

FAMILY LEADERSHIP TRAINING INSTITUTE LARIMER COUNTY // STATEWIDE

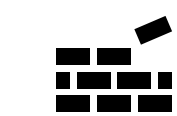


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COMMUNITY DRIVEN CHANGE

Historic models of community change were steered primarily by legislators and formal community leaders. However, the last two decades have identified neighborhoods, communities, and informal leaders as the critical changemakers.

Community-driven approaches to change are integral. Research shows:

-  They are more effective in making lasting progress
-  They are more inclusive and egalitarian, therefore more democratic
-  Capacity for community-driven change correlates with more resilience and responsiveness to disruptions and challenges

CSU Extension supports efforts related to community driven change and civic capacity through numerous avenues, including:

- **Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI)** – A 20-week program that equips community members with leadership, civic engagement, and policy skills to enact local and statewide change.
 - **Civic Capacity Index (CCI)**– A research based measure of a community’s ability to respond to challenges and disruptions. The CCI includes domains such as leadership, coalitions, inclusion, institutions, & civic culture. CCI evaluation is the first step in a larger transformative process.
- Both programs increase the inclusion of traditionally underrepresented voices to create healthier, more inclusive communities and systems.

INTERNSHIP GOALS & APPLICATION

- (1) Increase knowledge of community-driven change and civic capacity and its relation to the creation of more equitable systems.
- (2) Engage community partners in the process of civic capacity evaluation, stakeholder engagement, and community conversation to facilitate transformational change.
- (3) Communicate effectively regarding the work of CSU Extension, the CCI, and the value of community-driven change, targeting an increased integration of civic building and community engagement practices in community partnerships.
- (4) Center the social work values of social justice, dignity, and the importance of human relationships in a macro-level practice setting.

INTERNSHIP SCOPE

The Civic Capacity Index: A Tool for Community Transformation



Intern duties centered on the engagement of community partners, creation of communication materials, and supporting the development of new FLTI curriculum and training.

Internship successes included:

- Identification of **strategic CCI partners**, with a focus on increasing **representation of diverse stakeholders**.
- Utilization of CCI results as a starting point for **community conversation and intervention**.
- Creation of the “Implementing the Civic Capacity Index Guide” to **increase the accessibility of CCI utilization**.
- Participation in the **Larimer Recovery Collaborative’s** unified community engagement process.
- Updated **FLTI curriculum** and supported planning of the **Site Coordinators’ training**.
- Co-authorship of the **final report for the City of Fort Collins’ Home2Health project**.

“There is a difference in between having a voice and having a voice with teeth, which means that you are the voice-active. So in voice with teeth, an authority if going to respect your preference, and act upon that instead of saying: ‘Nice, but we cannot do it.’” – Walter Flores, Executive Director Center for the Study of Equity and Governance in Health Systems, Guatemala

How do you **INVITE** diverse community voices?



How do you **LISTEN** to the voices?

To what extent do community voices **INFLUENCE** policy, programs, and procedures?

How does community voice get to **EXERCISE** leadership?



KEY LEARNINGS

-  **“Policy is made by the people that show up.”**
 - Substantial **barriers exist to representative participation** in community arenas. This weakens our communities and leads to **less socially just outcomes**.
 - You **don’t need to be an expert** to show up.
-  **Community engagement requires more than an invitation.**
 - It requires critical identification and mitigation of **systemic barriers** to participation.
 - Equity practices might include **language justice**, use of **cultural brokers**, providing civic and leadership skills training, **compensation** for experts by experience, providing **childcare** or meals, selecting **community-based locations**, and **collective accountability**.
-  **Listening to community voice vs. “giving it teeth”**
 - While many communities are increasing avenues for **feedback**, this does not necessarily result in **community-driven change**.

Civic Capacity and COVID-19 Recovery



Colorado communities that scored higher on domains of community-driven leadership had better COVID-19 outcomes.

- Communities with higher levels of leadership, inclusion, social cohesion, and community resilience had **lower death rates**.
- Communities with higher levels of social control, social cohesion, and community resilience had **lower COVID-19 case rates**.

NEXT STEPS

- (1) Increase personal engagement in arenas of community change through attending city council meetings, joining boards, and speaking at community listening events.
- (2) Integrate practices of community-driven change and barrier reduction into my concentration year internship and future social work practice.

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