As part of the Aspirations to Actions initiative, DeSoto County Solutions in Action aims to build trust and strengthen connective tissue for what's possible in the Arcadia/DeSoto community by facilitating diverse and widespread community conversations. These conversations are interactive, adaptive, and innovative, allowing residents to become actively engaged, personally involved with development, and able to share their aspirations for their future.

Beginning in April, the A2A team helped convene six community conversations made up (in some instances) of 4th- and 5th-generation residents. The groups ranged from the 4H Young Leaders, Links2Success, Sub Debs, Casa San Juan Bosco, DeSoto Chamber of Commerce, and more than 20 nonprofit agencies. Over 120 people have participated in these six conversations to shift the focus from

Recently the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (SCGLR), an initiative of The Patterson Foundation, was named one of 20 finalists for the All-America City Award, and now SCGLR has been named 1 of 22 Pacesetters by the national Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. The winners of each of these awards will be announced on July 21.

SCGLR continues to be the only finalist in either program that covers more than one county, which makes these achievements all the more impressive.

Credit for both awards goes to the many who strive for all children to be successful...everyone's child.

As part of the award process,
problems, challenges, and barriers to a shared vision and new possibilities. Six more community conversations are planned. Once completed, the resonating themes will help guide the community toward action.

"The goal of these conversations is to identify solutions, not just problems. We also want to connect the people who can help move necessary actions forward."

-- Ashley Coone

If you are interested in being a part of one of the upcoming conversations or have a group that may want to sponsor a new conversation, contact Cheri Coryea.

SCGLR will make a 10-minute presentation (imaginatively crafted by Beth Duda) for the All-America City jury via Zoom, followed by a 10-minute Q&A period. The presentation time is 11:50a on Thursday, July 21, and we want you to be there to cheer!! Please arrive no later than 11:30a.

There will be frozen treats and cookies to enjoy following the presentation. Yay!

Register + Get Directions

Aspiring for Inclusion

"Inequities can manifest throughout our communities, from education, finance, climate, hiring, to civic engagement, health and wellness, vital services, and beyond."

As Aspirations to Actions continues to listen intently to our neighbors and amplify voices, we work to identify shared aspirations, moving ideas into action and action into excellence. Many roadblocks are often the result of systems that no longer serve the whole community. Identifying roadblocks and building diverse

Since 2012, nearly 200 people have completed The Harwood Institute for Public Innovation training as a gift from The Patterson Foundation. In the spirit of fostering collaborative communities, we are reaching out to all local Harwood training graduates to reconnect + share aspirations and new opportunities.

If you are a Harwood training graduate, please complete the brief Harwood Alumni Questionnaire.

Have questions? Want to share information about a community event? Interested in more information on Aspirations to Actions?

Contact Cheri Coryea
Throwback to 2015 with Ashley Coone and the Smith Brown Project/Boys & Girls Club initiative partnerships can create more inclusive realities.

"Those who benefit from the system are less inclined to change a system that serves them well, nor seek to understand where, how, and why the system fails others."

On his own Quest for Inclusion, TPF Fellow Michael Zimmerman gives a glimpse into the obstacles he faced, which continue to challenge communities today.

Have questions? Want to share information about a community event? Interested in more information on Aspirations to Actions? Contact Cheri Coryea at ccoryea@thepattersonfoundation.org. #Aspire2Action