Aspirations to Actions
by Online Journal, President and CEO, The Patterson Foundation
Change is part of Life. Each of us can be the architect of the change or the tenant of the results. Aspirations to Actions (ATA) is a new initiative of The Patterson Foundation (TPF) that provides an extraordinary opportunity for our region to learn and apply techniques that encourage citizens to engage in conversations about their aspirations for our community.

The initiative began in August when we invited a team from The Harvard Institute for Public Innovation to visit with us. Rich Harwood, president of The Harwood Institute, spoke to over 200 citizens during his keynote address “Reclaiming Main Street.” And, over a two-and-one-half day Public Innovators Lab, 70 community members began their journey of becoming public innovators by learning how to apply the Harvard tools and techniques.

The work of these public innovators continues under the leadership of Bank of America Initiative Consultant, and a team of guides who will work directly with the eleven community engagement teams that emerged from the Lab. The guides we have engaged are Bill Little, Mike Manfredi and Pan Truitt.

The Patterson Foundation’s long-term objective for this initiative is to provide an alternative method for encouraging citizens to engage in conversations about challenges faced by our community. Using The Harvard methodologies we believe solutions will be found in the aspirations of our citizens and in the way we develop innovative and collaborative partnerships.

We are so very proud of our team of 70 public innovators who are the pioneers on this new journey. The discoveries they make and the pathways they create will lead the way to positive change for the lives of people in our community.

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Community Aspirations
During Rich Harwood’s “Reclaiming Main Street” speech, we asked citizens in the room to tell us their aspirations for our community. Here is a sampling of what they said:

- A peaceful community
- That every neighborhood becomes more beautiful
- Keep seniors in their homes to age in place
- A place for everyone
- Downtown Bradenton as a livable place for diverse people
- To develop a community that learns to work together
- Shared goals, hope and mutual respect
- Helping children of poverty maintain grade level in school
- Collective engagement in addressing community issues
- That our community becomes more of a “we” than an “I”

What are your aspirations for our community?

Resources
Learn more about Aspirations to Actions:
TPF websites
Twitter: @TPFtargets
The Harwood Institute: www.TheHarwoodInstitute.org

Rich Harwood speaking to more than 200 citizens in our community.

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