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The Development of a Community Based Coalition to Promote Career and College Preparation in the HOPE Village Neighborhoods of Detroit and Highland Park

Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment

Graham Institute Integrated Assessment Report Series Volume III Report 6

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The HOPE Village Initiative
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About The Reports

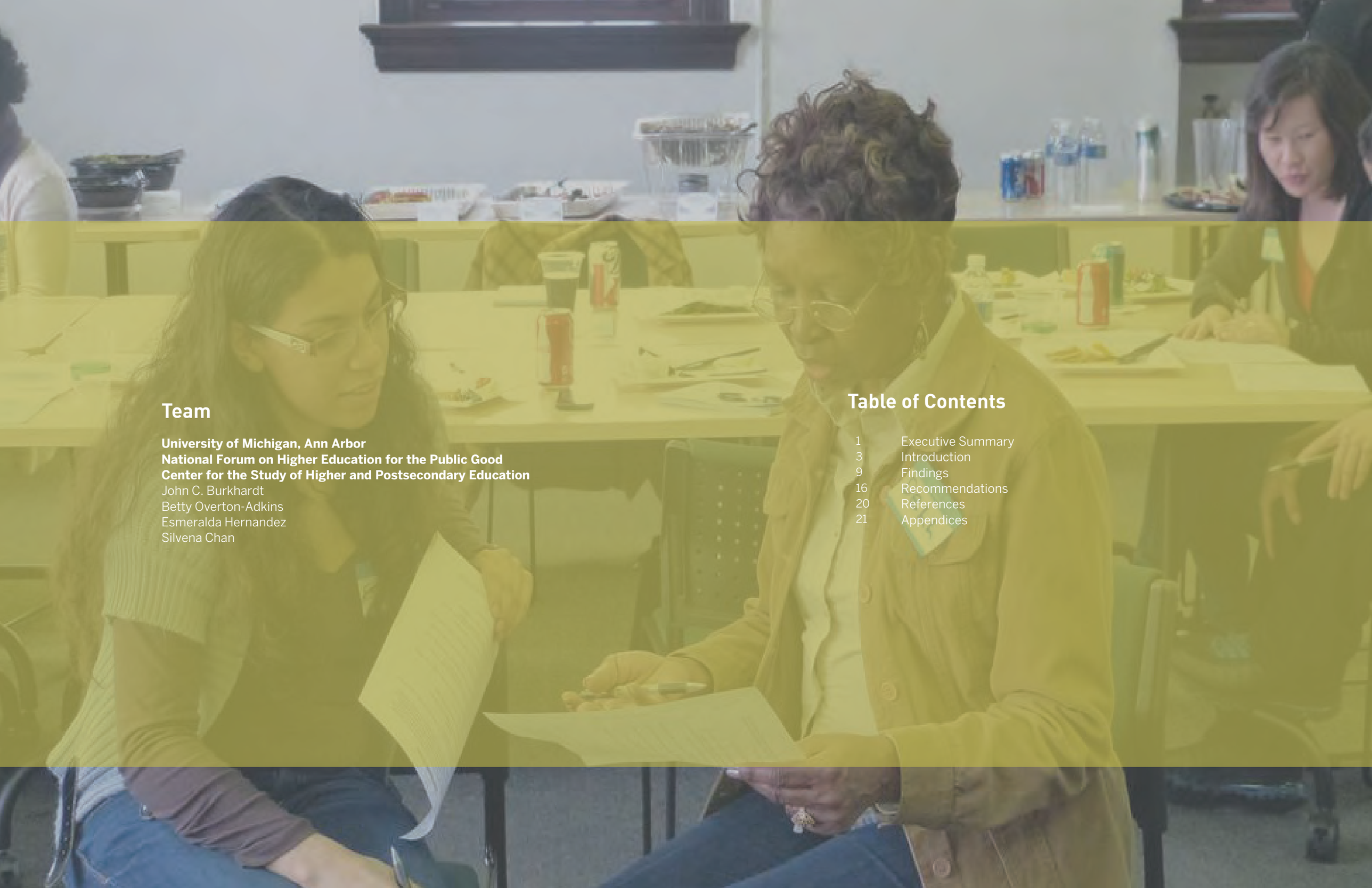
The Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment (IA) is the result of a partnership between the University of Michigan (U-M) Graham Sustainability Institute and Focus: HOPE. The IA was developed to support Focus: HOPE's comprehensive place-based effort known as the HOPE Village Initiative. The Initiative's goal: by 2031, 100% of residents living in a 100 block area surrounding the Focus: HOPE campus will be educationally well-prepared and economically self-sufficient, and living in a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.

The IA recognizes that the success of the HOPE Village Initiative is tied to sustainability factors including the physical environment, economic development, community health, and education. Through collaboration with U-M researchers, residents, and Focus: HOPE staff, the IA developed data, tools, and concepts to advance the HOPE Village Initiative. This document is one of six final project reports completed for IA.

This work was made possible with support from the Graham Sustainability Institute, Focus: HOPE, and neighborhood residents.

Reports In This Series

- Applied Research and Service by Urban Planning Students in the HOPE Village Initiative Area
- Building a Healthy Community in Detroit: Tracking the Impact of the HOPE Village Initiative Area
- Legal Issues in HOPE Village Housing Cooperative and Green Space
- Mapping Community Economies and Building Capabilities in HOPE Village
- Play & Grounds
- The Development of a Community Based Coalition to Promote Career and College Preparation in the HOPE Village Neighborhoods of Detroit and Highland Park



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Executive Summary

"These efforts would strengthen opportunities for area youth by providing information, options, resources and support to pursue higher education, career opportunities, and pathways that lead to expanded opportunities."

The National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good is honored to present this report to the Graham Institute relating to the HOPE Village Initiative (HVI).

When developing plans for our work with the HOPE Village Initiative, our team set many goals for the project. The vision of our contribution included:

- Promoting college access and educational attainment
- Researching community needs through holding dialogues focused on education
- Identifying and galvanizing support from the University of Michigan community
- Assisting the HOPE Village Initiative staff in developing a formal Local College Access Network (LCAN)
- Supporting the creation of mechanisms to develop a stronger college going culture within the community

To promote college access and educational attainment, the National Forum has contributed to the HVI through the creation of a number of project outcomes and products.
The National Forum team has researched and organized the production of a community assets

map in the form of a resource booklet. This booklet provides a listing of educational organizations within Detroit and the programs they offer which are available to residents of HOPE Village and the surrounding communities. This resource is targeted to persons working within the HVI target community and can be used by a variety of persons for information and referrals.

In addition to the assets map, the National Forum also conducted a number of Community dialogues in the spring of 2013. With a focus on education and college access, all three dialogues were designed to collect specific information that could be used in helping the community consider how it might develop specific programs (including a possible LCAN) to promote greater college access and success for its citizens.

To cultivate future student support from the University of Michigan, the National Forum has created a pre-service training presentation for those planning to work in HOPE Village or in the surrounding communities. The presentation provides information on the community with a focus on the principles of service learning.

Finally, regarding the development of an LCAN, there are several options available to HOPE Village, which we present in this report. The initial focus on creating a new LCAN has become subsumed under collaborative work in the development of a Highland Park LCAN with HOPE Village as a potential partner in this new LCAN. The goal of these combined efforts is to create a stronger college going culture in HOPE Village.

In order to capitalize upon the work that has been completed through this project, a number of next steps are identified. These recommendations will assist with maintaining and further developing a college going culture in HOPE Village. Many of the recommendations made by community members during the dialogues suggested programming for parents and students geared towards promoting a college going culture. This programming could include tutoring, mentoring, guest speakers, and college fairs all within the trusted community space of Focus: HOPE. These efforts would strengthen opportunities for area youth by providing information, options, resources and support to pursue higher education, career opportunities, and pathways that lead to expanded opportunities.

Focus: HOPE and the HOPE Village residents have the capabilities to create a thriving educational culture across the community to transform the HOPE Village neighborhood through generating in residents the hope, expectations, and knowledge to increase college attendance and success.

Introduction

"This project was built on the premise that changing the educational attainment and college-going practices within the community would have positive impacts for the community as a whole."

The National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good (National Forum), affiliated with the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education at the University of Michigan, has been actively involved in community-based research and interventions related to the challenge of building community agency in support of educational opportunity for over eight years. Based on this experience, we believe that for community building to be sustainable it must be rooted in active, authentic, and broadly endorsed community leadership and supported by widespread community input.

