OWL Collective: Strategic Impact

A Framework for Bringing More Household-Sustaining Careers to North Philadelphia

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORKFORCE LEADERSHIP COLLECTIVE

Temple University
Lenfest North Philadelphia Workforce Initiative

Background

The Opportunities for Workforce Leadership (OWL) Collective is a coalition of over 40 community organizations, education and workforce development providers, and employers who serve residents of 19121, 19122, 19123, 19125, 19130, 19132, 19133, and 19140. The mission of this coalition is to build stronger bridges between job seekers, workforce development providers, and employers and to improve employment outcomes for North Philadelphia residents through data-informed, strengths-based, and community-driven workforce development strategies. This coalition first convened in 2019 and is currently supported by the Lenfest North Philadelphia Workforce Initiative (LNPWI) at Temple University.

In the Fall of 2021, after two years of breaking down silos and building a foundation for collaboration, the OWL Collective sought to learn, design, and implement a collective impact initiative for North Philadelphia. The process began in Fall 2021 with the Voices Across North Philadelphia project in which OWL Collective members hosted small group conversations called "Table Talks" with North Philadelphia residents. During these Table Talks, the groups discussed how members of the OWL Collective could be more effective in supporting residents to achieve their education, employment, and personal goals. Based on these conversations, in April 2022 a Steering Committee of OWL Collective members and residents was formed to lead the creation of a collective impact based strategic plan. Upon completion of the process, the Steering Committee led the creation of a common agenda, baseline collective data, common measurements, partner efforts aligned with common measurements, and strategy for data collection.

The collective impact initiative, facilitated by Social Innovations Partners, combines a 1) Collective Impact Process that unites community partners on a common agenda, common measurements, mutually reinforcing activities, data gathering strategies and infrastructure combined and with our 2) Social Innovations Process that develops service models driven by lived experiences from your community partners (i.e., a bottom-up vs. top-down process) and developing these ideas through a human centered design and rapid prototyping process.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT MODEL: Process to meaningfully engage the community and shared communal models on Education, Workforce, and Violence

Collective Impact is "a disciplined, cross-sector approach to solving complex social and environmental issues on a large scale." Collective Impact (CI) includes five conditions which, when applied in a comprehensive way, have demonstrated remarkable effectiveness in addressing a broad range of issues. Collective Impact is also very much an evolving body of practice whose effectiveness is being accelerated as the growing number of practitioners who are now implementing it share their insights and experiences.
● Step 1: The Common Agenda: Focused on scoping, defining and affirming the common agenda for your work.
● Step 2: Shared Measurement: Explore shared measurement for your Collective Impact Initiative, and shared measurement systems to monitor and inform your strategy.

● Step 3: 100 Partners Challenge. Recruitment and onboarding of Collective Impact Partners essential to deliver upon the shared measurements.
● Step 4: Mutually Reinforcing Activities: Focused on how to align resources across the engaged partners into an initial theory of change that you and your partners believe will enable you to achieve your common agenda.
● Step 5: Backbone Organization: Identify and design a lean backbone organization to lead the collective into the future.

Collective Impact Goal 1: Build community capacity to determine the common agenda, shared measurement, partnerships, and mutually reinforcing activities which unite Lenfest North Philadelphia Workforce Initiative's community partners.

Collective Impact Goal 2: Create an iterative process that facilitates integrating and coordinating cross-sector partners to transparently work collaboratively with continual feedback by leveraging expertise and resources.

Collective Impact Goal 3: Develop a project management process that supports efficient use of time and accountability among the collective group.

SOCIAL INNOVATIONS: A process to define Workforce Development, Education, and Violence Service Models that are responsive to the people and community achieving the desired societal impact of the OWL Collective.

The Social Innovations Institute and Lab framework specifically teaches participants how to create and maintain an adaptive and generative orientation to grapple with the complex social reality that challenges our world.

Social Innovations Goal 1: Adapt existing models into innovation products or services leading toward Societal Impact within Workforce Development, Education, and Violence.

