



“PASS IT ON: MOBILIZING ENCORE TALENT
TO TRANSFORM THE PROSPECTS OF
VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND YOUTH”

Stanford University
June 24 - 25, 2014

Margaret Dyer-Chamberlain
and Lincoln Caplan, reporters



ENCORE.org

the David & Lucile Packard FOUNDATION

FOREWORD



Photo Credit: Generations United

October 24, 2014

The Stanford Center on Longevity, Encore.org, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation joined together in June 2014 to convene the “Pass It On” Conference at Stanford University because we believe there is great potential for mobilizing the human capital of people in the second half of adulthood to contribute to the well-being of children and youth. Experts from different fields met to discuss engaging experienced talent to improve the educational and developmental prospects of young people, particularly low-income children and youth, and to elevate generativity as a norm for the second half of life.

As summarized in this report on the conference proceedings, the lively discussion produced many interesting ideas, identified significant research questions, demonstrated considerable commitment on the part of participants, and generated a wide array of valuable connections (and re-connections). In the time since the meeting, participants have moved from idea to action in a variety of ways. For example:

- Paul Irving, President of the Milken Institute, has suggested that mayors across America be asked to commit to make our cities work better for an aging population and enable older adults to work to improve lives across the age span. The Milken Institute Best Cities for Successful Aging Mayor’s Pledge campaign is now successfully underway: <http://www.milkeninstitute.org/newsroom/press-releases/view/253>. Among other expectations, the pledge commits mayors to promote volunteer and paid roles that serve the city’s needs. A recent piece about the pledge was published by the National League of Cities: <http://citiesspeak.org/2014/09/05/a-mayors-pledge-to-support-successful-aging/>
- The Alliance for Children and Families is launching a demonstration project in partnership with Encore.org to achieve the goal that Susan Dreyfus, President and CEO of this organization, described of developing encore talent as a human capital strategy for nonprofits.

- Linda Fried, Dean of the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, has published a series of insightful essays outlining the case for paid roles for older adults in solving the most significant challenges of society, including: “Measuring the Later Years in Life Differently – for the Benefit of All” in the Huffington Post (October 2014),
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/linda-p-fried/measuring-the-later-years_b_5846260.html

Our own organizations are also moving forward to advance the idea of an encore human capital commitment of transformative scale commensurate with societal needs now and in the future. There will be updates on these activities in the coming months.

We look forward to partnering with those who attended the conference and many others to improve the future for children and youth, and to help build the expectation in our culture that working to benefit future generations can become a norm for older Americans.



Laura Carstensen, PhD
Director, Stanford Center on Longevity



Marc Freedman
Founder and CEO, Encore.org



Carol Larson
President and CEO, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation



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CONFERENCE INTRODUCTION



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The conference, “Pass it On: Mobilizing Encore Talent to Transform the Prospects of Vulnerable Children and Youth,” was sponsored by the Stanford Center on Longevity, Encore.org, and the David & Lucile Packard Foundation, and was held at the Bechtel Conference Center at Stanford University on June 24 and 25, 2014.

The “launch conference” model, as developed by the Stanford Center on Longevity, is different from a traditional academic meeting: instead of focusing on what experts have learned and know as a means of sharing scholarship, a launch conference is a means of identifying new opportunities for advances in scholarship, policy, and practice, by focusing on what experts don’t know and should learn, and how. Launch conferences consist of directed discussions based on clear and results-oriented agendas. The goal is to address key questions that lead to consensus-building and concrete next steps.

The goal of the Pass It On conference was to explore what must be accomplished to establish new norms in American culture, so more people in the second half of life will choose, and be able, to invest in future generations and increase cooperation among generations. In particular, the conference sought to identify institutional and policy innovations that could enable more older Americans to employ their time, talent, and experience to help improve the education and development of America’s most vulnerable children and youth. The conference sought to identify the research that might be required to help achieve this goal and understand the strategies that could be most effective.

