildout.[14] LINK acted as a broker and mediator for manufacturers interested in the megasite, responding to their needs by developing financial incentives and worker training.

In 2005, steelmaker SeverCorr, which later became Severstal, broke ground on an $880 million steel mill on the megasite.[15] CLD-LINK helped secure the Severstal deal with a package of $100 million in incentives in the form of state and local grants, infrastructure loans, and tax credits.[16]

In 2006, CLD-LINK won megasite status for a second site near the first one in Lowndes County. The next year, PACCAR, a heavy truck manufacturer, chose this location for its first U.S. engine factory—a $400 million investment in a 435,000 square-foot facility.[17]

By 2012, Lowndes County's neighbors showed interest in CLD-LINK's model. Officials from Clay and Oktibbeha counties came knocking on Higgins' door and joined the partnership that year. The new, larger organization became a regional economic development entity called the Golden Triangle Development LINK. The partnership soon paid off. In 2015, Yokohama Tires opened a $300 million, one-million-square-foot tire plant in Clay County.[18] A third megasite was certified in Lowndes County in 2016 but had no tenants as of 2018.[19]

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Workforce development

The manufacturers in the Golden Triangle needed specially trained workforces to run their heavily-automated, high-tech factories. LINK worked closely with the nearby Center for Manufacturing Technology Education (CMTE) at Eastern Mississippi Community College (EMCC) to meet the manufacturers' specific needs. When Severstal opened its plant in 2007, CMTE made sure local workers had the appropriate training and lined up 10,000 people for the first 600 jobs.[20] The average salary for a worker at Severstal was $80,000 annually.

CMTE then expanded its role, partnering with manufacturers to help local workers qualify for jobs and help manufacturers fill open positions. For example, PACCAR plant manager Lance Walters and vice president of EMCC's workforce and community development Raj Shaunak formed a relationship that eventually led to a customized workforce training program at CMTE.[21] PACCAR donated two engines for students to work on.[22] Based on this success, LINK pitched EMCC as a workforce development incubator for manufacturers considering a move to the Golden Triangle.

In 2016, EMCC broke ground on a new facility for CMTE, named the "Communiversity" because it aimed to bring together the community and college. The $42 million 145,000-square-foot building would be open to area manufacturers to train employees and new hires.[23] The Communiversity was located next to the Lowndes County megasites and was scheduled to open in early 2019.[24]

Although LINK brought 6,000 new jobs to the region, an estimated 12,000 jobs had been lost since the 1990s.[25] Higgins explained: "This is a two-step forward, one-step back business. Everybody says if all these jobs have been created, how come the unemployment hasn't gone down? Well, because Sara Lee closed during that time. Artech, Flexible Flyer, the freezer company. All those companies closed, so when we create 500 Yokohama jobs, that doesn't replace all those jobs we lost. When we get Yokohama to 1,000 jobs it still doesn't replace them, when we get them to 2,000 it still doesn't replace them. But if we weren't doing that, this would be an awful bad place to be."[26]

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The Itasca Project

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Introduction

The Itasca Project brought together business, nonprofit, and state and local government leaders in the Twin Cities—Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota—to work on civic initiatives. The Project had no office, no formal charter, and very few staff members. Yet it produced real results in the region.

The Twin Cities

Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota combined to form one of the twenty largest metropolitan areas in the U.S., with a 2018 population of about 3.6 million. The Twin Cities had the lowest unemployment rate in the U.S., at just 2.6 percent.[1] The region was home to many corporate headquarters, including Target, 3M, General Mills, and fourteen other Fortune 500 companies.[2] Median household income in the area topped $70,000, about 27 percent above the U.S. average.[3] About 75 percent of the Twin Cities population was white,[4] but this was changing rapidly as minority populations grew much faster than the white population.[5]

Itasca's Origins and Structure

In the 1950s and 1960s, executives from many of the Twin Cities' largest firms regularly gathered at Itasca State Park in northern Minnesota for conversations about the most pressing issues facing the region.[6] This model of engagement worked to keep the Twin Cities' economy competitive through much of the 20th century.[7] By the 1990s, however, negative economic indicators began to emerge. As two former chairs of the Itasca Project wrote, "Between 1990 and 1999, Minnesota's share of the nation's initial public offerings and venture-capital investment fell. We began losing the battle for emerging high-technology businesses and slipped as a hub for research and development."[8]