Social Innovations Goal 2: Create a culture of innovation/entrepreneurship within the OWL Collective leading to improved collaboration AND the design of new and existing service model improvements/ enhancements.

Common Agenda

The first element of collective impact, the common agenda, involves collective participants sharing a vision for change that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving the problem through agreed-upon actions.The OWL Collective Steering Committee developed their common agenda statement by working through Community Wealth Partner's Bold Goal Framework. From Community Wealth Partners, setting common agendas and bold goals have the following benefits:

• *Introduce a sense of urgency*
• *Align, inspire, and motivate internal and external stakeholders (e.g., staff, board, volunteers, partners, advocates, funders)*
• *Provide a clear bottom line against which progress can be measured*
• *Create a lens for focused decision-making and prioritization*

- *Clarify the type and scale of resources required, leading to growth in resources*
- *Promote new types of purposeful collaboration*

Independent Sector found that the most successful advocacy efforts identify "specific, ambitious long-term outcomes" and sustain focus on these outcomes over many years. Similarly, the Case Foundation engaged in research that suggests that the "most significant cultural transformations" occur when leaders set "big, hairy, audacious goals" to direct their efforts.

The OWL Collective steering committee developed seven different iterations of bold goals to drive a common agenda, and settled on the combination of two finalists to arrive at their final statement:

By 2025, the OWL Collective will increase the amount of household sustaining careers acquired by North Philadelphia residents due to an integrated service delivery system of OWL collective members, local anchor institutions, and relevant public, private, and social sector institutions.

Shared Measurement

 A key condition for collective impact is the use of a shared measurement system in which multiple organizations use a common set of measures to evaluate performance and track progress toward goals. Shared measurement systems encourage local organizations to align their efforts on shared outcomes, enable them to collectively track and evaluate their collective progress (or lack of) and offer organizations opportunities to benchmark their results against – and learn from – their peers.

The OWL Collective steering committee developed a set of **performance measures** which members of the collective impact initiative can share to measure their progress towards achieving their bold goal:

By 2025, the OWL Collective will increase the amount of household sustaining careers acquired for North Philadelphia residents due to an integrated service delivery system of OWL collective members, local anchor institutions, and relevant public, private, and social sector institutions.

The OWL Collective steering committee also developed a set of baseline **population indicators** to track how their efforts will impact the general population in their targeted zip codes surrounding Temple University's Main Campus and Health and Science Center.

Performance Measures

Total Program Participants
Education
Number of participants who advance in literacy level
Number of participants who obtained high school diploma or high school equivalency (GED or HiSET)
Number of participants who completed a job readiness training or program
Number of participants earning an industry-related certification or credential
Act 158* participants (alternative graduation pathways)
Employment
Number & percentage of participants obtaining employment
Number of job placements outside of training program
Number & percentage of participants working in job with a career focus or aligned with career objectives
Number of participants who received additional support to address a barrier to employment (i.e., assistive technology device, language support, transportation, childcare)
Increase in participant wages from placement to one-year anniversary
Number of participants entering full time employment
Number of participants entering part time employment
Number/percentage of participants who retain employment 3, 6, and 12 months (job title, wage, benefits change)
Average starting hourly wage of participants obtaining a job

Population Indicators

	OWL Focus Area 2018	OWL Focus Area 2020
Population	275,453 residents (18% of Philadelphia population)	233,402 (15% of Philadelphia population)
Median Age	30 years old	33 years old
Opportunity Youth (age 16-24)	24% of residents	29% of residents
Immigrant Population	8% of residents are foreign-born	9% of residents are foreign-born
Bilingual Population	23% of residents are bilingual	28% of residents are bilingual
Individuals with a Disability	20% population	20% of residents have at least 1 disability
Returning Citizens* ***(Source: US Census Bureau, 2015; The Re-Entry Coalition, 2015)**	23% of all returning citizens come home to North Philadelphia Approximately 2% of North Philadelphia residents were returning citizens in 2015	23% of all returning citizens come home to North Philadelphia Approximately 2% of North Philadelphia residents were returning citizens in
Veterans	4% of residents 18 and older	4% of residents 18
Educational Attainment	75% of residents 25-64 have a HS Diploma/ equivalency or higher	82% of residents 25-64 have a HS Diploma/ equivalency or higher
Labor Force Participation	52%	61%
Employment Rate	52%	55%
Unemployment Rate	12.7%	11%
Median Household Income	$25,000	$34, 960