The National Forum has made a long-term commitment to our work of increasing college-going culture in several Detroit neighborhoods. It began in 2005 with the launch of the "Access to Democracy Project which brought together residents in five communities across the state of Michigan to deliberate issues related to the wide range of factors shaping educational attainment. The National Forum has also been involved in the formulation and sustained partnership of several Local College Access Networks (LCANs) in the Detroit community and in Jackson.[i]

i. LCANs are community-based college access alliances supported by a team of community and education leaders representing K-12, higher education, the non-profit sector, government, business, and philanthropy. The National Forum has been actively engaged in LCANs located in three neighborhoods in Detroit. However, there are as many as nine LCANs located throughout the city, all harnessing local partnerships to move towards common goals.

The National Forum is staffed primarily by doctoral and masters' students studying higher education. Our work on the HVI was led by two faculty members affiliated with the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education (CSHPE); Dr. Betty Overton-Adkins and Dr. John Burkhardt. Additionally, a doctoral student affiliated with CSHPE, Esmeralda Hernandez, managed the day-to-day operations of the project team. The project team consisted of several five CSHPE masters' students, as well as three undergraduate students at the University of Michigan, all with backgrounds and expertise in community organizing and mentorship.

The Project Premise

In today's society, education is important and some level of college attainment is becoming increasingly important to acquiring economic and social well-being in the United States. This project was built on the premise that changing the educational attainment and college-going practices within the community would have positive impacts for the community as a whole. However, building to that impact would require a number of fundamental steps:

1. Learn from the community its hopes and aspirations for its young people relative college
2. Understand and help to articulate the opportunities and barriers to obtaining these aspirations
3. Connect a network of resources to the community

In order to pursue these steps, the Forum team identified activities that would lead to specific project outcomes:

- Researching community needs through holding dialogues focused on education
- Spearheading the development of pre-service tools for those volunteers outside the HOPE Village Community to understand how they enter and support ongoing projects within the community
- Assisting the HOPE Village Initiative staff in developing a formal Local College Access Network (LCAN)
- Collecting and organizing into a useable form educational resources in the Detroit area that might directly impact the work in HOPE Village

The project worked with a basic assumption that suggests that parents (and communities) often have hopes that their children might go to college, but they have no real expectations it will happen, nor do they have realistic strategies that can see the fulfillment of their hopes.

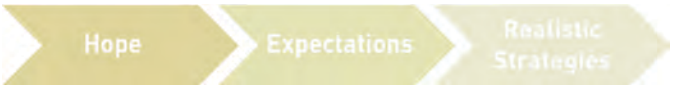

Figure 1 ***Community Agency***

The dialogic methodology used as a basis of the project was chosen to surface these assumptions and where possible help move community persons toward more knowledge-based and action-based strategies.

Developing the Dialogues

The HOPE Village community exhibits low educational attainment and parental engagement. The percent of students who have not met Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) scores in 2011 for the four elementary/middle schools in the HOPE Village area fall significantly below Michigan levels. Schools in the area often score a 2 out of 10 points possible in state evaluation scores.[1] There are no Detroit public high schools within the HOPE Village boundaries. However, the high schools that are available to students continue to perform below national and state standards. Further, many students are not graduat-

ing and not moving on to higher education. The four schools within the HOPE Village area are also finding it challenging to engage parents and begin college preparation early in students' educational paths.

While the numbers tell a certain story of the HOPE Village community, they do not tell the whole story. That is why the National Forum chose to develop a series of dialogues where the community could voice what they believe were the factors behind these stories, and more importantly, what needed to be improved or initiated within the bounds of HOPE Village to begin to see a change in the college going culture of the community.

Project Methodology

This project used Participatory Action Research (PAR) as a tool to develop a series of community dialogues. PAR is a method that involves those directly impacted by the issue to be involved the research, problem analysis, and eventually solution-making. Five HOPE Village residents were hired as community researchers and were involved in all portions of the research process along with researchers from the National Forum. Together, the conceptualization, recruitment, and analysis of the dialogues were carried out.

Researchers from the University of Michigan researchers and the community researchers trained on a specific form of dialogue and developed the particular methods that would be used to answer the questions above. The conversations with the community were based on a method of intergroup dialogue developed at the University of Michigan by Dr. Mark Chesler. Intergroup dialogue is unlike debate or deliberation. Rather, it emphasizes learning as something both the facilitators and the participants share. An important part of the dialogue is to understand that participants can have differences and similarities in experiences and perspectives and to have a shared learning experience, everyone should challenge themselves and the preconceived notions they hold in an attempt to broaden the perspectives of all participants.

The research team recruited dialogue participants from nearby schools and community events. Posters were displayed inviting community members to the dialogues and incentive strategies were discussed by the team to promote turnout for the dialogues. After several attempts, three dialogues eventually came to fruition. One dialogue had a mixture of adults and youth (youth were defined as below 21 years of age) while the other two dialogues consisted of one adult group, and one youth group. This was done intentionally to minimize power dynamics that occur between youth and adults as well as uncover any assumptions that adults had of youth and vice versa.

Keeping this method of dialogues in mind, the research team developed a guideline for the community dialogues in HOPE Village. Considering that higher education is an important subject that is highly valued and debated in many communities, the research team used several tools to create a space for a conversation in which all involved engaged in co-learning. Before the dialogues began, all participants received a sheet of guidelines for the dialogues. Guiding statements were read out loud by the participants or by the facilitators. Items on the guideline sheet included "Step up and Step Back" and "Challenge the idea not the person" along with explanations of these items. The full guideline sheet can be found in Appendix A.

As a second way to build trust and comfort among participants, the research team included an ice-breaker activity before the dialogues. Participants were paired and answered a question such as, "if you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?" Questions allowed participants to interact and engage a question that was not difficult or controversial in order to feel more comfortable when the dialogue began around a potentially divided subject

like higher education. The full list of questions can be found in Appendix B. Feeling comfortable as a community member and trusting in the process allows community members to be as honest an open about their answers as possible, and to engage with the facilitator and other participants.

Questions asked in the dialogues were open-ended and included questions such as "Do you feel you have access to higher education?", and "Is higher education important to you and your community?" The facilitator asked probing questions if they needed more clarity or detail about what a participant said. Participants were also encouraged to ask probing questions.

As an incentive for community members participating in the dialogues, each community member was provided lunch, a gift bag containing small token gifts (i.e. candles, hand soap, nutrition bars), and was provided some booklets providing tips on getting to college. Furthermore, a raffle was held at the end with prizes ranging from gift cards to a blender.

Pre-Service Training

This project was part of a focused involvement with the HOPE Village Community with a number of University of Michigan programs and departments. As such it has attracted a wide range of students and faculty. Given the number of volunteers from outside the community that work with Focus: HOPE, it is important that training is available on how to enter and benefit the ongoing work. With the guidance of community members, the Edward Ginsberg Center for Learning and Service, and prior scholarship on service learning and community building, we were able to create a pre-service training that would help students think about service to communities generally as well as think about HOPE Village specifically.

The pre-service training focuses on three main areas: the HOPE Village community, Asset-Based Community Development, and a set of service principles that all students should keep in mind when working in communities. The training is designed to take 2-4 hours and include activities and video clips to accompany the material presented (more detailed information in Appendix C). To help guide the trainer, the pre-service training will include a PowerPoint presentation and a trainer's manual.

LCAN Cost-Benefit Analysis

Should HOPE Village pursue an officially recognized Local College Access Network (LCAN)?

> *The HOPE Village Initiative aims to develop a safe, strong and nurturing neighborhood where children and their families can develop to their full potential. To accomplish that goal, we will offer an interconnected web of opportunities and support, with education at its center. We expect to build a community where people want to live, work and raise a family – and where children have every opportunity to achieve their greatest potential.*

As the National Forum and Focus: HOPE work together towards the educational goals stated in the HOPE Village Initiative's (HVI) mission, the assumption has always been that whatever actions might be taken, a coalition built on community voices would be at the forefront. The question at hand is the form that this coalition will take. Initially, the National Forum intended to contribute to this goal by assisting in the development of a local college access network (LCAN) through the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN). LCANs are "high-quality, community-based college access strategic alliances" that are "committed to building a college-going culture and dramatically increasing the college going/comple-

tion rates within their community."[2] However, several factors went into the decision not apply for an LCAN and to enter into collaborations with neighboring LCAN's instead.

