Authentic Community Engagement
A More Effective Strategy

Smart Suite Summit September 2016
How Do You Define Community Engagement?
Introduction

Jenna Meglen – Project Director Berea Site, Partners for Education at Berea College

Donna Griffin – Mantua Project Director

LeVar Michael – Program Officer LISC Safety
Takeaway & Outcomes....

- Clear definition of authentic Community Engagement
- Types of community engagement and their effectiveness
- Best practices and effective principles
- Solutions to overcoming obstacles
Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation

- A Placed-based, comprehensive public safety initiative which seek to identify and address drivers of crime in order to build sustainable communities of opportunity.
  - Data Driven – Researched Informed
  - Cross-sector Partnerships
  - Revitalization
  - Community Engagement

- Over 60 BCJI sites are located throughout the country
Authentic Community Engagement:

Consistent and persistent engagement with an entire community for the purpose of establishing a foundation of partnership, trust and empowerment.

- You MUST view engagement as the emergence of a new paradigm – no more business as usual - this should be a “transformative process”

- **Empowerment = Capacity Building**
  Creating opportunities for community members to obtain ownership, power and authority over their own collective destiny by working with neighbors as decision makers to improve their community

- **Partnership**
  Working in tandem with community members and stakeholders to accomplish joint objectives of community revitalization
Authentic Community Engagement:

- It’s not just about listening to people, it’s about *hearing people* and *valuing what you hear*

- Cultivating Community Buy-in

  When the community endorses or supports an initiative and views themselves as a stakeholder in the process, buy-in has taken place.
Understanding Engagement:

Symbolic Engagement
Engagement which is designed to serve a purpose other than building relations, establishing trust, and empowering residents

Perfunctory Engagement
A modest form of engagement which engages a small fragment of the community residents to serve as representatives of the entire community

Effective or Authentic Engagement Produces:
- Strong Social Cohesion and Collective Efficacy
- Builds Community Capacity
- Strengthens Institutional Legitimacy & Trust
Berea Site: Southeastern KY Promise Zone

- Partners for Education (PFE) at Berea College
  - Serving 26 counties, 33 districts
  - More than 16 grant initiatives
- Southeastern Kentucky Promise Zone
- Includes eight counties (highlighted in yellow)
- PFE – Educational partner
- New target area – Bell, Clay and Harlan counties
Collective Impact – Berea Style

- Starting at the top and funneling down to individual communities and residents
  - Partners for Education’s presence and current partnerships
  - Promise Zone Advisory Board
  - Individual counties
  - Individuals towns/communities
  - Organizations with the communities
  - Community residents in each community

**the foundation of getting buy-in, building capacity, collective efficacy and empowering a community**
Authentic Engagement in Rural KY

◦ Two Cultural Researchers
  ◦ Over 45 one on one interviews and 5 focus groups with youth and service providers

◦ Storytelling
  ◦ Community
  ◦ Engagement
  ◦ Collaboration

◦ Building off current relationships and partnerships
  ◦ Being introduced to community members by community members/residents
  ◦ One on one meetings

◦ Group meetings/”get togethers”
  ◦ Meeting folks where they are at
  ◦ Having no agenda

◦ Regional and local organizations
  ◦ Understanding of culture
  ◦ Well known and respected in communities

◦ Examples:
  ◦ Law enforcement
  ◦ School districts
  ◦ Faith based organizations
  ◦ Community residents
Communities taking Charge

- County listening sessions
  - Facilitate the sessions
  - Community voice

- Leadership Team in each county
  - Cross sector partnership team
  - Meet at least once a month
  - “This is our town, we will work together as one to plant and grow our backyard.”

**Community has obtained ownership and are fully on board with working together to reduce youths’ involvement in crime and risky behaviors.
We Are Mantua!

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Consult the community as a part of a process to build community awareness
- Involve the community to ensure that issues, concerns and priorities are understood
- Include community in the planning and strategy development, mobilizing public support
- Strengthen skills to lead and own efforts to transform Mantua
We Are Mantua!

BYRNE CRIMINAL JUSTICE INNOVATION PUBLIC SAFETY INITIATIVE

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AT ALL STAGES IN SIGNIFICANT ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY CHANGE EFFORTS

✓ Consult
✓ Involve
✓ Mobilize Support
✓ Implement Solutions

PRESENTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAINING THAT STRENGTHEN PARTICIPANTS SKILLS AND CAPACITY TO LEAD and OWN EFFORTS

✓ Block Leaders
✓ Civic Leadership
✓ Residents
✓ Mt. Vernon Manor CDC
✓ Police
We Are Mantua!

A. Resident and community based organization representative leads committee

B. Resident and Stakeholder led public safety examples
   ✓ Bulbs Not Bullets Project
   ✓ Brandywine Park Creative Placemaking Project
   ✓ Mantua Greenway Initiative
   ✓ Mantua Urban Peace Garden
   ✓ 34\textsuperscript{th} and Haverford CPTED Project
   ✓ Equal Partners in Change Trust Building Program
We Are Mantua!

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

♦ Build Awareness ♦ Inform ♦ Confirm ♦ Engage in Strategic Planning and Implementation ♦ Strengthen ♦ Create Ownership

We Are Mantua!  WORKING TOGETHER FOR MANTUA
Community Engagement Handout

Community engagement is an ongoing process that involves people in solving problems, making decisions, determining policies, and shaping programs that affect the places where they and their families live, work, study, and play. Community engagement can take many forms and includes a broad range of activities. Below are some components for meaningful community engagement:

- Consulting the community as part of a process to develop government policy, or build community awareness and understanding.
- Involving the community through a range of mechanisms to ensure that issues and concerns are understood and considered as part of the decision-making process.
- Collaborating with the community by developing partnerships to formulate options and provide recommendations.
- The community participates at all stages and in all significant aspects of the community change effort, including planning, developing strategy, mobilizing public and political support, crafting policy, implementing solutions, and shaping programs over time.
- Presenting opportunities for training that strengthen participants’ skills and capacity to advocate for, lead, and own efforts to transform their community.

Contact: Donna Griffin • Community Engagement Consultant • 610.608.0475 • DGriffin845@gmail.com