The MIT Living Wage Calculator can be used as a population measure to determined levels of household sustaining careers based on family situation:

1 ADULT				
	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
Living Wage	$17.53	$36.94	$48.10	$62.94
Poverty Wage	$6.53	$8.80	$11.07	$13.34
Minimum Wage	$7.25	$7.25	$7.25	$7.25

2 ADULTS (BOTH WORKING)			
0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
$13.92	$20.47	$26.14	$31.49
$4.40	$5.54	$6.67	$7.81
$7.25	$7.25	$7.25	$7.25

2 ADULTS (1 WORKING)			
0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
$27.83	$34.42	$39.21	$43.39
$8.80	$11.07	$13.34	$15.61
$7.25	$7.25	$7.25	$7.25

Additional population measures identified to approximate a baseline of household sustaining careers within the zip codes of the OWL Collective geographic focus area included average commute time, displacement rate measured by increase in home values, income inequality as measured by the Gini Index, newly established businesses in the area, and insured/uninsured population.

Continuous Communication

A hallmark of collective impact, the OWL Collective has set strategic communication points with member organizations and steering committee members. The OWL Collective has also been very proactive about creating feedback loops with the local community to inform decision making during this process through a series of table talks and community surveys.

The following graphics display the strengths, gaps/unmet needs, and community recommendations that were identified by residents in the Fall 2021 Table Talk Series:

Strengths:

Strengths of North Philadelphia

North Philadelphia is full of skilled people, they just need opportunities.	Youth are an emerging part of the workforce.	There are training and certification opportunities available to North Philadelphia residents.
There are program models that actually work (like mentorship, apprenticeships, and individualized approaches).	There are employment opportunities in the city that offer living wages (although they are not always accessible to North Philadelphia residents).	North Philadelphia residents are–and always have been–deeply committed to uplifting their communities and seeing every North Philadelphia resident thrive.

Gaps/Unmet Needs:

Gaps or Unmet Needs North Philadelphia

Many workforce development programs don't match the needs and goals of North Philadelphia residents.	Non-workforce related issues (i.e. violence, childcare, housing) have a big impact on education and employment but are rarely addressed in programs.	There needs to be better outreach about existing programs.
Some programs don't have direct connections to real employment opportunities.	Lack of transparent and inclusive local hiring practices among Temple and other large employers in North Philadelphia.	Non-Profit Organizations and educational institutions have been unhelpful and harmful in the past and need to rebuild trust with communities.
	Many barriers to employment exist on a structural level and require structural change.	

Community Recommendations:

Community Recommendations for the OWL Collective

1. Real change needs real community involvement in designing and implementing solutions.
2. Community Residents need a role in updating or creating programs.
3. Organizations in the OWL Collective can share their power and influence to support resident-led change efforts.
4. Organizations need to prioritize on-the-ground outreach efforts and assess their current outreach strategies to see where they are ineffective or reinforce biases.
5. Workforce development programs should have direct pipelines to sustainable careers and empower residents to build their professional networks.
6. Workforce development programs should increasing the supportive and individualized services available.
7. Residents and Organizations can come together to advocate for policy changes.
8. Temple and other large employers in the North Philadelphia area need to invest in the future of the communities they are based in.