In light of Focus: HOPE's existing relationship with the Central Woodward/North End LCAN in Youthville, and the new partnership with the Highland Park LCAN, it was important to consider whether creating a stand-alone LCAN serving HOPE Village would produce benefits that justify the additional hours and reporting. Additionally, there were some questions about where such an LCAN might be organized since several of the schools that serve most HOPE Village students already have LCANs. Focus: HOPE requested we prepare a cost-benefit analysis to understand the variety of options available to HOPE Village and the benefits and trade-offs associated with these options. We initially envisioned three models as representations of the possible directions that college-access-coalition-building could take. However, after further research we identified three methods that would best allow for the development of the access network, and Focus: HOPE is currently using one of those models (Model C), working with leaders from the Highland Park LCAN to bring services to the Focus: HOPE campus that will be available to youth in the area.

- Model A (HOPE Village LCAN only):
  Create a freestanding LCAN for the HOPE Village neighborhood through Focus: HOPE
- Model B (HOPE Village-CW/NE LCAN):
  Create an LCAN in partnership with the Central Woodward/North End LCAN
- Model C (CW/NE LCAN only):
  Work through Highland Park and the Central Woodward/North End LCAN to strengthen and localize services for HOPE Village

See Appendix D for more information.

Community Asset Map

In a community whose assets are being fully recognized and mobilized, these people too will be part of the action, not as clients or recipients of aid, but as full contributors to the community-building process – Kretzmann & McKnight, 1996

Remaining consistent with the idea of asset-based community development, we collected and produced an asset map detailing the educational resources in and around HOPE Village. The resources compiled go beyond the static locations of schools and libraries. They also include opportunities where residents can gain skills and services that encourage pursuit of higher education. The organizations listed range from tutoring services to financial assistance programs, mentoring programs, day camps for children, parenting classes, and religious programs. The availability of an asset map is seminal to closing the potential gap between community organizations that are looking to serve individuals, and the individuals who would take advantage of these opportunities if they were aware of them. Many times in communities it is not the case that people are not seeking help, but instead many are unaware of where they can go for help. Furthermore when the organizations are not being utilized they can potentially lose funding which will undoubtedly hurt the community.
The community asset map was made possible through the cooperation of the partners in the community. Many of them took the time to complete surveys about the programs their organizations offer, as well as the services they offer. Therefore, the Forum was able to compile the data into an excel sheet which organizes each resource according to the opportunity it provides. The "map" is intended to be used by persons in agencies, organizations and other leadership roles as a resource for information sharing and referral.

The dialogues, community asset map, pre-service training, and LCAN decisions constituted the activities that we engaged throughout the grant period. The findings for this project focus on the community dialogues, which tell us the most about the state of educational aspirations and attainment in the community.

Findings

"If we have higher expectations and believe in our children doing better, seeking better, you know that it starts there."

The three dialogues revealed community thoughts about access to higher education in HOPE Village. From the transcripts, several themes were identified throughout the dialogues. These are organized under five main categories: Purpose of higher education, barriers to higher education, parents and teachers, community as social capital, and college going expectations. We also include other observations of the dynamics within the dialogue.

Purpose of Higher Education

Participants—both youth and adult— noted several purposes of higher education, both implicitly and explicitly throughout the conversations in all dialogues. It was clear the benefits of higher education for the individual were known to all three groups. College is understood as a mechanism for students to learn new skills, gain knowledge, get a good job, or be successful. Many times these purposes were interrelated and mentioned simultaneously. The assumptions that participants held about higher education underlined many of their experiences and opinions about access and barriers in the community. One youth participant noted:

> *"Education is like future, of like knowledge. You can succeed in life."*

Later the same participant also commented,

"Higher education is important to me and my community because like, it's jobs out here but just with a high school diploma, it's not really you know, fit. You need more now, they ask for more."

In addition to skills, some participants noted that higher education was necessary to gaining access to information and knowledge that is not available to them in the Detroit schools. For example, majors in higher education or specialized vocational training are opportunities for students to practice their interests. As one participant claimed, "knowledge is power." Higher education is believed to be the key to gaining that power.

Although most agreed that higher education facilitated job seeking and skill building, not everyone believed that higher education was necessary for one to live a successful life. For youth, success was mostly defined as having a stable or large income. Any postsecondary options that led to that outcome were considered, and college was not always one of them. A few youth in particular mentioned careers that did not require credentials or degrees as alternatives to pursuing higher education and becoming successful.

"I think education is great to have. But, you don't need it to succeed in life. It is great to have though. [Facilitator: So what are other ways that people can be successful?] Well you can be an entrepreneur. Like you might need a little intelligence for that but you don't really need to go to school for that. Like, you could invent something then you can travel all over the world. Or you can be a rapper or basketball player."

Both the youth and the adults also rejected the common view of higher education as the four-year institution. Alternative higher education systems like two-year community colleges, trade schools, or certification programs were important to participants who believed some students just needed skills and credentials that would allow them to give back to their communities.

"Everybody will not go to a four-year university or a two-year community college. Some people just need to work on cars; some people need to open up a business. You know what I mean?"

Despite these alternative views, participants also believed that the purpose of higher education was not only important for the success of the individual, but also for the community. In other words, participants saw higher education as being directly related to community empowerment and growth. For example, training a community member to become a business owner in their community brings resources and social capital back to the community. Therefore, the education of an individual is important for the vitality of the community as a whole.

"Some people need to be a mechanic, because I can't always go out to the dealership…I need a mom and pop on the corner who knows just as much, don't have as much overhead, but that gives it to me two hundred dollars cheaper… who is that person? Not doctored."

The perception of the need and purpose of higher education is fundamental to the attitudes that a community has towards access to higher education. Participants believed higher education was important for the individual and the community and opposed narrowly tailored definitions of higher education and postsecondary options. The following themes provide more clarity to these perceptions.

Barriers to Higher Education

Dialogue participants suggested a multitude of barriers to access to postsecondary education in

their community. The factors noted by participants were identified at multiple levels. Understanding that there are barriers at the individual level, educational systems level, and societal level is evidence that community members understand the complexity of educational issues in general and how they affect access to higher education.

Individual Barriers

Most of the adult participants felt that many youth did not understand the importance of education. Community members believed youth in the community had a tendency towards negative activities (sex, drugs, stealing etc.). Adults associated these bad choices with the tendency to drop out and negative attitudes towards pursuing postsecondary options. The following participant highlighted perception of youth and the distractions keeping them from understanding the value of education:

> *"They feel like all they wanna know is sex, drugs, going out to the club, poppin', fighting, and hooting and hollering, and what he-said-she-said that and the fifth...Like they don't understand the actual value of knowledge."*

However, the perception of youth was not all negative. Participants attributed delinquent behavior of youth to contextual factors such as the schools and the environments in which youth are growing up. One participant also voiced how role models can have a negative influence on youth:

> *"Eight year old breaking into a house here and there, and they looking up to the wrong people. Ain't no telling how or what level they stopping school. They feel like they should go that way instead of getting an education on" (italics added).*

Further, a participant shared a personal experience to illustrate that youth can very often be misunderstood.

> *"As a child I wasn't very aggressive or negative, but I was very adventurous and it was misunderstood for 'oh, he's bad, he doesn't listen'. I turned out to understand the work. A lot of times, it was no problem for me to actually grasp it. [I] kind of got bored of it and would just go do something else."*

The perceptions that adults have of the youth in the area were mixed. However, there was agreement that many other factors were involved in shaping individual aspirations and access. Many of these factors involved schools, which are spaces youth tend to spend a majority of their time.

School Barriers

Participants expressed an overall dissatisfaction with the school system that was serving the youth in their community. For many, the dissatisfaction was with what students were learning and how it was being taught to them. Participants perceived schools as teaching students concepts that did not apply to their backgrounds or appeal to student interests. For example, a teacher in the community who was participating in the dialogues noted that the texts students had to read in schools did not necessarily cater to the personal histories of the students. Furthermore, most participants agreed that the standardized instruction being provided to their children did not create an environment that catered to their interests. As illustrated by the personal experience in the last quote, participants were concerned that youth were bored in school. Personal negative attitudes for her school experience had one adult saying "it just wasn't interesting."

> *"Learning needs to be more personable more suited to each person's traits and what their abilities are. You know, their own creative identities. If you know everybody is learning*

the same thing, you're kinda creating the same thing over and over and over again."