Concerned business leaders soon convened local meetings. Consultants from the Twin Cities office of McKinsey conducted interviews to identify problems a new civic group could tackle and methods that group should use.[9] The consultants recommended that the organization should be led by the business community, be open to the perspectives of all stakeholders, and have a long-term outlook.[10] In September 2003, the new organization, now named the Itasca Project, held its first meeting. Attendees included the governor of Minnesota, the mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul, many CEOs and other business leaders, and university and hospital presidents.[11]

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Sizing up its domain, the group saw "education, jobs, and transportation as a triangle with socioeconomic disparities in the center, influenced by the other three."[12] As a result, the Itasca Project spent much of its time and resources on the three corners of this triangle. The group strove to be nonpartisan and to base recommendations and analysis on hard data from interviews and surveys.[13] "Because every recommendation is firmly grounded in fact," they noted, "this approach underpins our credibility with partners and the broader community. They know that Itasca is—to the greatest extent possible—objective, nonpartisan, and driven only by the desire to improve our community."[14]

Since its founding, the group had grown to include more than seventy regular members; new members joined only by invitation. One member served as the group's chair. A fourteen-member Working Team met for breakfast every Friday in a conference room at Minneapolis's McKinsey office.[15] Two consultants and an executive assistant, seconded by McKinsey, managed the group's research and logistics.[16] The rest of the group was divided into working groups and task forces focused on projects or issues. The group assembled yearly to set its annual budget. "We collectively spend some two hours each year worrying about funding," the group noted.[17] Member companies received invoices that they could opt to pay to fund activities.[18] The Itasca Project's members limited participation to top decision makers in the region. They noted, "We are all principals with decision-making authority, sitting in meetings as equal participants with equal voices."[19]

Itasca's Effort

Soon after its founding, the Itasca Project set about selecting issues to focus on. See Appendix for a complete list of the group's priorities over time. The following efforts are representative.

Inequality
An early project focused on socioeconomic inequality: Itasca contributed to a study by two nonprofit foundations. The resulting report, issued in 2005, pointed to disparities in educational attainment, household incomes, and commutes between white residents and people of color. The group wrote, "We can't claim to have solved the disparities issue. But it is now squarely at the center of all conversations about what kind of community people want the Twin Cities to be."[20]

Infrastructure
In 2007, a major bridge over the Mississippi River in Minneapolis collapsed, killing thirteen people and injuring 145.[21] The tragedy highlighted the issue of transportation and infrastructure that the Itasca Project was already working on. The next year, the Minnesota state legislature passed an increase to the state gas tax to fund infrastructure improvements. The state governor vetoed the bill. In response, the members of the Itasca Project called legislators, arguing that the infrastructure bill was necessary to keep businesses competitive in the region. Ultimately, the state legislature overturned the governor's veto and raised the state's gas tax.[22]

Economic development
A 2010 Itasca Project task force report on attracting investment and job growth recommended the creation of a new independent entity for regional economic development. In October 2011, the group created Greater MSP (MSP = Minneapolis-St. Paul). Greater MSP was completely independent of the Itasca Project, although a large share of its $4 million annual budget came from Itasca Project

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members. Greater MSP was tasked with attracting U.S. and international companies to set up shop in the Twin Cities region.[23] Within just a year, Greater MSP was able to bring more than 4,800 jobs and $450 million in capital expenditures to the region.[24]

Higher education

A project that began in 2011 focused on higher education, research, and innovation. Though the Twin Cities region was dotted with major corporations and research universities, the Itasca Project found little coordination or cooperation among researchers. In response, the group launched a task force co-chaired by the CEO of 3M and the president of the University of Minnesota. The task force's 2011 report, Higher Education: Partnerships for Prosperity, recommended improved collaboration among all parties. In 2014, the Itasca Project co-funded and co-launched a new nonprofit, Real Time Talent, that aimed to improve collaboration and help universities better align their offerings to match the talent needs of the local business community.[25]

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Appendix

The Itasca Project's Priorities Over Time

- Building a Strong University-Business Partnership (2004)
- Growing Minnesota (2004)
- Improving Early Childhood Education (2005)
- Mind the Gap/Close the Gap (2005)
- Setting Regional Performance Indicators (2007)
- Creating Minnesota's Future: World Class Schools, World Class Jobs (2008)
- Generating Quality Job Growth (2009)
- Calculating the ROI of Transit Investment (2010-2012)
- Improving Higher Education (2011-2012)
- Aligning Education and Training with Employers' Workforce Needs (2013-2015)
- Closing Socioeconomic Employment Gaps (2015-2016 and ongoing)
- Measuring Regional Progress (2014-present)
- Career and College Readiness (2015-present)

Source: The Itasca Project, "Priorities," https://www.theitascaproject.com/priorities.html, accessed September 2018.