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Backbone Organizations

Backbone organizations serve as coordinating bodies that bring together a diversity of stakeholders and lead a synchronized effort to achieve a common goal. They share six key functions that distinguish them from other conveners. Over the lifecycle of an initiative, they: (1) guide the vision and strategy, (2) support aligned initiatives, (3) establish shared measurement practices, (4) build public will, (5) advance policy and (6) mobilize funding. Backbone organizations are a central element of the Collective Impact theory, which states that "no single policy, government department, organization or program can tackle or solve the increasingly complex social problems we face as a society."

Backbone Organizations Are Critical to Any Collective Impact Effort—And They Perform Six Major Functions

Guide Vision and Strategy	• Build a common understanding of the problem • Provide strategic guidance to develop a common agenda
Support Aligned Activities	• Convene key external stakeholders to do mutually reinforcing activities • Facilitate communication and collaboration • Catalyze or incubate new initiatives
Establish Shared Measurement Practices	• Collect, analyze, interpret, and report data • Catalyze or develop shared measurement systems • Provide technical assistance for building partners' data capacity
Build Public Will	• Build public will, consensus, and commitment • Create a sense of urgency and articulate a call to action • Support community member engagement activities
Advance Policy	• Advocate for an aligned policy agenda
Mobilize Funding	• Mobilize and align both public and private funding to support goals

Backbones must balance the tension between coordinating and maintaining accountability, while staying behind the scenes to establish collective ownership

The Steering Committee decided a backbone organization structure would be best if driven by multiple organizations in the form of a new, influential, and cross-sector steering committee. LNPWI would play the coordinating and staffing role of this steering-committee driven backbone organization.

This new senior-level committee would recruit leaders from organizations representing government, private employers, academia, and community organizations focused on increasing household-sustaining careers within the geographic focus area. The pros to this structure allow the recruitment of broad-cross sector buy-in and influence. However, accountability would be shared across multiple organizations.

Backbone Organizations Come in a Variety of Types

Types of Organizations That Could Serve as Backbones

Funders	New or Existing Non-Profits	Government Agencies and Other Intermediaries	Private Sector	Multi-Organization Initiatives

Core Requirements to be a Successful Backbone Organization*

Strong and Adaptive Leadership · Sustained Funding and Resources · Dedicated Staff

High Credibility in the Community · Ability to Be a Neutral Convener

Top 100 Partners Exercise

Name of Organization/Group
T.E.A.M. (The Empowerment Achievement Movement)
Next Level Girls Afterschool Program
Cast-offs to Conquerors
MyNEWPhilly
Blackhawks Sports League
Bringing Everyone Together (BET)
Indochinese American Council
Penrose Playground/Rec Center
Tree House Books: Advisory Board
Black Male Community Council
Children's Creations
10K Fearless In Philly
Beckette Life Center
Community Peace Pop-Up Shops
Delivery of Resources that Impact Vulnerable Environments
L.E.S.S.O.N.S. (Learning Effective Solutions Solving Ongoing Negative Situations)
Mothers Demand Action
Same Day Pay - PHS
Einstein/Jefferson Hospital
Fidelitas LLC/Right Spot LLC Workforce Development Program
Committed Community Mentors

The OWL Collective Steering Committee identified 100 Partners across sectors that could assist in meeting the household sustaining careers goal.

From Paul Born and the Tamarack Institute: "Consider the top 100 people and organizations in your community that could help you realize the change you want to see. Imagine that they were working together to change the community. This would be a dream come true for many communities. The easiest and least effective way for partnerships to emerge is to just let them happen. I am a huge believer in emergence but, given that partnerships take so much time to develop, I feel it is very important to know who you want your partners to be and to develop a strategy for building these relationships."

Because LNPWI and the OWL Collective has already built many successful partnerships and community relationships, this list was generated much more rapidly in comparison to other collective just starting this process.

The list to the left serves as a sampling of the 100 partners identified that can contribute to the common agenda and a variety of the above performance measures.

Social Innovations Lab Process

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Participants generated the following ideas to innovate on service delivery models and increase household sustaining careers in the geographic focus area:

-Use text message service to share jobs in a quicker, more timely fashion.