Further, participants were disillusioned by the idea that they could not change the system of education even if they were involved in the school system as parents. One participant recounted a negative experience with being involved in the schools.

"I thought that if I was involved as a parent that I could impact the education they would receive and the environment but I was unable to do that... You know back when I believed in public education, then I thought that me appearing onto PTAs, staying on my kids at home would make them [successful] but there were many distractions, they're not stupid. They graduated, all of them, but the environment itself and the system that's in place didn't engage them."

Adults in particular believed that schools and the stakeholders within the school system have the most influence over their children's academic preparation. Therefore, the barriers at the school system level were very pervasive in conversations.

Environmental Barriers

Participants related the education and access to the condition of the community several times throughout the dialogues. Participants indicated issues in the community such as violence and poverty had a direct connection with the level of aspiration to postsecondary education and the level of preparation students need to pursue those aspirations. One participant commented:

"In some students, the issues that you deal with are so detrimental to their ability to come in the class and focus. For example some of our youth are dealing with incarcerated parents or maybe, you know, nobody is at home. You know, nobody is feeding them, there is not food at home. Or just different levels of issues and probably maybe their gas and water is turned off...the lights , maybe they can't study...I know my next door neighbor is running a generator to keep their lights and gas on...they have school aged children."

Rather than schools being a safe-haven for students, participants said issues the community has dealt with outside the schoolhouse gates were now being reflected on school campuses. One participant noted, "Not only is violence in the streets. It's starting to be inside the schools." When this participant was asked why they thought that was happening, the participant said that schools were ignoring the issue and that schools did not think it was their responsibility or job to stop the issue from spreading. Violence and crime both in the community and in the schools were believed to be distracting students from their education:

"I would have to definitely agree about the violence just kind of overtaking the schools ...issues around fighting, or you know, just bullying other students. And it really kinda seems to be an issue of, almost survival. It's like they know that this is what they're gonna expect during the school day. So they already kinda seem to come prepared to encounter that on the daily. So that definitely takes away from the academic side of the school."

Economic Barriers

Participants recognized their community's low-income status as very important, and as having major implications for education. Paying for college was a particularly salient issue for adults in the conversations. Most perceived that communities that are more affluent did not have to worry as much about how to pay for college. Those communities that did have to think about paying for college had difficult

decisions to make. One adult questioned whether getting into debt to go to college was worth it.

> *"I could go to college because that's what I'm supposed to do in hopes of making this much money down the line, but in the meantime I'm gonna drown in debt, I'm gonna, you know, I'm gonna ruin my credit just to, you know, gamble to see if college is for me to see if I can come out on the other side. And I feel like people lead you to believe, that every college is gonna produce the same results for you and that's not true."*

Another male participant noted he was a parent of a daughter who had college aspirations. However, the economic situation of the participant limited the postsecondary options for his daughter.

> *"My daughter has aspirations to go to an art school but it is very expensive, we can't afford it right now, so she's going to go to community college in the fall. So we're dealing with having a daughter going to college there's a lot of factors, and I'll just mention the one; being able to afford college is also a very serious concern for people in our community."*

This quote suggests that even those students with parental support and aspirations of attending certain institutions are being deterred because of their families' income status.

Parents

The dialogues highlight the community's perceptions of parents and teachers as important actors in increasing students' educational outcomes. Participants repeatedly spoke of the role of the parent setting expectations for their children and being involved. Many of the adult participants were parents themselves, and noted the challenges to helping their students navigate early and secondary education and the college application and choice process. Participants agreed that setting expectations was not enough, and therefore resources to help parents be part of the navigation process were important. Some participants also described the socioeconomic status and personal situation of parents as a major influence for students. Parents with low levels of education and low incomes felt that they were limiting their students' higher education options.

Community as Social Capital

Participants regularly recognized the effect that community agents can have on the college-going decisions of youth. Teachers, parents, and communities as a whole were cited as important factors in the decisions of students to do well in the school years leading up to high school graduation and matriculating into higher education. Although participants recognized that community agents could be empowerment agents for youth—and gave personal experiences and opinions as examples—they also realized that community agents could also be negative examples for youth. In addition to community agents being active in facilitating or impeding the access of youth in the area, the dialogue highlighted the detrimental effect of community agents taking a neutral stand and doing nothing towards building a college-going culture for youth in the area. Participants noted the contrast between their community and communities in other areas.

> *"I think other areas have community involvement. Detroit is just, I don't know what we waiting on, they just…they don't want anybody in the schools and they don't wanna go outside the schools."*

Some of the adults reminisced about a time when the community seemed more connected.

Community connection—or what one participant would call "community kinship"—was believed to be the source of social capital in the community. One community member tells of a time when everyone in the community had a role in taking responsibility for the other youth and adults in the neighborhood. The following are example of how community members described what their community was like in the past.

> *"You had a lot of very different types of people. You had a mixture but it was a working class. You had the mom and pops who owned the stores that live right around the corner or lived upstairs over the store, or right down the street. You had ministers on the block. People knew each other from the local churches... And everybody supported one another... It was almost everybody was striving for better. And there was a different level of even self-respect, families were proud of their names you know, you had the Williams who stayed on this block and then the Martins were over there and uh Mr. Smith and Mrs. Jackson. There was still a sense of pride for being us or who even in our madness. And you had your churches plugged in and that's how people received a lot of their information and the spiritual guidance and do a few relationships and then you had your store owners so we were able to shop and serve on another. But it seems that things have changed and so because of that, the expectations, I think of the community, has changed."*

College-Going Expectations

The participants perceived a stable community environment as the best place to cultivate a college-going culture. In the adult dialogue, there was a consensus that what empowers the community directly impacts the individuals of that community in a positive way. In particular, the participants felt that all of the community played a critical role in setting the expectation to go to college. Expectations are understood not only to be the responsibility of the community as a whole, but also the responsibilities of individual families and the schools. Setting an expectation for youth to go to college was seen as a foundational step in building the college-going culture.

> *"I think expectations have a lot to do with it. When it comes to parents, when it comes to the teachers, then when it comes to the community. And if we have higher expectations and believe in our children doing better and seeking better, you know that it starts there. And a lot of us lose hope with the world and things improving. So I think we have to start with higher expectations."*

The quote above gives some evidence of the gap in the community between aspirations and expectations. As noted above, community members agreed that higher education was important and necessary to both increase personal development and facilitate their social mobility. As such, many of the adults expressed wanting their children to go to college, and youth expressed similar aspirations to attend higher education. The same participants also expressed assumptions about the community and experiences that lowered their expectations. For example, one male adult participant thought that his involvement with his local PTA would help him fulfill the aspirations he had for his sons. His negative experiences regarding his attempts to change the schools changed his expectations. Similarly, while his daughter aspired to get a higher degree, his financial reality did not reflect his expectations. However, expectations continued to be important. Even if the mother or father of a family did not pursue higher education, having expectations set in motion the steps necessary to assist their children in navigating the college-going process.

> *"Some people are privileged to go to college from family expectations. You know, coming*

from a certain area, but your family has this expectation and they try to help you figure out ways to navigate through that."

Observations on Adult and Youth Perceptions

In addition to the dominant themes in the dialogues, facilitators noted the group dynamics and trends within the discussions. Adult participants were more likely to reminisce on the past and bring examples of how expectations and community dynamics used to function in the area. Furthermore, adult participants often went back and forth from blaming youth for making bad educational decisions and understanding that factors in their environment often led youth to make bad decisions. Surprisingly, youth were very likely to blame themselves for their educational outcomes with statements like "I just don't work as hard as I know I should." However, in the adult and youth dialogue when one adult participant blamed the youth for not trying hard enough, a youth participant quickly pointed out that youth were not the only ones at fault. Some youth also pointed to teachers as having a large impact on educational experiences of students and that when teachers do not take the time to explain things again, or show that they care about their students' education that it can negatively impact them. Alternatively, youth pointed out that when teachers have high expectations, it can reflect well on their own educational expectations. Therefore, while some students blames themselves, other youth situated their negative educational experiences within larger contexts.

In addition to differences in attitudes between adults and youth, participants in two of the dialogues expressed they were unfamiliar with the term "higher education." Not knowing what higher education is may be an indicator that the language surrounding options after high school is not prevalent enough in the community. Building a college-going culture involves normalizing all terms related to higher education. Thus, the findings may indicate the need for community organizations, businesses, and other community members to facilitate more conversations in the community concerning postsecondary education. The community also perceives many barriers to access to higher education. In many cases, they display tones of powerlessness or hopelessness in being able to change the college-going culture of the community. This is especially true when the educational system is directly related to the perceived barrier. These insights into the experiences and views of community residents can inform how community organizations and other community actors respond to the issues addressed.