The focus was education and learning related services, from pre-K through college readiness and access programs. The discussion sought to better understand the state of the field—including the current cultural norms that influence many older Americans’ awareness of and inclination to engage in generative activities; the needs of vulnerable children and youth; the organizations that are helping meet those needs; needs that are not being met; how current initiatives are being evaluated and if further research is needed; and how human capital can help meet educational and developmental needs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Photo Credit: Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust

In the next generation, the growth in the number of older Americans will drive fundamental shifts in social policy. As the Stanford Center on Longevity notes in its publication “New Realities of an Older America” (2010), “The number of old people – age 65 and over – will double over the next 30 years, from 40 million to 80 million, and the share of old people will increase from 13% to 20%. By the time the last baby boomers turn 65 in 2029, 1 in 5 Americans will be age 65 or older. By 2032, there will be more people 65 or older than children under 15.”

The United States has a major opportunity to mobilize older Americans as a resource for helping to address substantial social challenges and, in particular, to match this sizable cohort of human capital with the country’s ongoing and essential effort to educate and develop its young people, especially vulnerable children and youth.

The Pass It On Conference brought together nearly 40 experts from different fields to discuss this opportunity. The attendees included scholars, grant-makers, social innovators, experts in public policy, and leaders of non-profit and governmental organizations providing educational and other programs for vulnerable children and youth.

The goal, as the Director of the Stanford Center on Longevity, Laura Carstensen, said, was “to explore ways in which empirical evidence and research findings may inform thinking about the potential of older Americans assisting at-risk youth.” There is increasing excitement related to this opportunity, she emphasized—about making it a significant goal for the future.

As the recommendations reflect (page 11), even attendees who have been engaged in this effort for many years and who consider themselves part of a national encore movement – to enable many more older Americans to choose next chapters in which they help address a major social challenge – strongly agreed that the next steps must include foundational work to understand how to best “match” encore talent with the needs of youth. They pointed out that research and analysis is needed to better understand current initiatives, programs, and needs. They also agreed strongly that as many older Americans as possible should be involved in this effort, and that those who need to

be paid for their service in order to meet their financial needs as well as those who can afford to serve as volunteers should be included. In other words, the effort to close the opportunity gap for many young people should also address the parallel gap in engagement among older Americans.

The conference participants agreed that the next steps must speak to, and aim to reach, those who aren't aware of this opportunity, by explaining what individuals and organizations can do to help bring about the mobilization of encore talent—and by explaining why this opportunity is so compelling and so urgent. The group agreed that they must convince American leaders as well as citizens to support and join the efforts of innovators and early adopters in mobilizing older Americans in service of younger ones. Evidence-based research about what works best, and what might be flawed in concept or execution, is needed.

The consensus of the conference was articulated by Dr. Linda Fried, Dean of the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, in her comment that “this feels like a Sputnik moment,” of challenge as well as an opportunity. The large number of older Americans yields an abundance of human capital for helping tackle a major social challenge; the seriousness of the needs of younger Americans continues to call for a concentrated commitment of resources; program evaluation is critical for developing the effort; and matching the supply and demand requires carefully calibrated yet urgent action. With neither a plan nor widely accepted policies and practices in place for making this match, the United States has much to do, quickly, to reach this important goal.

RECOMMENDATIONS



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The conference generated many ideas about how to advance the goal of effectively engaging older adults in improving the education and development of young people, especially vulnerable children and youth. The ideas are presented throughout the report, and especially in the “next steps” section on page 25.

