



Engage!

Grantmaking for Comprehensive Impact

Communities and organizations everywhere are searching for better ways to organize themselves effectively so they can solve community problems.

Funders and grantmakers likewise look for clear guidelines on how to best support communities and organizations in their work.

Community Visions, Community Solutions: Grantmaking for Comprehensive Impact provides guidance to these groups in an effort to improve the impact of community efforts.



Co-author of the book, Joseph A “Jay” Connor has been sharing his expertise with Vibrant Communities funders and contributors through a three part tele-learning series. Over 40 of these local and national supporters have participated in the sessions.

Jay highlighted the importance of community efforts to create systems changes in order to create larger impacts and stressed that funders need to be open to supporting these systems change rather than simply focusing on project based initiatives.

He also encourages funders to invest in the “behind-the-scenes specialists, organizations, and coaches that are necessary to sustain the effort and get results.”

Any organization, community and funder interested in improving the way they provide and receive financial support should check out Tamarack's new online seminar on Grantmaking for Comprehensive Impact.

The seminar includes audio clips from the sessions and additional resources.

 [Visit the online seminar now!](#)

Related Links:

- [The Collaboratory for Community Support](#)
- [Additional fundraising resources](#)

By: Kerrie Skillen

Can social movements make a difference?

On December 13, 2002 Quebec's provincial government passed its groundbreaking "Law Against Poverty and Social Exclusion."

The following spring a new government was elected and introduced tough measures to force social assistance recipients from welfare into work.

Québec's strong social movements, including the [Collective for a Poverty-Free Quebec](#), pushed back.



A year later the Charest government reversed course and put forward a plan for addressing poverty that even many of its critics found remarkably progressive.

Among other points, it includes income supplements for welfare recipients who participate in training or employment measures and income supports for the working poor.

The Action Plan is far from perfect and the struggle for a fully effective law against poverty continues. However, people across the country and elsewhere continue to learn from Québec's initiative.

Can social movements shape the public agenda? Can a law against poverty have a real impact?

For a review of the government's Action Plan and an interesting discussion of the role that the Collective and the law against poverty have played, see Alain Noël's paper, [*A Focus on Income Support: Implementing Quebec's Law Against Poverty and Social Exclusion.*](#)

For further background, see Bill Ninacs' paper, [*The Collective for a Poverty-Free Quebec: A Case Study.*](#)

Related Links:

- [*A Law Against Poverty: Quebec's New Approach to Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion*](#)
- [*The Collective for a Poverty-Free Quebec: Forward, backward, sideways...*](#)

By: Eric Leviten-Reid

The Transportation Gap

One of the biggest challenges in urban areas is helping people seeking good employment to connect to jobs that are increasingly located on the edges of growing regional economies in industrial parks and suburbs.

The 400,000 plus residents of Niagara region feel this "transportation gap" every day in their urban-rural area of 12 local municipalities that covers 1841 square km.

"It's ridiculous!" says Peter Papp, Program Manager of Opportunities Niagara, a local collaboration devoted to poverty reduction.

"On one side of the region, we have hundreds of people hungry for jobs. On the other, we have a booming tourism and hospitality industry that had to import workers from outside Canada last year to fill 2,000 positions, some paying \$14 to \$16/hour!"

With the encouragement of Niagara Tourism and technical support from the Public Transit Commission of Welland, Opportunities Niagara and PORT CARES, a local non-profit multi-faceted agency, have designed a pilot project to provide underemployed residents with employment, skills training and transportation to job sites, thus helping the tourism industry to address a critical skills gap.

The project reflects a strong commitment to multisectoral cooperation.

Three municipal governments will implement an affordable inter-municipal transportation system, while Niagara Tourism, an affiliate of Niagara College, will provide job skills training. The Region of Niagara's Community Services will screen potential employees from their Social Assistance caseload and will provide employment related expenses and recommendations for up to 200 positions.

In addition, a major hotel owner-operator in Niagara Falls will provide employment for trainees, contribute funds for transportation costs and implement employee retention and advancement programs.

"If this works," says Papp, "we can use the results to help shape an inter-municipal transportation policy that will significantly contribute to the region's economic development and quality of life for all residents."

Related Links:

- [Niagara's Transportation Study](#)
- [St. Louis Regional Jobs Initiative](#)

By: Mark Cabaj with Peter Papp

Reforming Labour Markets

In the spring of 2004, participants of the Sustainable Incomes Learning Initiative heard Bob Giloth, Director of the US-based Annie E. Casey Foundation's Jobs Initiative, describe a struggle he shares with those in the business of making sure that people who are willing and able to work can find a decent job.

"For many years," he reported, "we invested heavily in solid, innovative programs to link unemployed and underemployed residents to good jobs."

"These programs did deliver some good results – but not on the scale we wanted. The ambitious Jobs Initiative is designed to create the community's capacity to reform how our workforce development systems operate so we can substantially better outcomes for those that have been so long been denied good jobs."

Bob then shared some exciting examples from six American cities that are each taking a unique approach to changing their regional workforce development systems and are achieving significant outcomes.

Following Bob's presentation, people from five different communities participating in Vibrant Communities came together to explore whether there were Canadian examples of communities working to reform "workforce development" systems.

They found some!

These stories include communities assisting employers to strengthen their workplace practices, improvements in public policy, customized training initiatives and new investments into workforce development.

While the examples are simply the tip of the iceberg, they demonstrate that any community interested in achieving dramatic improvements in local unemployment and underemployment levels cannot afford to ignore a systems reform approach.

 [Striving for Impact](#)

Related Links:

- [Sustainable Incomes Learning Initiative](#)
- [Creating Change: Pushing Workforce Systems to Help Participants Achieve Economic Stability and Mobility](#)

By: Mark Cabaj

From Sweden to Canada, with love

Sweden, like Canada, has long, cold winters. In the north of Sweden, the home of the indigenous Sami, (previously known as Lapps) the culture of herding reindeer continues. In fact, the Sami share this occupation with their 'cousins' in Finland and Russia.

Although, my trips to Sweden were always during the warmer seasons, I had the opportunity to learn about and enjoy several of the many fantastic recipes the Swedes have developed using reindeer meat. Reindeer meatballs with potato puree and honey lingonberries are one of my favorites.

Since kids usually like meatballs it isn't difficult to get them involved in the preparation of this wonderful meal. On several occasions when my youngest daughter Rachel was still living at home we would make the meatballs together, usually served with salmonberries or even cranberries since lingonberries are hard to find (unless you live across the street from IKEA).

The recipe is easy and the results are delicious.

 [Download David's recipe!](#)

Related Links:

- [Soup's On! Visit our food and community page for more recipes and stories from Tamarack.](#)

By: David Pell