Limitations

While the general dialogues were successful and yielded important information, there were limitations to the work. Despite the plethora of strategies used to recruit participants, only three of the five dialogues that we planned had enough participants to go forward. Visiting schools was an effective form of recruitment. Participants also appreciated the food, tokens of thanks, and raffles that were provided at the dialogues. However, recruitment still needs further attention in future projects.

Future projects need to employ alternative strategies to address employment. Rethinking systems to compensate participants for their time may be necessary. Further, projects may benefit from accessing established community groups and encouraging dialogues in familiar settings (churches, block clubs, library etc.)

Recommendations

"Identifying leaders in these spaces is also important. The dialogues reveal that higher education is simply not talked about enough in the community."

Community members have identified several barriers they believe should be addressed but that can be daunting to tackle all at once. One strategy to prioritize barriers may involve identifying the barrier that can most readily be addressed. Prioritize barriers that (1) are already being addressed through existing initiatives, (2) can be addressed by new initiatives with limited resources, and (3) can involve community leaders and residents. The following are recommendations for Focus: HOPE, as it considers how to address the barriers identified.

Recommendation 1

Provide spaces where students and parents can find support through educational professional but also through dialogue with each other.

The community has multiple sources of support for students and adults pursuing postsecondary education. Education professionals such as teachers, counselors, or admissions officers that work in HOPE Village or have access to the area are obvious sources of support and information for students and their families as well as adults. Education professionals, however, cannot create college-going culture alone. Every member of the community has a role to play in increasing educational attainment for HOPE Village. For example, community business owners could help support students by offering incentives in the form of discounts to students who have filled out the Federal and Financial Aid (FAFSA) documentation. Seniors

in the area can serve as mentors to students and younger adults who are navigating the college-going process. Parents and adults who are undergoing the various stages of the college going process can also support each other in the process by sharing their experiences and sources of information.

A culture that supports all of these activities and more is not created overnight. Instead, an environment that supports various forms of college-going culture must be facilitated. Most spaces that offer information about postsecondary education are very formal. This can deter community members who might be intimidated by settings that are more formal because they do not know what to ask or are not as comfortable speaking with professionals from outside the community. Very often, safe spaces for community members to convene around college going in an informal setting are unavailable. Therefore, we recommend that Focus: HOPE provide safe spaces for the exchange of information on college going.

Building community spaces first requires the identification of existing areas where residents already tend to congregate. These spaces can take many forms such as spaces on the Focus: HOPE campus, recreation centers, block club meetings, libraries, or churches (to name a few). These are areas where the exchange of information is already taking place. Once these spaces are identified, it is recommended that an aspect of each space be built around college going. Take churches for example. A church can adopt a college information board or dedicate a portion of their meeting time to deliver college information to their members. Libraries can have a college corner with college information. Recreation centers can develop programming that increases expectations and encourages college going.

Identifying leaders in these spaces is also important. The dialogues reveal that higher education is simply not talked about enough in the community. Some conversations may occur at school or at home depending on the type of environment the student has in those spaces. However, outside of those spaces, students are not receiving regular messages about going to college. Community leaders such as ministers, storeowners, and librarians are the starting point community conversations around higher education. The more youth are exposed to the expectations and the process of going to college, the more the language of college going will become normalized. However, many times community leaders are also uninformed. Organizations can help by disseminating college information to community leaders at critical points of the year. Organizations can encourage community leaders to have conversations, offer incentives, and be active in building the college-going culture.

Recommendation 2

Increase the opportunities for community-based activities for students of all ages geared towards developing academic and social skills that are supportive of college access and college success.

While informal spaces are necessary for the development of a college-going culture within the community, there must also be ample programming for parents and students to access at all times. Programming can and must vary greatly to attract a diverse audience, provide an abundance of different services and ultimately veer from pushing a one-size-fits-all model to college access. For students, this begins with nurturing a college-going mindset. Though this must be fostered within the community, several outside resources can additionally prove as vital towards this development. Guest speakers, college tours and college fairs are all important ways to promote this culture. Guest speakers, specifically those from the community, often serve as motivational influencers and role models especially for first generation college-bound students. While all college tours and fairs can prove meaningful, targeting schools with enrolled students from the community

can additionally serve as a motivator, especially if those students are able to speak about their experiences both transitioning to and in college. With that, college tours can prove even more beneficial when visited consecutively as opposed to single isolated trips. This allows students to compare and contrast and helps to shift the student mindset from "will I go to college?" to "where will I go to college?" This also emphasizes the idea of best fit as students have the opportunity to think critically about what they need and want from a college.

Fostering a college-going culture also must include rigorous support of the college application process. The earlier students are aware of what the college application asks for the sooner they can set themselves up for success. Making meaningful connections with middle and high schools to offer application awareness workshops their students is one way of accessing larger groups of students and also advertising relevant community resources like free ACT prep classes and extracurricular opportunities. Some students participating in the focus groups specifically noted a lack of extracurricular opportunities provided to them by their school. More extracurricular opportunities, both implementing new ideas and exposing students to what already exists is crucial. More opportunities means students are more able to explore their interests and use their experiences to strengthen their college application. Collaborating with local businesses means opportunities for job shadowing, internships and career fair participants.

Students participating in the focus groups also expressed a strong desire for more experienced and relatable tutors, specifically those who are current college students. Several identified this as potentially more of a mentorship opportunity so that they could improve their academic skills from role models with insight on the college process. As a partnership with Highland Park LCAN continues to develop, this is one idea for addressing academic support and college preparedness.

Recommendation 3

Identify means of supporting college counselors and the work they do with students.

As students approach 11th and 12th grade, the importance of access to a college counselor is invaluable. Currently in Michigan, a college application week exists where students are encouraged to submit as many applications as possible. While this is important for the encouragement of application submittal, it results from the lack of individualized support. Students with permanent college counselors are able to walk to through the process and most importantly assess colleges that are the best fit for them. Attending a school that is the right fit is directly connected to retention and graduation rates. It is also important to have a counselor who can work with students on developing their personal statement, request ACT and application fee waivers and answer difficult application related questions.

In addition to students, college counselors can also work with parents to demystify the process for their child. Adults in the dialogue expressed the need for a specific person to go to for help with the application process and with financial aid. Paying for college was of particular concern for parents in the dialogues. Having an expert to walk them through the options for financing their child's education can be invaluable.

A current model that is working to get more counselors in the schools is Michigan College Advising Corps a program run by the Center for Educational Outreach at the University of Michigan. The program trains recent college graduates to become full-time college counselors in underserved high schools throughout Michigan. While this model is successful in bringing more counselors to the schools, the mere presence of informed full-time staff would be a major enhancement.

Recommendation 4

Provide concrete "how to" information and timelines for parents geared to identifying specific steps in preparing their children for college.

A common theme from parents in the focus groups was hopelessness. Parents discussed how they emphasized good grades and pushed their children to be successful in school, but that it ultimately was not enough. Several parents discussed the necessity of consistently holding high expectations and how students from other communities are assumed successful from the beginning. For some parents, a lack of knowledge around the college process is detrimental, and as mentioned, there can be an intimidation factor when attempting to seek out resources. For some, safe spaces are valuable; for others public workshops can provide valuable information on fostering a college-going household. Either way it begins within the community. Parent workshops must be more than just FAFSA application completion night. Empowering parents, who may be unfamiliar with the college process, to embrace it and learn its intricacies can have a resonating impact. Workshops with guest speakers who address their successes and failures as parents of high school graduates can be valuable in addressing the value and urgency of an all-hands-on-deck approach. Parents feeling a sense of hopelessness can learn effective strategies from other parents instead of a third party facilitator. This can similarly take the form of general discussions or dialogues. What we saw in the focus groups was parents sharing their stories and working together to identify where they believe a lot of the problems lie. From there they were able to think about potential solutions or ideas that might tackle some of these challenging concerns. Through the leadership of a few parents and a venue, these valuable discussions could easily come to fruition both in more formal and informal settings.

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1. GreatSchools. MI Michigan Educational Assessment Test Scores [Internet]: 2013; Available from: http://www.greatschools.org/test/landing.page?state=MI&tid=108
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Appendices

Appendix A
Guidelines

Guidelines for Dialogue

1. **Confidentiality.** We want to create an atmosphere for open, honest exchange.

