

# ASPIRATIONS TO ACTIONS

Friday, July 21, 2017

Learn more every month about how to turn aspirations to actions, follow this link to [A2A's June Newsletter](#).

Interested in learning more about Aspirations to Actions? Subscribe to the newsletter [HERE](#).

## ARE YOU MOSTLY TURNED OUTWARD OR INWARD?

A fundamental practice of the Aspirations to Actions (A2A) initiative is Turning Outward -- asking questions designed to find out what the community wants instead of arriving with the answer. Realizing the community's aspirations, teams and resources can be brought together to take action to make those dreams a reality. Check yourself by taking THE TURN QUIZ developed by The Harwood Institute.

### TAKE THIS QUIZ

INWARD	OUTWARD
 Activity	 Action
 Programs	 People
 My Organization	 My Community
 People as Consumers	 People as Citizens
 Process	 Progress
 Outreach	 Engagement
 Public Relations	 People's Reality
 Inputs	 Impact
 Claiming Turf	 Coming Together
 Charity	 Change
 Feeling Good	 Doing Good

[Click image to enlarge](#)

## SUNCOAST CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE-LEVEL READING'S ALL-AMERICA CITY AWARD: TURNING OUTWARD

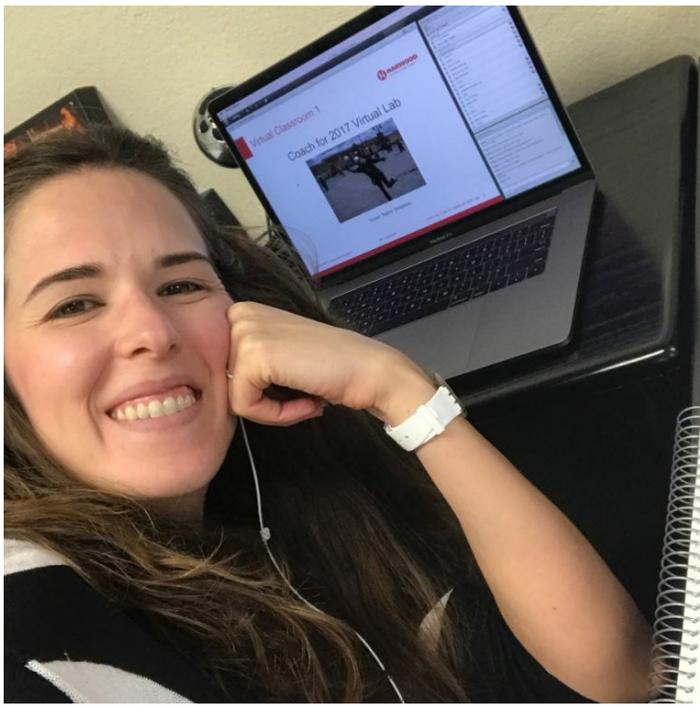


[SCGLR All America City Award Clip 2017](#)

On June 16th, the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (SCGLR) was one of 15 U.S. communities honored with the 2017 All-America City Award for civic engagement to help more young children from low-income families achieve grade-level proficiency and early school success.

As the awards were announced community by community, one phrase used in an introduction tipped us off, indicating the Suncoast region would be the next named called. The phrase? "This

## THE WORDS WE SPEAK



*Editor's Note: Beatriz Paniego-Béjar is a consultant for the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading and part of its Outreach Team Support. Currently, she is participating in the Virtual Public Innovators Lab of The Harwood Institute, learning to aspire to action.*

Words shape the way we think, determine our mindset, define our outlook in life; and if there is an institution that has made me realize more and more about the importance of the words we use, that has been The Patterson Foundation (TPF).

It is not the same to say the word "enabling" as saying "engaging." It is not the same to say "outputs" and "outcomes." It is not the same to say "issues" and "aspirations" -- the importance of words and The Patterson Foundation's approach.

Thanks to the generosity of TPF, I am now learning more about all these notions through the Virtual Public Innovators Lab of The Harwood Institute, and week after week I keep on being dazzled.

I started working with TPF (please note the preposition "with", not "for" - the importance of words) almost two years ago, specifically with the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (SCGLR) as part of the Outreach Team Support. It has taken almost this much time to fully grasp the impactful work SCGLR is doing in

community Turns Outward." Turning Outward is one of the Harwood Institute principles supported by the Aspirations to Actions Initiative of the Patterson Foundation which the SCGLR strives to apply to all its endeavors.

