

## A Look Back: Cohort 1's "Greatest Hits" 2014-2016

By Beth Doyle, Aspirations to Actions Initiative Consultant

Albert Einstein said, "If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician. I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music."

And so it is with me. While I am neither a physicist nor a musician, I often "think" in terms of music, lyrics and song titles and that is why I composed this summary about Aspirations to Actions Cohort 1 as a tribute to our "Greatest Hits" spanning the last two years.

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### "Do-Re-Mi"

*Let's start at the very beginning. A very good place to start ...*

The Patterson Foundation successfully hosted the first Harwood Public Innovators Lab in August of 2014 with 70 individuals (now known as Cohort 1), and introduced the innovative concept of providing "Guides on the Side" to support the Teams. Teams began turning outward and started using Community Conversations to learn the aspirations of their communities.

Sadly, because of Kathy Bayliss's illness, the initiative was slowed, and we needed some extra time to figure out how to move forward. So, we had a bumpy beginning.

When we started offering quarterly workshops that we called "Innovation Spaces" -- parlance borrowed from Harwood -- we knew we were onto something. These sessions provided Teams and individuals an opportunity to come together in order to connect, learn, share, evolve and eventually strengthen, over a period of several months. The Teams, who had a lot of new members, could learn the language, dissect the model and understand that practice does make perfect, or close to.

Every Team has seen some progress along the way, and over this period time, we all came to the realization that change -- real, positive change -- is slow and needs a lot of support.

Nevertheless, after our last two Innovation Space workshops, where Teams did presentations, we all felt a shift. There was an "Aha!" moment where we all came to recognize that this is real and we're doing it. Even better, we are *being* it. We may have been doing it before, but the Harwood practice teaches us to do it better and with intention. This changes how we approach our personal life, as well as our organizations, and ultimately, our community. With shared vision and shared responsibility for creating positive change in our community, anything is possible.

*... When you know the notes to sing, you can sing most anything!*

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### "Hallelujah!"

*Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!*

The talented Aspirations to Actions Guides of Bill Little, Mike Mansfield, Pam Truitt and now Alicia Chalmers -- along with the Teams they supported and our Harwood Coach Bill Booth -- hit a lot of high notes. No words can express the depth of my gratitude for the wisdom, compassion and perseverance they all brought to the initiative and to the Teams they supported.

#### Highlights of Public Innovators Lab 1/Cohort 1

- 70 Individuals
- 11 Teams with 9 Teams entered into Year 2
- 100\* Community Conversations and/or meetings reached close to 1,000 people \*Does not include United Way of Manatee's Community Conversations

#### Teams Still Active at Various Levels -- Engaged or exploring, using the practice, connecting and/or partnering:

- United Way -- Manatee, Suncoast, South Sarasota, Charlotte
- United Sarasota
- Sarasota Against Violence
- Realize Bradenton
- SCOPE
- Sarasota Library System
- Drug Free DeSoto
- Smith Brown Gym DeSoto
- Charlotte
- Lakewood Ranch

#### Communications

- Newsletters -- 12
- Blogs -- 38
- Video -- 1
- Facebook -- LIKE!
- Twitter -- We're getting better

#### The Patterson Foundation's Innovation

- Guides on the Side
- Quarterly Innovation Space Meetings
- Community Conversations in Spanish (and blogs)
- Pre-Lab Workshops for Lab 2

*Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!*

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### "IMAGINE"

*Imagine all the people living life in peace ...*

And so our aspirations to involve more people in creating positive change led to the decision of The Patterson Foundation hosting another Harwood Public Innovators Lab with 120 people this September and allowed us to reflect on what we learned from Lab 1/Cohort 1. As a result, we made some enhancements by adding a series of Pre-Lab workshops to prepare Cohort 2 for the Lab, and so they could connect, learn the language, understand the model, and appreciate that the real work begins with them.

As I look back on how I personally developed my own understanding of the Harwood practice, I began to see "aspirations" everywhere. In fact, I opened one of our Innovation Space sessions by reading a quote from Thich Nhat Hanh: "If you have a deep aspiration, a goal for your life, then your loving of others is part of this aspiration and not a distraction from it. If you and your partner both want to do things to relieve the suffering in this world, then your love for each other is connected to your love for others, and it expands exponentially to cover the whole world."

This made me think how philanthropy is defined as "the love of humanity" and that made me think of The Patterson Foundation. Aspirations to Actions is truly The Patterson Foundation's gift to the community. I am deeply touched by how closely The Patterson Foundation, Aspirations to Actions and The Harwood Institute's values are aligned. I am also struck by how significant this initiative is -- in an ironically quiet sort of way -- because so much of the work is done internally before it ripples out. We don't always get to see it, but we know it's there and it's preparing to sing.

*... You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday you will join us, and the world will be as one.*

P.S. Special thanks to Rodgers & Hammerstein, George Frideric Handel and John Lennon.

## Keep Aspiring Cohort 1 ... You Made Great Things Happen!



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