2. **Our primary commitment is to learn from each other.** We will listen to each other and not talk at each other. We acknowledge differences amongst us in backgrounds skills, interests, and values. We realize that it is these very differences that will increase our awareness and understanding through this process.

3. **We will not demean, devalue, of "put down" people** for their experiences, lack of experiences, or differences in interpretation of those experiences.

4. **We will trust that people are always doing the best they can.**

5. **Challenge the idea and not the person.** If we wish to challenge something that has been said, we will challenge the idea or the practice referred to, not the individual sharing this idea or practice.

6. **Speak your discomfort.** If something is bothering you, please share this with the group. Often our emotional reactions to this process offer the most valuable learning opportunities.

7. **Step Up, Step Back.** Be mindful of taking up much more space than others. On the same note, empower yourself to speak up when others are dominating the conversation.

The Program on Intergroup Relations
The University of Michigan, 2010

Appendix B

Table 1 ***AGENDA*** ***13 April 2013 | Bridge Room***
Education Dialogue at the Focus: HOPE
Workshop Goals: Addressing in hopes of bring to light assets and barriers within our education.
Logistics: Create name tags once seated

Time	Activity
10 mins	**Welcome** Introductions (The idea of a Dialogues)-Introduce Facilitators Go over Agenda and Goals (Framing the Workshop) We are going to have a dialogue. A dialogue is in a sense a conversation that is unlike a debate. Where we look for shared meaning and invite others to engage in a discussion regarding: • Personal experiences and perspectives • The differences and similarities across these perspectives • That challenges ourselves and the preconceived notions we hold in an attempt to broaden our perspectives.
10 mins	**Guidelines (Hand out Paper Copy**) -Popcorn read out & add on if needed
12 mins	**Icebreaker - Concentric Circles (create inner and outer circle)** Q1: If you had a time machine that would work only once, what point in the future or in history would you visit? Q2: If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go? Q3: If your house was burning down, what three objects would you try and save? Q4: If you could talk to any one person now living, who would it be and why? Q5: If you HAD to give up one of your senses (hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, tasting) which would it be and why? Q6: If you were an animal, what would you be and why? Q7: Do you have a pet? If not, what sort of pet would you like? Q8: Name a gift you will never forget? Q9: Name one thing you really like about yourself. Q10:. What's your favourite thing to do in the summer?
5 mins	**Transition** • Now that we know each other a bit better we are ready to begin our dialogue about education and education after high school. • This is an open conversation • We encourage you to ask questions freely to each other as well as us or respond to one another's experiences • This is a conversation between all of us and not just us • We are co-learning, • Emotions are important to people learning

60 mins	With that...**Exercise #1 (Feel free to share/provide a personal experience if no one is sharing to start the dialogue.)** 1)What does education mean to you? 2)Is higher education important to you and your community? 3)What are your educational goals? Adults: What are your educational goals for your children? Youth: What do you think others expect of you? (I.E. Mentors, parents, etc.) Do you share the same expectations for yourself? 4) Are you doing anything to reach your reach higher education? If so what? 5) Do you feel you have access to higher education? 6) Do you think you can reach your educational goals? 7) Are there any resources in your community that can help you access to higher education ? Are there other communities that have more access to higher education? 8)What do you think will help you access higher education in this community? 9)Do you feel as though something is interfering preventing you from reaching your educational goals or accessing higher education? 10)What would you do about those barriers in order to ultimately reach your educational goals/ aspirations?
15 mins	**Debrief** - Next Steps...?
5 mins	**Closing Activity** One word go around
3 mins	**Closing Remarks** Thank you for joining us this afternoon. We've heard a lot of stories and personal experiences about and what that means to you all. This is a conversation that I hope will continue further-more my hope is that we can take these thoughts and turn them into actions as to further serve the community and its agenda for furthering education whatever that may mean to each and every one of us. Right now we will have the raffle. Be sure to grab a gift bag on the way out! Once again thank for your participation! =] Enjoy the rest of your evening.

Appendix C
Pre-Service Training Information

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)

Asset-Based Community Development was developed largely by scholars John Kretzmann and John P. McKnight.[1] The idea was in response to issue that many look to our cities and "disadvantaged" communities as inherently deficient, full of problems, and "needy". This view of our communities has led to community members losing agency, and feeling they have no control over their futures. As a result of the internalization of negative outside views, community members become clients of services who receive aid from outside sources. Kretzmann and McKnight noted that for outside assistance to contribute to the communities assets rather than to further the internalization of the client, they needed to practice asset-based community development.

Students who engage in community service in areas like HOPE Village may have an inherently deficient view of the community that they will be working with. Furthermore, students may develop a "savior mentality" in which they believe their work is going to solve the communities' problems and empower community members. Having an understanding of asset-based community development would benefit student volunteers because they may be able to expose the false or negative assumptions about a community, and focus on taking the good in the community and creating change.

Principles of Service

We also believed it was important for students who volunteer at HOPE Village to keep in mind certain principles that are often cited in service learning and community building literature, but rarely listed and explained in one place. From the scholarship in the area of service, we have developed the following list of principles that will be included in our training for students.

Activities

Our training is meant to do more than introduce the concepts of ABCD and our nine principles. Therefore, the training we have provided includes activities that encourage student volunteers to think actively about some of the concepts taught and about how they will put them into practice. Each activity provides a space for students to share their perspectives and reflect as a group on how these perspectives are relevant to their service in HOPE Village.

Video Clips

While ABCD and Principles of Service can be applied to any community in which students practice community service, it is important to realize that each community is different. To give students the best understanding of the community, it is best to turn to community members themselves. Therefore, the training we have developed will include video clips to be played at different points of the training that showcase community members. Some of the topics that these clips will cover are:

- What community members think about HOPE Village
- What community members identify as some of the communities assets
- What community members would want to see in a volunteer coming into their community

Trainers

Our pre-service training includes a powerpoint presentation as well as a detailed trainer's manual with steps on teaching these concepts, an overview of the activities, and additional reading to assist with understanding the concepts we have briefly outlined above. As such, anyone from an organization should be able to conduct this training for incoming students.

1. Respect- Respect has been found to be "the single most powerful ingredient in nourishing relationships and creating a just society".[2] It is a basic attribute for working with people in all types of communities and situations. We most often talk about respect as something we do to others. We give, show, or

hold persons in high respect. Showing respect is a basic part of engaging people. For some it means giving a positive feeling of regard or deference. For others it is proper acceptance or courtesy.

2. Integrity-integrity involves two fundamental intuitions: first, it is primarily a formal relation one has to oneself or between parts or aspects of one's self; and second, that integrity is connected in an important way to acting morally (as defined by one's social and cultural environment). Research related to integrity identifies it in a number of ways: 1) the integration of self; 2) the maintenance of an intentional values identity; 3) standing for something; and 4) moral purpose.[3]
3. Openness- Openness is a state of mind and attitude that facilitates receptivity to people, ideas, cultures, and environments, especially those circumstances from one's own. Persons that exhibit openness are seen as earnest and sincere in their approach to situations. Openness connotes a genuineness freedom for us to share but also to have others share their experiences and perspectives without judgment. Persons seen as demonstrating openness are often judged to be honest and caring.
4. Building Relationships- Developing and continuously strengthening relationships with community members and organizations through practices that encourage equity and mutual growth Relationships are usually transactional for short term tasks (each side brings something the other doesn't) and transformational for sustained change (both sides are flexible, reflective, and change as a result of their interaction).[4]
5. Awareness- the ability to consciously shift perspectives and behaviors into an alternative cultural worldview.[5]
6. Self-Awareness- Also known as Intrapersonal awareness. Capacity to create an internal self that openly engages challenges to one's views and beliefs and that considers social identities (race, class, gender, etc.) in a global and national context; integrates aspects of self into one's identity.[6]
7. Awareness of Others- Also known as Interpersonal awareness. Capacity to engage in meaningful interdependent relationships with diverse others that are grounded in an understanding and appreciation for human differences; understanding of ways individual and community practices affect social systems; willing to work for the rights of others.[7]
8. Community Empowerment-Community Empowerment is achieved through the fostering of individual, civic agency among community members. Fostering individual, civic agency involves the promotion of decisions makers (community members) who have the authority to execute action within the community as a democratic group.[8]

Reference

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Appendix D

LCAN Cost-Benefit Analysis

Cost-Benefit Analysis or Feasibility Considerations

Should HOPE Village pursue an officially recognized Local College Access Network (LCAN)?