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One Fund Boston

JAN W. RIVKIN AND MICHAEL NORRIS

Introduction

In April 2013, two explosions at the finish line of the Boston Marathon killed three people and injured hundreds more. Established within hours of the attacks, the One Fund Boston would go on to raise more than $80 million from private citizens, philanthropies, and corporations around the world, distribute every cent of the donations to those affected by the tragedy, and close itself down in late 2014.

The 2013 Boston Marathon Bombing

The 117th running of the Boston Marathon took place on April 15, 2013, with more than 23,000 runners participating.[1] At 2:50 p.m., more than two hours after the elite runners had finished the race, two homemade bombs were detonated near the marathon's finish line on Boylston Street in downtown Boston.[2] Three people died at the scene; 264 were injured in the blasts.[3] Investigators moved quickly to identify those who had carried out the terrorist attack and within days announced the names of two brothers as suspects. In the early hours of April 19, the suspects murdered a campus police officer at MIT and attempted to flee in a stolen vehicle. The brothers confronted police in nearby Watertown, Massachusetts and engaged in a firefight. One was killed by police. The other was captured and later tried and convicted for his role in the bombing.

Origins and Structure of the One Fund Boston

Immediately after the attack, Boston Mayor Tom Menino and Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick took control of the local response. While investigators at the local, state, and federal level worked to identify the attackers and first responders treated the wounded, the politicians and their staffers moved quickly to begin the healing and recovery process for the City and region. They knew that members of the public would want to respond by donating time and money to help with the recovery.[4] Menino and Patrick advocated for the creation of a single entity—a new, freestanding fund—to handle all fundraising in response to the bombings.[5] This was in contrast to the typical response to prior tragedies, which relied on existing organizations to raise and disperse funds independently. (In Boston, a natural candidate would have been the Boston Foundation.) Menino and Patrick believed that a single entity—the One Fund, as it came to be called—would prevent problems with coordination, dilution of impact, and potential fraud that had arisen in other circumstances.[6]

They also knew that they had to move quickly. Mitch Weiss, Menino's chief of staff at the time, started the process by registering a PayPal account so that the One Fund could immediately begin accepting donations.[7] Menino and Patrick placed calls to the leaders of some of Boston's largest businesses to

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get them on board immediately. Leaders from the John Hancock insurance company, the marathon's biggest sponsor, began coordinating the response.[8] Hill Holliday, the large, Boston-based advertising firm, designed a logo for the organization that was modeled on a marathon runner's race bib.[9] A Boston-based partner of the law firm Goodwin Procter filed paperwork to incorporate the organization and register it as a 501(c)3 nonprofit.[10] The president of Bank of America's Massachusetts office set up a bank account for the One Fund.[11] By 5:00 p.m. on April 16, just over twenty-four hours after the bombs exploded, the Mayor and Governor held a joint press conference announcing the creation of the One Fund.[12] Weiss later wrote, "The One Fund Boston team knew that there was a limited window before the generosity flowing in from all corners of the globe would be directed elsewhere because of another attack or natural disaster. That's why it was so important that the organization was up and running the day after the attacks, why it was better to start on PayPal than not at all."[13]

At the April 16 news conference, the Mayor and Governor also announced that Kenneth Feinberg would serve as the administrator of the One Fund.[14] Feinberg had served in a similar capacity after the September 11 terrorist attacks, the 2010 BP oil spill, the 2012 Aurora, Colorado movie theater shooting, and many other events in which money donated to charities had to be distributed to victims.[15] The Mayor, Governor, Feinberg, and many others presented a unified voice in promoting the One Fund as the single place where members of the public could donate money.