-Support entry-level apprenticeship to long-term employments pipeline, partnering with employers for an extended period.

-Hold "Open House" events for the whole family, where staff is available to answer questions and connect family members to resources.

-Utilize credible messengers for families experiencing violence to provide counseling and other career/training/recreational resources as a preventive intervention to increased violence in the community.

-Inject professional development opportunities within entry level jobs at companies so people can grow into positions that provide a household sustaining career.

-Conduct home-visits and offer wrap-around services, including counseling on public benefits.

-Offer stipends to incentivize neighborhood skills training classes.

-Address the "opportunity gap" by working closely with both employers and those seeking employment to ensure successful placement in and retention of high-quality jobs.

-Connect people with employment that has a career ladder and growth opportunities.

-Ensure workforce readiness through technical and life skills training, while tracking progress through an integrated service delivery system so people's progress does not get lost as they transfer between service providers.

-Develop a "Home for Measurement," a central measurement system for OWL Collective Members and employers to track program performance and to link people both to quality jobs that lead to household sustaining careers and entry level jobs that put people on the path to a successful career. Systems and policy change ideas included ensuring people don't follow off the "benefits cliff" when transitioning to employment, and better coordination among workforce programs at varying levels of government (city, state, federal).

-Provide graduates with an opportunity to "sample" multiple types of careers and provide them with the counseling and support needed to pursue an eventual pathway, instead of having graduates make a choice of a career ahead of time.

Participants also identified opportunities for systems and policies change in order to place people in household-sustaining careers, including dampening the effects of hitting a "benefits cliff" in the transition to employment and removing administrative siloes across levels of city, state, and federal government.

Recommendations to Launch a Place-Based Collective Impact Initiative:

A first overarching recommendation: consider amending the common agenda to a number of household sustaining careers created in the OWL geographic focus area, rather than "increase." Although there are ways to approximate number of household-sustaining careers, baseline number could be disputed. For example, the Good Jobs Initiative has a stated goal of "connecting 3,000 people in the region to quality, family-sustaining jobs in high demand occupations and industries."

1. Recruit a new steering committee of 5-7 leaders across public, private, social, academic, and community sectors to form a multi-organization backbone. Manage backbone coordination, data collection, and partner recruitment through LNPWI.

2. Pursue funding for collective impact efforts (sample budget attached).

3. Secure commitments from OWL Collective partners to share and submit data contributing to achieving the common agenda, bold goal, and shared performance measures. Transfer performance measures and population indicators into shared measurement software in order to track progress from OWL Collective members, like Clear Impact Scorecard: https://clearimpact.com/scorecard/

4. Interface with regional Collective Impact efforts such as The Good Jobs Initiative and Philadelphia Equity Alliance, driving performance outcomes such as quality, family-sustaining jobs in a place-based setting (OWL Geographic Focus Area).

5. Continue to cultivate strong feedback loops, participation, and ownership within the community.

6. Pursue 1-3 ideas generated from the Lab Process as a collective.

Sample Budget for Backbone Function

Expense Category	Budget Range ($)		CI Initiative Budget	Description
	Low	High		
Salaries	80,000	155,000		1 FTE Executive Director
	55,000	100,000		1 FTE Facilitator/Coordinator
	65,000	100,000		1 FTE Data/Operations Manager
	25,000	65,000		0.5-1 FTE Admin. Support
Benefits	45,000	84,000		At 20% of salaries
Professional Fees	90,000	105,000		Consultants, R&E, Recruiting, Data Collection
Travel and Meetings	7,000	30,000		Workshops, events, retreat
Community Engagement	0	35,000		Space rental, youth stipends
Communications	36,500	90,000		Reports, materials design, paid media
Technology	0	4,900		In-kind hardware, software, IT
Office	0	74,000		In-kind/paid rent, utilities, supplies
Other	0	6,500		Staff training, miscellaneous
Total Expenses	**403,500**	**849,400**		Covered by grants and fees

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