A list of the recommendations was circulated after the conference asking participants to indicate what they considered most important. Based on their responses and a review of the proceedings, the following emerged as the top recommendations about content to develop, infrastructure to build, and efforts to launch:

1. Develop a statement of vision for improving the education and development of young people by engaging older adults, including a call to action that explains theories of social change on which the vision is based.
2. Create a portfolio of case studies about youth-service programs and intermediaries that match individuals with organizations, with the case studies evaluating the impact of encore talent, using metrics for success about what has worked and what has not, and identifying organizational models and encore roles that can be adapted and scaled. The portfolio would also identify areas of future research that are needed, in order to better design programs and initiatives and to measure progress.
3. Construct a portrait of encore-stage Americans 50 to 70 from demographic data – including details on gender, race, socio-economic status, and health – to understand the segmentation and diversity of this group and shape encore opportunities that are broadly available, to those who will need income as well as others who can afford to serve as volunteers.

4. Identify existing and potential new revenue sources for strengthening programs that serve vulnerable young Americans by increasing the number of older Americans who work with these programs. That could include foundations encouraging their youth-serving grantees to value older adults as part of their paid and unpaid workforce; public funding to expand national service programs that provide stipends to individuals, like the Foster Grandparents Program of the Corporation for National and Community Service; and corporate employers introducing workers of all ages to community service, so that when they approach retirement, they will have direct experience in the kind of service they might pursue as an encore.
5. Develop policy ideas for enabling individuals to finance their encore transitions and subsidize their encores—for example, by letting individuals draw on Social Security accounts to fund a bridge year for finding and moving into an encore; encouraging corporate employers to fund encore transitions for their workforce; and creating new savings mechanisms, modeled on 529 college accounts, like Individual Purpose Accounts. Develop research questions that need to be answered and explored related to these ideas.
6. Build an information platform/clearinghouse for encores in service to children and youth, with content to be aggregated, created, and updated that includes a “matching” service for encore seekers and youth organizations.
7. Launch a campaign for a “Mayor’s Pledge,” which would include a commitment to developing encore opportunities in a mayor’s city or town, for example, by integrating the encore idea into the criteria for Age-Friendly Communities and for the Best Cities for Successful Aging Report and Index.
8. Reinforce place-based strategies by developing pilot projects for communities to improve key outcomes for children and youth. Develop research and evaluation programs to assess the effectiveness of these strategies.
9. Locate the encore idea within other initiatives designed to serve vulnerable children and youth – for example, in early-learning and after-school programs – where experienced adults can help the initiatives succeed.
10. Conduct a marketing campaign with a national call to action, organized around historic milestones in 2015, like the 50th Anniversary of the Foster Grandparent Program and the White House Conference on Aging.

CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

Naila Bolus
President & CEO
Jumpstart

Donna Butts
Executive Director
Generations United

Susan Cabrera
Executive Management Consultant

Lincoln Caplan
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Visiting Lecturer in Law, Yale Law School

Dawn Carr
Social Science Research Associate
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Laura Carstensen
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Susan Curnan
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The Heller School, Brandeis University

William Damon
Professor & Director
Stanford Center on Adolescence

Susan Dreyfus
President and CEO
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Margaret Dyer-Chamberlain
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Michael Funk
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Kathryn Gillam
Executive Director
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John Gomperts
President and CEO
America's Promise Alliance

Daniel Grant
Vice President, Strategic Initiatives & Partnerships
Teach for America

Kerry Hannon
Columnist, Author & Speaker
The New York Times/Forbes/PBS Next Avenue/AARP

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Senior Research Scholar and Director, Demographic Analysis
Stanford Center on Longevity

Nancy Henkin
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Paul Irving
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Gene Steuerle
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The Urban Institute

Judy Strand
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Lester Strong
CEO
AARP Experience Corps

Jeff Sunshine
Program Officer and Manager, Children, Families, and
Communities Program
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Erwin Tan
Director
Senior Corps, Corporation for National and Community Service

MEETING THEMES AND NEXT-STEP IDEAS

Generativity and Intergenerational Cooperation



Photo Credit: iStockphoto.com

INTRODUCTION

The conference's opening session was a conversation among the three leaders of the organizations that co-hosted the event:

- Laura Carstensen, the Fairleigh S. Dickinson Jr. Professor in Public Policy and Professor of Psychology at Stanford University and Director of the Stanford Center on Longevity;
- Marc Freedman, CEO and Founder of Encore.org (formerly Civic Ventures); and
- Carol S. Larson, President and CEO of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Chris Farrell, economics editor of Marketplace Money and economics correspondent for Marketplace, moderated the conversation.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

The dramatic growth in the number of older Americans and the experience, skill, and focus that many of them have to offer makes their cohort in the population a significant source of human capital.