> *The HOPE Village Initiative aims to develop a safe, strong and nurturing neighborhood where children and their families can develop to their full potential. To accomplish that goal, we will offer an interconnected web of opportunities and support, with education at its center. We expect to build a community where people want to live, work and raise a family – and where children have every opportunity to achieve their greatest potential.*

As the National Forum and Focus: HOPE began its work together towards the educational goals stated in the HOPE Village Initiative's (HVI) mission, one of the initial assumption has always been that whatever actions might be taken, a coalition built on community voices would be at the forefront. Additionally, there was a particular model of this community-based coalition that was an early model of the work that might be done to build a strong college-going culture within Hope Village. Initially, the National Forum intended to contribute to this goal by assisting in the development of a new local college access network (LCAN) through the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN). LCANs are "high-quality, community-based college access strategic alliances" that are "committed to building a college-going culture and dramatically increasing the college going/completion rates within their community" (MCAN). Because the National Forum had had some experience in working with another community (Brightmoor) in developing such a community network, this projected started with the development of an LCAN as an early goal for our involvement in HOPE Village.

Establishing an LCAN in HOPE Village would mean creating a formal structure through which community members can collectively organize in order to "coordinate and expand programs, services and resources that lower barriers preventing students from pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities" (MCAN). The work would also mean identifying an administrative structure, establishing relationships and formal program structures with an identified local high school or middle school, and creating an effective community oversight and engagement process for the LCAN. When those structures were in place, the community would then be in a position to apply to the Michigan College Access Network for funding to support an LCAN within HOPE Village. The funding from MCAN would come with a prescribed set of expectations and procedures that would additionally require staff hours and reporting procedures.

As we began to explore these options for development of an LCAN, the National Forum team encountered a number of issues. First, we discovered that an existing LCAN had been organized in the community several years prior and served community students. While we could not document the exact number of HVI students served, it was clear, based on school attendance patterns, that a significant number of students from HVI would be enrolled in the current LCAN service area. Focus: HOPE had an existing, though not well defined relationship with this LCAN-- the Central Woodward/ North End LCAN in Youthville. Members of the HOPE Village staff had been invited to serve on the advisory committee for this LCAN and had met occasionally, with the LCAN leadership. While specific goals had been generated through the LCAN related to all students in the target areas, there was no efforts to specifically identify how the program impacted HVI.

A second issue that we encountered was deriving community input and support for the development of an LCAN. Earlier discussions with the HVI advisory committee had expressed possible interest in an LCAN; however, the community had little information about the LCAN nor had systematic processes been engaged to ascertain community interest in the LCAN process.

Out of these issues, the National Forum determined that its focus for this aspect of the project needed to be looking at the benefits or feasibility of considering the development of a new LCAN as a mechanism for developing a college going culture within HOPE Village.

With this focus in mind, the team then began a process of

1. Learning more about the LCANs in the Detroit area, what they offered and who they served
2. Through the community dialogues, getting a better sense of the educational aspirations and needs within the community
3. Considering the best approaches to developing an LCAN structure or LCAN-like structure that might serve HOPE Village
4. Building relations with Detroit LCANs on behalf of the HOPE Village project

Using the Local College Access as a model for building college –going aspirations and preparedness for young people, increasing community knowledge and support for college success, and developing clear outcome measures to facilitate the goals of college access and success, the team proposed three possible models for HOPE Village to consider. Based on our learning process, the team arrived at three possible models of LCAN development that might serve HOPE Village:

- Model A (HOPE Village LCAN only):
  Create a freestanding LCAN for the HOPE Village neighborhood through Focus: HOPE
- Model B (HOPE Village-CW/NE LCAN):
  Create an LCAN in partnership with the Central Woodward/North End LCAN
- Model C (CW/NE LCAN only):
  Work through Highland Park and the Central Woodward/North End LCAN to strengthen and localize services for HOPE Village

The benefits, trade-offs, and steps necessary to move forward with each of the models is noted in the charts that follow.

Table 1 ***OPTION ONE Focus on creating a freestanding Local College Access Network (LCAN) for HOPE Village***

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Free-Standing LCAN	Creating a free-standing LCAN will provide optimal support to residents of HOPE Village. The target of the outcomes for the LCAN will be those identified with input from community residence and developed to meet goals and outcomes that benefit the community. The LCAN can benefit HOPE Village by receiving membership to resources and support from the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN) such as access to data, program evaluations tools, grant opportunities, and training programs. Being a member of MCAN will also unite HOPE Village with other LCANs around a shared vision and goal of increasing the community's postsecondary educational attainment level to 60% by 2025.	Having an LCAN for HOPE Village may contribute to an overlapping of resources between communities of close proximity that may be already engaged in similar work. In addition, being a member of MCAN may also challenge autonomy as there are procedures and goals the LCAN must follow.
Program Model & Services	EXAMPLES OF WHAT MIGHT BE DONE	THINGS TO CONSIDER
	Option 1: Drop-in information center only	Option 1: Less engagement and community participation
	Option 2: Coordinated resources for college preparation (workshops, application assistance, FAFSA and scholarships)	Option 2: Leaving out interest populations who may not be college bound (i.e., want to work)
	Option 3: Coordinated resources for college preparation and job preparation	Option 3: May require more resources (e.g., staff, support, funding, space)
Administrative Staff	Part-time LCAN Director or Coordinator	
	Option 1: request assignments of current Focus: HOPE staff person(s). This option will utilize staff that is familiar with the Focus: HOPE community and the mission. This is also most cost effective, as it will not need to add an additional employee to serve this position.	Option 1: May stretch resources; may install staff not particularly interested or prepared for this role
	Option 2: Hire new staff person for this responsibility. This option will provide a new perspective and expertise. This position may be supported through the use of grant funds or other sources.	Option 2: New staff may not be familiar with the community served by Focus: HOPE
	Option 3: Identify local volunteers or college students to serve as resources. This will provide opportunity for community members and/or college students to engage in leadership. This option is cost effective with minimal personnel expenses.	Option 3: The staff may have other immediate obligations that may affect their commitment. The staff may also not be familiar with the community served by Focus: HOPE.

Clerical or Support Staff	Hire members/leaders from external educational organization, the Focus: HOPE community, and/or university students as interns to support the structure of the LCAN. This will help build a strong network of diverse leaders and staff that can advance the mission of Focus: HOPE and the LCAN.	Personnel hiring may be restricted due to funding
Space or Facility	Option 1: Allocation of space by Focus: HOPE This option is the most cost effective and will provide an accessible space within Focus: HOPE for community members to convene for workshops, discussions, training, and strategic and organizational planning.	Option 1: Depending on Focus: HOPE's allocation, the space may be limited by the size, structure, atmosphere, etc.
	Option 2: Rent an external space This option allows the LCAN to rent a space that is most ideal and meets the needs of the community (e.g., accessible to public transportation, large enough space to accommodate large audience and participants, a welcoming atmosphere, etc.)	Option 2: Rent may be more costly and it may not be in the proximity of the Focus: HOPE parameters. This may limit the accessibility to the center to some members of the community.
Recruitment and Resources Materials	Option 1: solicit from colleges, universities and other college or career preparation agencies. This option will align community resources and build partnerships based on trust.	Option 1: May be restricted with access to certain resources such as databases.
	Option 2: develop brochure or fliers to promote the LCAN. This will assist with the establishment of HOPE Village as an LCAN and as an official community resource	Option 2: May be restricted due to funding. May also limit legitimacy and building trust without external partnerships

Table 2 ***OPTION TWO Create a collaborative LCAN between HOPE Village and the North Central LCAN (or other LCANS)***