Donations poured in. John Hancock set the tone of corporate giving with a $1 million donation on day one. Other Boston businesses followed suit, including Bain Capital, Liberty Mutual, the Boston Red Sox and Celtics, and the New England Patriots.[16] Dunkin' Donuts and Citizens Bank each gave $100,000.[17] By April 25, the One Fund had raised $23 million;[18] one month later, it was up to $30 million,[19] and by late June, it hit $60 million.[20] Weiss noted that the large, early donations were important: "Had John Hancock donated $100,000 instead of $1 million to establish the fund, One Fund Boston probably would have raised one-tenth as much money."[21]

The One Fund was agnostic as to the source of donations. Large corporate gifts and small donations from the public made up the bulk of donations, but partnerships also led to large donations. A benefit concert held on May 30 raised $2 million; the concert was televised a month later to raise even more money.[22] Sales of One Fund t-shirts and other merchandise also contributed to the fundraising efforts.[23]

In order to ensure that all donations went to those affected by the bombing, everyone connected to the One Fund worked pro bono, including the organization's board of directors, lawyers, tax professionals, and the former chief operating officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, who oversaw payment processing.[24]

In May 2013, the One Fund ran into a snag. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) was delaying approval of the One Fund's 501(c)3 tax-exempt charitable organization application. The One Fund planned to distribute money to the bombing victims and their families based on the severity of the injuries suffered in the attack, with no regard to financial need.[25] This plan ran counter to IRS regulations. IRS rules governing the workings of charitable organizations specializing in providing relief to the victims of disasters stipulated that the organization had to means-test recipients before they could determine financial awards. Similar charities set up in the wake of attacks or natural disasters had to put in place

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systems to means-test claimants before awarding money.[26] The One Fund feared that it would have to create an administrative organization and hire accountants and auditors before it could begin distributing money.

The One Fund's pro bono lawyers soon found a creative and novel workaround.[27] Because the One Fund had been "providing the infrastructure to coordinate the collection, administration, and distribution of the substantial funds raised, [and] providing a single vehicle to receive these funds thereby avoiding the misdirection of donations to fraudulent organizations, [and] acting as a central resource to those affected by the tragic events," the organization's lawyers could legitimately claim that the One Fund was providing essential government services, which would qualify it for an exemption from the IRS requirement to means-test applicants.[28] Menino signed off on this approach—described by Weiss as "hacking the bureaucracy"—and the IRS soon approved the One Fund's 501(c)3 application without the need to means-test fund recipients.[29]

Results of the One Fund Boston

As the One Fund collected money, Feinberg was tasked with deciding what to do with it. He turned to the community for input. By far the most popular suggestion for the money was to distribute it immediately to individuals affected by the bombing.[30]

By early May, 2013, Feinberg released a preliminary methodology for distributing funds, what he described as "rough justice."[31] Fund claimants would be divided into categories based on the severity of their injuries—two people who required double amputations and families of the individuals who were killed would receive the most money; the fourteen who had a single limb amputated were in category two with smaller awards; those who were hospitalized overnight were put in category three.[32] This categorization scheme was discussed at town hall meetings at the Boston Public Library and was published online and in local newspapers. Feedback was requested from the entire community and was solicited from those who would be eligible to make awards claims. As a result of the feedback, Feinberg added a fourth category: people who were injured and received treatment from medical professionals but did not require an overnight hospital stay.[33]

By the end of June 2013, the One Fund made its first distribution of $60 million—all the money that had been raised up to that point.[34] A second distribution came in January 2014, and a third in September 2014. Ultimately, $80 million was distributed to the victims of the bombing.[35] Once all funds had been distributed, the One Fund stopped accepting donations and shut itself down.

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StrivePartnership

JAN W. RIVKIN AND SUSIE MA

Introduction

Launched in 2006, the StrivePartnership (Strive) pioneered an innovative approach to supporting children in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area from "cradle to career"—from early childhood through their education to a successful career. Strive did not provide services to kids directly. Rather, it helped the community develop a shared vision for student success, connected that vision to measurable goals, set up a system for collecting metrics, encouraged data-based decision making, and steered resources toward service providers that delivered on the community's goals. By 2016 (the time of the latest available data), 80 percent of the data points that Strive captured to measure student progress were on the rise.[1]

Cincinnati

When Strive was started in 2006, the Cincinnati metro area had a population of 2.1 million in southern Ohio and—just across the Ohio River—northern Kentucky.2 Poverty impinged on the area from both the urban core of Cincinnati and the rural areas of nearby Appalachia. Annual median household income in Cincinnati was $52,500,[3] compared to a national median household income of $57,500.[4]