Contrary to a common theme in the American media about the looming conflict between interests of the young and the old, many older Americans feel a vital connection to younger Americans, are supporting them in many ways, and have the capability and the potential to provide much more support—across generations, but also across ethnic backgrounds and races and across economic and social classes.

"We need to think about how we can build models that can be scaled and replicated, going viral across the country – truly innovative models like the 'too small to fail' initiative. How can we get focused on the most basic issues, like helping children who have a thirty-million word deficit when they enter kindergarten? How can we get the most impact for the most Americans?"

*- Carol Larson, President and CEO,
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation*

The concept of “generativity” – the notion that individuals are committed to nurturing, guiding, and caring for the generations that follow them – traces back to Erik Erikson, one of the most influential psychologists of the 20th century.

This kind of support benefits the children and youth receiving it, but also the older Americans giving it, and the country at large. There is a large and growing body of literature about the physical, psychological, and social benefits for older Americans of this kind of meaningful and sustained connection.

The type of support for children and youth spans a broad range, from after-school and foster-care programs; to literacy training for pre-schoolers with word deficits who are from low-income or poor households; to support for teachers of elementary, middle, and high school students who perform below grade level in reading, critical thinking, writing, and problem-solving.

CONCLUSIONS

Many older Americans are well-suited to addressing these needs: their attention is focused on the present and on achieving goals; they prefer to spend time on important activities; and they have experience and skill that is valuable in supporting an array of educators and youth workers, including by serving as mentors for younger practitioners in these fields.

CRITICAL QUESTION

- How can the country take the concept of generativity into mainstream culture, overcoming cultural norms about leisurely “retirement years” and limited roles for older people?
- How much of an obstacle is age discrimination?
- Who among vulnerable young people are older Americans best able to help and why—for example, poor children when they enter school with limited vocabulary and spatial skills?
- Similarly, what specific roles are older Americans more likely to fill effectively—for example, helping pre-schoolers learn the alphabet and the joys of reading and being read to? How can these roles make the best use of the talent and strengths of older Americans?
- Since the economic status of a young person’s family and community has the largest impact on his or her education, health, and opportunity – all of the characteristics of a school account for no more than one-third of the differences in school achievement among young people – how should the focus on education and development be defined to address the fundamental link between poverty and outcomes, in addition to those affected by school?

“What are the institutions that create opportunities for intergenerational conversations? In the past, churches served this role. What will be the institutions of the future?”

*- John Rother, President and CEO,
National Coalition on Health Care*

- How can encores be made available for all capable and committed older Americans—not just those who are well educated and prosperous?
- What research studies and evaluative programs are required to assess the questions described above?

Background Readings: (all Background Readings are available to the public on the website of the Stanford Center on Longevity at <http://longevity3.stanford.edu/readings>):

- “Making Aging Positive” The Atlantic, June 2014, by Linda P. Fried, MD
- “‘Generativity’ and the Pass-It-On Conference” by Lincoln Caplan
- “Family Matters: Public Policy and the Interdependence of Generations” by Generations United

Challenges and Solutions



Photo Credit: iStockphoto.com

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this session was to identify key challenges to older Americans seeking encore opportunities, especially to older Americans committed to helping meet the wide range of needs for supporting the education of children and youth broadly—and vulnerable young people in particular. The question the session addressed was, “If mobilizing encore talent is such a great idea, how do we make it happen on a grand scale?”