We are grateful for the collaborations and strong partnerships across two counties that led to our selection for this honor. Notably, the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading's All-America City Award marks the first time in the 68-year history of the All-America City Award the honor has been given to a two-county region. The Patterson Foundation uses Harwood principles to help guide the regional efforts in Manatee County, with lead partner United Way - Suncoast, and in Sarasota County with lead partner the Community Foundation of Sarasota County.

SCGLR is reaching beyond the "usual suspects" and listening deeply to the voices in our community. We are focusing on our shared aspirations, with people from all five sectors (business, non-profits, government, individuals, and the media) collaborating to improve the academic achievements of our most vulnerable children.

We have a lot of work left to do to ensure all children in our region can read on grade-level by the end of 3rd grade. The All-America City Award is a welcomed recognition of our efforts; we welcome you to join us as we continue to gather citizens who want to be part of the solutions that will lift our children up to the success they deserve.

## INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPHINE EISENBERG



the community, simply because I didn't have the mindset to do so. I am now shaping a new mindset thanks to The Harwood Institute's lab.

Once I comprehended the actual meaning of the Campaign's effort -"to help all children, especially those from low-income families succeed in school by ensuring they read on grade level by the end of third grade," once I realized how significant it is to focus on the outcomes, once I saw that this is truly a collaborative work, the words gained a new meaning, and a change in my outlook happened. The importance of words.

Now I am more confident in sharing with our families the work SCGLR does, because I know that change and improvements take time to happen, so we need to meet people where they are -another concept learned at The Harwood Institute Lab - and we need to start by planting a small seed that will grow and spread. Particularly in my role with the Campaign, one of those seeds is to share Vroom with our families, a free application that gives parents ideas of games they can play with their children 0 to 5 in any

daily setting (while feeding them, while driving, while going for a walk, while doing chores, etc.), to develop their kids' brains, to build their vocabulary, to help them understand the world around them, creating "brain building moments."

This is one simple step. One simple step that will lead to prepared children ready to start Kindergarten -- eliminating the 30-million-word gap that exists between kids from low-income families



**Josephine Eisenberg, Outreach Team Support for Age-Friendly Sarasota, Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, and Margin & Mission Ignition**

### **1. How are you using the Harwood Practice professionally and/or personally?**

I personally feel the Harwood practice is something that evolves on a continuous basis for each person. I work on using the Harwood principles in all areas of my life, both professional and personal. One of the biggest impacts this work has made in my life is understanding the importance of listening and not arriving with the answer. This is sometimes a lot more difficult than it sounds. Now when I catch myself in a conversation (or even a thought inside my head) where I am 'showing up with the answer' -- it is easier for me to notice that is what I am doing and then I can make changes to correct that. Another area I am using this work is focusing on accountability. A specific accountability question from the Public Innovators workshop was 'Am I living up to my pledges and promises?' I actively focus on this question both personally and professionally every day.

### **2. Can you share a specific example or story that relates to the Harwood practice?**

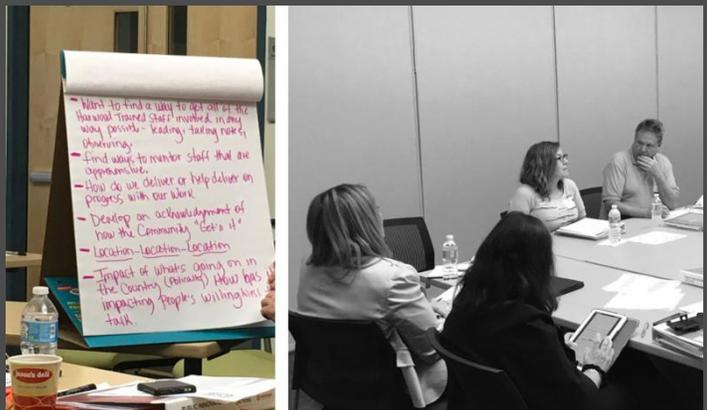
A great example of using Harwood practices is my work with the Age-Friendly Festival (AFF). This festival is a gift from The Patterson Foundation to the community inspired by the aspirations of residents shared through research conducted by the Age-Friendly Sarasota initiative. Over 1,000 residents were asked to tell us their aspirations for the age-friendly future of our community. We are focused on these aspirations and hold them dearly as we move forward with planning the Festival. It's