Create LCAN Partnership	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
	Having an LCAN will provide optimal support to residents of HOPE Village. The LCAN can benefit HOPE Village by receiving membership, immediate support and resources from the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN), such as access to data, program evaluations tools, grant opportunities, and training programs. Being a member of MCAN will also unite HOPE Village with other LCANs around a shared vision and goal of increasing the community's postsecondary educational attainment level to 60% by 2025.	Having an LCAN for HOPE Village may contribute to an overlapping of resources between communities of close proximity that may be already engaged in similar work. In addition, being a member of MCAN may also challenge autonomy as there are procedures and goals the LCAN must follow.
Program Model & Services	EXAMPLES OF WHAT MIGHT BE DONE	THINGS TO CONSIDER
	The Central Woodward/North End LCAN can collaborate with Focus: HOPE in developing and provide services relevant to the HOPE Village community at Youthville. OR the Central Woodward/ North End LCAN can provide their existing services onsite at Focus: HOPE in serving HOPE Village area schools.	
	Option 1: Drop-in information center only	Option 1: Less engagement and community participation
	Option 2: Coordinated resources for college preparation (workshops, application assistance, FAFSA and scholarships)	Option 2: Leaving out interest populations who may not be college bound (i.e., want to work)
	Option 3: Coordinated resources for college preparation and job preparation	Option 3: May require more resources (e.g., staff, support, funding, space)
Administrative Staff	Part-time LCAN Director or Coordinator	
	Option 1: request assignments of current Focus: HOPE staff person(s). This option will utilize staff that is familiar with the Focus: HOPE community and the mission. This is also most cost effective, as it will not need to add an additional employee to serve this position.	Option 1: May stretch resources; may install staff not particularly interested or prepared for this role
	Option 2: Hire new staff person for this responsibility. This option will provide a new perspective and expertise. This position may be supported through the use of grant funds or other sources.	Option 2: New staff may not be familiar with the community served by Focus: HOPE

Administrative Staff	Option 3: Identify local volunteers or college students to serve as resources. This will provide opportunity for community members and/or college students to engage in leadership. This option is cost effective with minimal personnel expenses.	Option 3: The staff may have other immediate obligations that may affect their commitment. The staff may also not be familiar with the community served by Focus: HOPE.
Clerical or Support Staff	Hire members/leaders from external educational organization, the Focus: HOPE community, and/or university students as interns to support the structure of the LCAN. This will help build a strong network of diverse leaders and staff that can advance the mission of Focus: HOPE and the LCAN.	Personnel hiring may be restricted due to funding
Space or Facility	Option 1: Allocation of space by Focus: HOPE This option is the most cost effective and will provide an accessible space within Focus: HOPE for community members to convene for workshops, discussions, training, and strategic and organizational planning.	Option 1: Depending on Focus: HOPE's allocation, the space may be limited by the size, structure, atmosphere, etc.
	Option 2: Rent an external space This option allows the LCAN to rent a space that is most ideal and meets the needs of the community (e.g., accessible to public transportation, large enough space to accommodate large audience and participants, a welcoming atmosphere, etc.)	Option 2: Rent may be more costly and it may not be in the proximity of the Focus: HOPE parameters. This may limit the accessibility to the center to some members of the community.

Table 3 ***OPTION THREE Current LCANs to bring services into the target geographic area***

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Work With Existing LCAN	The desired goals of an LCAN are to improve the chances that students from a particular geographic area will be able to enter and graduate from college. The LCAN helps to focus attention and resources on these community students. HOPE Village is situated in a geographic area where several LCANs already operate and does not need to duplicate these resources. HOPE Village already has access to the programs and needs to concentrate its time on ensuring that the existing LCANs give specific attention to students who live in the HOPE Village zip code. Given limited resources within the neighborhood, HOPE Village could more wisely use is resources to galvanize community support for the existing program and pressure these programs to better serve its needs.	It is hard coming into organizations and making demand on its resources. While there is current willingness to address the needs of HOPE Village by the existing LCANs, personnel changes that are happening could see HOPE Village as less of a focus in the future. Additionally, HOPE Village will have less autonomy over ensuring that its students get the attention and resources needed to be college ready and successful.
	EXAMPLES OF WHAT MIGHT BE DONE	THINGS TO CONSIDER
Program Model & Services	HOPE Village invites the Central Woodward/North End LCAN to expand its services into the target zip codes and provide additional follow up for these students through various programs already existing through Focus: HOPE or the LCAN. Additionally, HOPE Village could work with the LCAN to develop specific parent and community outreach efforts that may be beyond the current score of the LCAN. Some of the same options in Plan Two might also be employed in this option with the exception that the LCAN is taking on these roles without the assistance of HOPE Village.	
	Option 1: Add a study center or other program at HOPE Village but managed by the LCAN	Option 1: Less engagement and participation by the LCAN with HOPE Village students and parents
	Option 2: Enlarge current activities that attempt to coordinated resources for college preparation (workshops, application assistance, FAFSA and scholarships) within the HOPE Village settings	Option 2: Leaving out interested populations who may not be college bound (i.e., want to work)
	Option 3: Coordinated resources for college preparation and job preparation with Focus:HOPE activities	Option 3: May require more resources (e.g., staff, support, funding, space) from the LCAN that may not be available

Administrative Staff	No new personnel required	
	Option 1: LCAN staff or volunteers take on these roles	Option 1: LCAN manages all staffing
	Option 2: Use volunteers from local colleges to help coordinate the delivery of new services. H HOPE ope Village has already started building a relationship with a number of local colleges and can capitalize on these	Option 2: LCAN manages all staffing
	Option 3: Identify local volunteers or college students to serve as resources. This will provide opportunity for community members and/or college students to engage in leadership. This option is cost effective as well with minimal personnel expenses.	Option 3: The LCAN staff may have other immediate obligations that may affect their commitment. The staff may also not be familiar with the community served by Focus: HOPE
Clerical or Support Staff	LCAN staffing handles clerical and support responsibilities.	Personnel hiring may be restricted due to funding
Space or Facility	Option 1: Allocation of space by Focus: HOPE to the LCAN This option is the most cost effective and will provide an accessible space within HOPE village for community members to convene for workshops, discussions, training, and strategic and organizational planning.	Option 1: Depending on Focus: HOPE's allocation, the space may be limited by the size, structure, atmosphere, etc.
	Option 2: LCAN operates out of its own existing space This is a cost effective way to handle any space needs and does not require the LCAN or HOPE Village to spend additional dollars	Option 2: LCAN operates out of its own space that may not provide visibility and access for HOPE Village community

Conclusion and Next Steps

The National Forum team has spent time working with the local LCANs to determine feasible ways to bring an LCAN's services, if not an actual LCAN into HOPE Village. From the initial idea of developing an LCAN and applying for funding through the state of Michigan, the National Forum team concluded during the time of the project, that Option One, building a freestanding LCAN would not be feasible for a number of reasons, the primary one being the presence of the Central Woodard/North End LCAN operated by Youthville. Staff from Focus: HOPE was already involved in the advisory committee for this LCAN. The Youthville LCAN was working in five different schools that served as sites for HOPE Village students.

Given the existence of this LCAN, the other two options became the focus of our work. Option Two, developing a partnership with the North End LCAN, became one of the foci of our work and allowed the National Forum team to begin developing a relationship with the director of the LCAN. We were able to connect him to some University of Michigan resources, to advertise some of the HOPE Village program events, and to begin a discussion of what a closer relationship with HOPE Village might look like in terms of structure and resources. We found the biggest issues were not the lack of desire to serve HOPE Village but the limited resources available through the LCAN and a lack of understanding of how HOPE Village might be specifically served. We also began to understand the complexity of the work with identifying students to begin to target HOPE Village residents.

In the course of this work with the North End LCAN we learned about plans to develop another LCAN through Highland Park High School, an area that has a small overlap with the HOPE Village geographic boundaries. We began working with the planning group for this LCAN and have contributed significantly to development of the LCAN proposal that is being submitted to MCAN. In the course of this work, we arranged time for the LCAN developers to meet with HOPE Village representatives to ensure that HOPE Village (and Focus: HOPE).

Given the work we have done with the local LCAN, we believe the initial goals of this part of our project have been accomplished. We have 1) make the North central LCAN more aware of HOPE Village as an interested and targeted community to be served and 2) we have linked the HOPE Village Community to the pending development of the Highland Park LCAN. Through both of these efforts, we hope that more HOPE Village students will be directly prepared to enter and be successful in college.

While we believe we have accomplished the goals of this segment of our work, we understand there is still more that could be done to work with college students in the HOPE Village area. We recommend that Focus: HOPE and HOPE Village continue to pursue the following:

- Develop a survey of community focus on college interests and goals
- Create a specific goals related to college access and success for residents of HOPE Village
- Continue work with the existing LCANs to be able to provide information about HOPE Village students and their needs related to preparation for college and receive from the LCANs updates on what is happening with various educational programs being provided
- Develop specific community activities that call attention to college access (College recruitment Day)
- Ensure that persons from HOPE Village continue to attend the LCAN meetings and serve on various committees

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