The session was moderated by Paul Irving, President of the Milken Institute, with comments about one challenge and a solution to it by Susan Dreyfus, President and CEO of the Alliance for Children and Families; John Gomperts, President and CEO of America’s Promise Alliance; and John Rother, President and CEO of the National Coalition on Health Care.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

Challenge #1

The country’s ongoing budgetary challenge, spotlighted by the recent severe recession and intensified by the growing percentage of older Americans in the population and by the increase in entitlement spending, has led to politicized conversations about intergenerational strife and about the possibility of older Americans taking jobs, opportunities, and resources from younger Americans. This distracts conversation from more positive generative ideas.

Solution

The scarcity of resources for supporting younger Americans comes not from programs supporting older Americans but from the large amount spent on healthcare in general, including for older Americans. This insight is not widespread, and needs to be more clearly articulated in public conversation. So do the views of economists that older adults who work generally expand opportunities for others to work, too, and generally are healthier and happier, contributing more to their communities and requiring less support from society.

“I would challenge us to ask ourselves a hard question: Why is it that the idea of older people helping young people isn’t taking off on its own?”

*- John Gomperts, President and CEO,
America’s Promise Alliance*

Challenge #2

The call to mobilize older Americans to help support younger ones yokes together two ideas that can be a strong match yet can also be distinct from one another. One is establishing a new norm of service among older Americans. The other is establishing that older Americans can play critical support roles in the development and education of vulnerable children and youth.

Solution

The most effective way of mobilizing more encore talent on behalf of vulnerable children and youth may be to locate this goal in a larger cause, like the ongoing efforts to close the opportunity gap with early-learning and after-school programs or a major new service campaign to engage older Americans. This would bring big picture, systems-level thinking to the issue, rather than focusing on individual program-level ideas, which may or may not relate to one another.

Challenge #3

Today, the only older Americans who can relatively easily find encore opportunities are those with economic security because they have the flexibility to volunteer.

But most older Americans aren't

economically secure: Nearly one in three who are 65 and older get almost all their income from Social Security and nearly two in three get half or more — and Social Security benefits are modest at best. For the encore effort to encompass more than the economically secure, current means of paying older Americans to engage in this work must be significantly expanded and new means of paying them must be devised.

"We live at a time of extraordinary possibility."

*- Eugene Steuerle, Institute Fellow and Richard B. Fisher Chair,
The Urban Institute*

Solution

One way to make this work broadly accessible would be to provide financial support for transitions, for example, through the Social Security system — by allowing individuals to draw on their accounts or access partial flexible retirement options to support an encore commitment. Another example of financing transitions would be for many more corporations to fund encore fellowships for their retiring workers. What research is required to evaluate such proposals?

Another way to make this work broadly accessible would be for service programs and organizations to make a point of regarding older Americans as a regular source of talent to help meet human capital needs. Government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and public institutions do this by using ReServe to find professionals 55 and over who "fill crucial staffing gaps at affordable rates." In this way, the encore idea changes from being a programmatic commitment to a human resources solution.

CONCLUSIONS

To properly match older Americans with younger ones, individuals and organizations must deal with these realities:

- Older Americans tend to want flexibility in their schedules, so the option of working 15-20 hours a week may be needed along with the option of working 30-40 hours.

- Older Americans may need training, re-tooling, and transition periods, to become accustomed to encores after their “traditional” working years and to adjust to a new working culture.
- Older Americans generally learn differently from younger ones, often needing more time to assimilate information.
- To have enough resources for this effort, it is time to seek more philanthropic funding. It is also sensible to seek different means in addition to traditional funding sources, such as identifying a big, new source of public revenue, like the taxes on sales of marijuana; using mechanisms designed to support other social innovations such as social impact bonds; and identifying new corporate partnerships.

“It is time for us to move from program thinking to systems change thinking.”