so exciting to be a part of creating something the community has really asked for - instead of a team of people creating something they 'think' the community NEEDS or WANTS. The Festival is designed as a kick-off that will create an exciting age-friendly movement - a change that can take hold in our community, filled with possibility for the future. The entire AFF team works very hard at Turning Outward in regards to planning this

that exists between kids from low-income families and their more affluent counterparts by the age of 5. One simple step to give those children a better chance of staying on track to read by grade-level at third grade and continue their path to a successful life. One simple step. One small seed that will create a ripple effect. ([Please follow this link to learn more about the work SCGLR does.](#))

The Harwood Institute approach has guided me to a deeper understanding, connection, and belief in the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading's effort in our community, simply by seizing the key words that define the Campaign's work - the importance of words. And this is only week three. I cannot wait to see what's ahead.

### MANATEE LIBRARY TEAM



Manatee County Neighborhood Services and Library system, which consists of six libraries throughout Manatee County, continue embedding the Harwood practice into their culture through the long, hot summer.

Manatee public innovators have intentionally created work groups around developing and sharing the public knowledge summary in the community. The creation of the public knowledge summary will summarize what the aspirations were at community conversations and ASK exercises while building public will for the community to take on issues. In the spirit of Turning Outward the core team hosted internal Harwood update meetings where public innovators were able to choose which work group was of most interest. Each workgroup is facilitated by a member of the core team. A brief description of working groups is as follows:

• **Theming** work group is creating themes

Festival. We are reaching out, Turning Outward - as opposed to being in our own silos. We are listening to what the agencies, businesses, and government entities see as their best age-friendly assets, their aspirations for our age-friendly community and how they would like to showcase those assets during the Festival. We are NOT arriving with the answers. We are focusing on hope and possibility with our age-friendly movement 'advancers.' It's interesting - we all have our own ideas of what exhibits might come across as a 'wow factor' and most often what actually arises from listening and connecting is an even bigger 'wow factor'!

### 3. How has being Turned Outward been positive?

Turning Outward is the most impactful takeaway from the Harwood workshop for me. I am actually able to notice a lot sooner now when I am NOT Turned Outward. A majority of the time when a conversation or an interaction doesn't seem authentic or isn't making progress -- if I step back and just listen I realize I am not Turned Outward. In my personal and professional life -- there has been a positive difference in regard to Turning Outward. Remembering that it is our own personal choice about the 'direction we face' is so powerful. I realize how important it is to work towards gaining an authentic understanding of the community and/or people's lives.

### 4. What do you think you would have done before you worked with A2A and were trained in the Harwood approach?

That's a difficult question! I assume I would have continued to approach things in my personal life and my professional life in the same manner I have always done. I think many things would have continued to have the same outcome as always. The saying 'You don't know what you don't know' really applies here.

### SARASOTA LIBRARY TEAM



• **Theming** work group is creating themes from all community conversation and ASK notes as a summary.

- **Communications** work group is focusing on how and who to share the summary within the community.
- **Marketing** work group is focusing on how to communicate and what the look and feel or the summary will be to the community.
- **Presentation** work group will develop and share the presentation to the community
- **Visioning** work group strategizes the future of issues and themes in the community that come out of listening during public knowledge sharing.

Currently the theming and communications groups are in process and working hard through the busy months of library summer programming. Each work group aspires to confidently share the 3 "A's -- Authority, Accountability and Authenticity -- which is important and impactful in building public will. Looking forward to sharing progress and dates with the community and the next newsletter.

### CONGRATULATIONS: News from Manatee

"We just received an on-the-spot \$500 grant from the Manatee Community Foundation to enhance our Kids' Krew afterschool program at South Manatee Library. Recently, forty local agencies presented one-minute grant pitches at a luncheon and everyone voted on the top three. We will use the money to purchase additional Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) materials, craft supplies, and such. Kid's Krew was an unfunded program created by the staff at the branch to get after school latchkey kids out of the parking lot and into the library while they wait for working parents to pick them up. The concept has generated a lot of interest in reading clubs, crafts, and STEM training for the kids."