Strive's Origins and Structure

In 2006, scores of nonprofit and government groups in the Cincinnati region were working to help children succeed, and the area had a number of deep-pocketed corporations and foundations to fund these efforts. Yet, community leaders were frustrated by their inability to improve students' educational performance.[5] The problem, some community leaders believed, lay in poor civic coordination. Strive's founding executive director, Jeff Edmonson, explained: "The community was program rich but system poor. For years, there were numerous programs designed to increase student achievement, but no underlying structure to combine resources and improve effectiveness."[6]

With an eye toward creating such a structure, the president of the University of Cincinnati and the chief executive of KnowledgeWorks, the City's largest education-focused foundation, assembled a coalition to launch Strive.[7] Founding members included the presidents of three local universities, the superintendents of the school districts in Cincinnati and the Kentucky cities of Covington and Newport, business leaders, civic and nonprofit leaders, and parents.[8]

This core group of community leaders researched how to increase student achievement and developed a "Student Roadmap to Success" with checkpoints along a child's path from birth to adulthood to track progress. Creating the roadmap took several years as the coalition worked to define common goals and

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determine the best path forward based on their research.[9] The members learned to compromise and trust each other as they "decided to abandon their individual agendas in favor of a collective approach to improving student achievement."[10]

Members agreed on six outcomes for student success on their roadmap: kindergarten readiness, early-grade reading, middle-grade math, college or career readiness, college or career persistence, and career pursuits.[11] Importantly, the founding coalition decided that Strive itself would offer no services to children. Rather, it would be what came to be called a "backbone organization": it would aim to coordinate the activities of other direct service providers with just a small staff. Staffers included an executive director, data analysts, facilitators, and support staff. KnowledgeWorks funded Strive's staff budget of $500,000.[12]

Eventually, more than 300 community organizations joined the network that Strive coordinated. Organizations that provided services to students—one observer noted—were "grouped into fifteen different Student Success Networks (SSNs) by type of activity, such as early childhood education or tutoring. Each SSN [met] with coaches and facilitators for two hours every two weeks for . . . three years, developing shared performance indicators, discussing their progress, and most important, learning from each other and aligning their efforts to support each other."[13]

From the outset, Strive utilized student data—collected from its partner organizations, state achievement tests, and local and state departments of education—to help members make informed decisions and create consistent reporting measures across all initiatives.

Business support was critical to Strive's success. Early in the partnership, for instance, leaders from a local unit of General Electric (GE) trained participants on using GE's Six Sigma framework to define a common agenda, shared measures, and a plan of action.[14] GE adapted Six Sigma for nonprofit purposes and conducted training on it for several years before developing a toolkit for Strive to use with its partners.[15]

One of Strive's first efforts in 2008 used the breadth of resources within the network to connect struggling students in Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) with appropriate outside services. CPS teachers regularly monitored students' academic progress, behavior, attendance, and special services at select schools.[16] When teachers determined a student needed support outside of school, such as mentoring or tutoring, they tapped into the Strive network to provide it.[17] This model resulted in a collaboration among Strive, CPS, and Microsoft (who helped at the request of its client, Cincinnati-based Proctor & Gamble)[18] to build an online tool that public school systems used to match students with services.[19]

The Strive network also banded together to advocate for policy changes. For example, the United Way of Cincinnati, CPS, Strive, and other organizations partnered to build voter support for a levy to strengthen K-12 education and expand access to preschool.[20] The five-year, $48 million levy passed in 2016.[21]

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Strive's Results

Between 2014 and 2016 (the most recent data available), Strive reported a number of positive trends:

- CPS student kindergarten readiness increased from 44 percent of students to 55 percent.[22]
- CPS fourth grade reading scores went from 55 percent proficient to 76 percent proficient.[23]
- CPS ACT scores rose from 18.1 to 19.1 (out of a total possible score of 36).[24]
- Postsecondary enrollment among graduates of the school system in Newport went from 46 percent of students to 58 percent.[25]
- Northern Kentucky University college retention rates increased from 59 percent to 73 percent.[26]
- The University of Cincinnati increased its six-year graduation rate from 47 percent to 54 percent.[27]

The success of Strive led to the creation in 2011 of an umbrella organization called StriveTogether, to help communities across the country replicate the model. In 2018, StriveTogether's network included backbone organizations in seventy communities, each modeled after the original Strive in Cincinnati. The national network engaged more than 10,000 service providers, school districts, local governments, businesses investors, and civic organizations and touched 10.4 million students.[28]

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