*- Susan Dreyfus, President and CEO,
Alliance for Children and Families*

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

What will it take to shift the hiring of older Americans from being a program, requiring fresh allocation of funds and incurring a financial liability, to being part of any well-designed human resource strategy where older Americans would be viewed as an asset? In this way, older people could be capable contenders for positions already created, budgeted for, and needing to be filled. What evidence is needed to make the case for this shift?

How should this intergenerational approach be designed so that it helps close the dramatic divide between the haves and the have-nots in America today, rather than reflecting and being captive of the divide?

Background Readings: (all Background Readings are available to the public on the website of the Stanford Center on Longevity at <http://longevity3.stanford.edu/readings>):

- “Demographics Reference” by Adele Hayutin
- “Potential Encore Talent and Their Interest in Helping Children and Youth: A Preview of a 2014 Encore.org Survey” by Jim Emerman and Cal Halvorsen
- “Marshaling Encore Talent: Intermediaries and Other Match-makers” by Phyllis Segal
- “The Fear Factor,” *The American Scholar*, Summer 2014, by Lincoln Caplan

Matching Supply and Demand



Photo Credit: Corporation for National and Community Service

INTRODUCTION

The discussion addressed this question: “How do we help bring together organizations that need capable and committed people with available encore talent?”

The session was moderated by Donna Butts, Executive Director of Generations United, with brief comments by Nancy Morrow-Howell, Professor of Social Policy at Washington University; the team of Naila Bolus, President and CEO of Jumpstart, and Erwin Tan, Director, Senior Corps, Corporation for National and Community Service; Susan Curnan, Professor at Brandeis University; and Stacey Easterling, Program Executive, The Atlantic Philanthropies.

“At Jumpstart, we believed that we could engage the skills and experience of older adults. But we had to fundamentally adapt our program, which was developed for college students.”

*- Naila Bolus, President and CEO,
Jumpstart*

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

The overarching issue is understanding what a “good fit” is.

In order to determine “good fit,” we must be specific about the needs of vulnerable children and youth and the traits and strengths of older Americans that equip them to relate well to those younger people and help support them effectively. Matching supply with demand calls for matching specific capacities with particular needs. It also requires an understanding of the roles better filled by others, as in college-readiness programs where it is best for college students to serve as counselors for high-school students about how to make the transition to college. Finally, it requires evidence about and evaluation of the most (and least) promising strategies. Mismatching supply with demand is unlikely to help young people and could do harm instead.

While there is a demonstrable need for more people to help vulnerable children and youth learn in school and school-related settings, there are also other inadequately addressed needs of these young people. For example, it is important

to teach them how to develop resilience after experiencing trauma as witnesses to violence. It is also important to help reduce the number who end up in foster care, all too often a pathway to incarceration. Addressing after-school needs, identifying mentoring opportunities, and addressing public health imperatives are also critical.

CONCLUSIONS

There is no easy answer to the question of how better to match supply and demand, but “fit” should be a means rather than an end. The goal is to improve the prospects of vulnerable children and youth—to have positive impact.

There are many successful programs serving young people around the country, so a next-step goal should be to understand these programs’ human capital needs and where older Americans contribute through paid and unpaid work. This requires synthesis and analysis of program effectiveness, and research that facilitates a stronger understanding of the successes and barriers facing existing efforts.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

What are the most effective organizations currently engaging older adults as part of the paid and unpaid workforce serving vulnerable children and youth? Why have they been successful? Many model programs were noted throughout the conference: what are the best practices of those using encore talent and how can they be built upon?

How do the most successful initiatives measure impact—of their program and of the people who work in the program? How can the country get the best impact for effort and dollars spent? If impact is not being adequately measured, how can evaluative research be established and conducted?

What are the most compelling stories of older Americans who have made a significant difference in the lives of younger Americans?

