



A Joyful Journey

The Patterson Foundation's CEO, Debra Jacobs, has a lovely saying: "Aspirations to Actions is a joyful journey." As we all know, the most important factor in any "joyful journey" is the other people with whom we are traveling.

Nearly a year ago, Mary Mack joined over 70 other "fellow travelers" who embarked on a new journey called Aspirations to Actions, and she became a [Harwood Public Innovator](#) on the United Sarasota Team. A native Sarasotan, Mary is an alum of Booker High School, as is her husband and three grown children. Last September, she earned her college degree in accounting and business from Strayer University. She has always been actively involved in the community and is truly passionate about making it a better place for all.

In a recent interview, Mary shared what she has learned over the past year while engaged in the [Aspirations to Actions Initiative](#).

Has the Harwood practice changed the way you approach engaging others and the community?

MM: *Absolutely! We would love to touch as many people as possible to get a broad overview of the issues and concerns of the community and then focus on the most critical.*

What Harwood question or techniques do you like using the most?

MM: *I had taken our "Turn Outward" questionnaire in our initial workshop. My score was eight. I took it again when our committee started on our yearlong journey. I scored 11. "Turn Outward" has changed the way that I think about community engagement and conversation. Coming together is what makes things happen. I'm a great believer in that.*

How do you think "turning outward" accelerates and deepens impact?

MM: *People want to feel that they are a part of the decisions that are being made in their communities. No one person speaks for the people of a community unless there are documented concerns and the majority of the constituents are in agreement. No one likes to be blind-sided with rules and regulations without their input, especially when it affects their livelihood. I would encourage citizens to be at the table whenever possible. Stay in the know. Voice your opinion -- you do have one. Engage with the officials who govern your community on a regular basis. This promotes participation and trust.*

How does focusing on assets or aspirations change the conversation when we are creating change?

MM: *We must aspire in all aspects of our lives and look to the future with hope. We must include our community in these aspirations. There has to be planning. There has to be conversation. There has to be change. There has to be action. And when it's all put together, we will have progress. When we have progress, it should have an impact on the community.*

Innovation Space is Here

On Monday, June 8th, the Sarasota County Library Aspirations to Actions Team held its first Innovation Space Meeting. Ann Hardy led the discussion on how to use Innovation Space and in our July newsletter, we will share what we have learned. Stay tuned.



WORD!

Keeping up with Harwood ...

3A's of Public Life

AUTHORITY

Holding authority means having deep knowledge rooted in the community - understanding people, their lives, where they live, their aspirations and concerns. You apply this knowledge to inform your decisions; how you design and implement programs; how you conduct yourself. You act as part of the community as opposed to acting apart from it. You are rooted in public life.

AUTHENTICITY

Being authentic means your words and actions reflect the reality of people's lives. You seek to understand the wholeness of a situation. You genuinely listen in an ongoing way so you can reflect the community in your work, and the community believes you have their best interests at heart.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Exercising accountability takes being open to learning along the journey of change, setting realistic expectations for change and making progress, understanding public time and rhythms, and pursuing actions rooted in purpose and meaning for people. You must account for what you are learning, and your own pledges and promises.

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Off the Wall @ TPF

A special quote as seen on the wall at The Patterson Foundation...

"Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts."

Blogosphere

In case you missed it ...

Pam Truitt's [When Talk is Action](#)

People Talk

And we listen ...

"Do you wake up with your purpose?" - Casey McPhee, Largo Library

"Libraries are more than books and media." - Nancy Roucher, Arts & Cultural Alliance

"We are all learning together." - Mary Butler, SCOPE

"Words matter." - Phil Brown, United Way of Manatee County



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