**Sharing and Learning:** Sarabeth Kalajian and Ann Hardy conducted listening and learning sessions with the Harwood lab participants during the month of June. Meeting in three locations, the innovators had the opportunity to hear about the progress the library system is making in implementing the Harwood practice. Sarabeth and Ann heard from the various libraries about how they are Turning Outward, looking for creative ways to engage the community and the plans of the libraries to incorporate what they are learning into their operations. Sarabeth and Ann facilitated a mini Innovation Space session at each site to model how to share ideas and opportunities with participants, share back what they are hearing in Ask Exercises and Community Conversations, and what is changing as they apply the "Turning Outward" methods.

**Using the practice:** Venice Library: Planning for the new Venice Library continues, and Harwood practices have provided a strong foundation for strategies to restore trust among the community following the early citizen reactions of suspicion and anger. One priority for staff is frequent communication and the latest was a project status report on July 11 to the Venice City Council. Library staff continue to inform neighbors and nearby business owners about project milestones through email and community update meetings. The next meeting is August 2.

Shannon Staub North Port Library: Plans are underway for conducting Conversations in North Port as part of the effort to connect this new library to the community.

**Building and Strengthening Relationships:** An important component and result of the applying the Harwood Practice is building and strengthening community relationships through Turning Outward. The Sarasota libraries are a participant in the national Book-Rich Environment in partnership with the Sarasota Housing Authority, Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, The Patterson Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County. Several meetings were held in June to support this initiative.

### RICH'S CORNER



You may recall reading about the work of the Mobile Area Education Foundation and their efforts to Turn Outward at a Harwood Public Innovators Lab. This story is useful to revisit, using the following reflection questions:

1. The Foundation in this story had to make explicit choices to change the way they typically would have approached their work. What do you think they were? What are the choices you have made and need to make to change, and what will it require of you to make those changes?
2. This story is laden with examples small and large of leaders having to calibrate risk. What are the risks involved in some of the decisions you either have made or need to make to Turn Outward -- risks for your organization and you personally. How have you (or how will you) manage those risks?
3. This story is a strong example of how Turning Outward can create conditions to build common ground for action. What does it look like in the story? Within your sphere of influence, where do you see possibilities to create more common ground for efforts you hope to advance? What can you learn from this story?

### **Case Study: Mobile County, Alabama**

With the help of the Harwood Institute, the rate of schools meeting state standards for education in the Mobile County, Alabama, school district grew from 27% to 85% in four years. Within ten years, 9-out-of-13 schools in Mobile were awarded the Torchbearer Award for highest performing, high poverty schools in the state of Alabama. Learn more about their journey Turning Outward.

[\*\*READ THE CASE STUDY\*\*](#)

Sarabeth participated as one of three guests in an interview for the Gulf Coast Live WGPU Radio program (Fort Myers NPR station) about book "deserts" and the Book-Rich Environment project. Other topics included the ways the role of public libraries is changing, use of the library by millennials, makerspaces, and digital resources.

The Library Foundation Executive Director, Board members, and Sarabeth continue to make presentations to community groups (Lakewood Ranch Kiwanis, St. Mark's Presbyterian Men's Club, Sarasota Yacht Club GEMS) and include information about outreach to the community including the Aspiration to Actions (A2A) activities and the Foundation's support of early literacy efforts with the Imagination Library, Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, and Book-Rich Environment.

Providing affordable learning and enrichment opportunities for their children and teens was a common aspiration expressed by parents during Community Conversations. For example, parents know there are local programs - camps, art, dance, drama, and music classes. They want their children and teens to be able to participate. Four programs the library is engaged in this summer to address this aspiration include:

- Talking is Teaching early literacy bilingual promotional materials were distributed to all the libraries and select program partners.
- Build A Better World Summer Learning Programs
- Summer Academies at Alta Vista, Gocio, Tuttle, and Emma E. Booker Elementary Schools.
- Family Field Trip Pass program

Congratulations: Andrea Dictor was selected as the new Youth Services Coordinator replacing Holly Anderson who was appointed Manager of the new Newport Library.

## GET CONNECTED

[Bloggers share how Aspirations are being transformed to Actions in our community.](#)

Have a story about turning outward?  
Send it to Deborah Gauvreau



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