Background Readings: (all Background Readings are available to the public on the website of the Stanford Center on Longevity at <http://longevity3.stanford.edu/readings>):

- “Investing Human Capital and Social Capital in America’s Children and Youth: A Case Study of Jumpstart from the Perspective of The Corporation for National and Community Service” by Erwin Tan
- “AARP Experience Corps: A Case Study” by Lincoln Caplan

NEXT STEPS



Photo Credit: iStockphoto.com

The second day of the conference focused on distilling the first day of conversation and developing next-step ideas for further deliberation. The day was moderated by Margaret Dyer-Chamberlain, Managing Director of the Stanford Center on Longevity; Lincoln Caplan, Senior Advisor at Encore.org and Visiting Lecturer in Law, Yale Law School; John Rother, President and CEO, National Coalition on Health Care; and Trent Stamp, Executive Director, Eisner Foundation.

Introductory comments were provided by Kerry Hannon, columnist, author, and speaker; Dr. Linda Fried, Dean, Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University; Kimon Sargeant, Vice President, John Templeton Foundation; Judy Mohraz, President and CEO, Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust; Judy Strand, CEO, Metropolitan Family Service; and Barbara Sih Klausner, Executive Director, DreamCatchers.

“We need to remember that there is an aspirational America and then a real America. We need to understand both to build change.”

- Lester Strong, CEO,
AARP Experience Corp

Next step questions and ideas that emerged from the group were the following:

1. A vision statement: What would American lives, re-designed because of longevity, look like from cradle to grave? How would the matching of supply and demand discussed at the conference benefit younger and older Americans? What are the theories of change that animate this vision?
2. Measurement: What are the desired outcomes? What are effective ways to reach them? For young Americans? For

older Americans? What research is needed to determine this? What metrics and analysis should be used? Do we know enough about the talents and skills that older Americans provide that meet needs of children and youth? How can we get specific and also capture the diversity of the picture?

3. Advocacy: What are the most compelling ways to advocate this vision and these outcomes? What resonates with volunteers and those being paid for this kind of work? With non-profit organizations that could meet their human capital needs by including older Americans on their teams? What media relationships would benefit this advocacy? How do we market and brand this message?

4. Infrastructure: What additions to social infrastructure are needed to bring about systemic change rather than program-by-program improvement? Which organizations can best handle these types of initiatives? What are their characteristics?

5. Policy: What changes in policy would be most helpful—around measurement, resources, and existing youth-serving and senior programs? How might these policy changes be researched and evaluated?

6. Resources: How can the major effort being contemplated attract sufficient resources, so that the effort can grow to the scale needed? What new resources can be brought to bear? What new partnerships?

7. Specific Strategies and Project Ideas:

- a) Gathering a list of the 50 most successful organizations serving vulnerable children and youth and analyzing and explaining the human capital needs essential to their success.
- b) Identifying the organizations that effectively involve older Americans in their programs and analyzing and explaining how they use older Americans and why this is successful. Identifying other organizations on the list not yet using encore talent that seem like good candidates for doing so;
- c) Establishing a national clearinghouse for this kind of information;
- d) Doing marketing research about how to tell the story effectively, including how best to persuade youth-serving organizations to employ and recruit older Americans. Identify the new research questions that need to be asked. Develop a major marketing and branding campaign;
- e) Creating a Mayors' Pledge to elevate encore service to youth as a local priority;
- f) Developing an organization-based initiative: work with a portfolio of 5-10 demand-side, bellwether, and youth-serving organizations, to engage encore talent in helping advance their missions, and evaluating it carefully;
- g) Expanding existing national and public service efforts to include this population (including gap and bridge years for people 50 and over, focused on service to youth);

- h) Engaging programs like after-school programs, mentoring initiatives, public health programs, foster care programs, in service to youth;
- i) Using a place-based approach: working with communities/cities to pilot encore talent strategies—creating “Encore Zones” with a concentration of talent, advocacy, and philanthropy, to improve outcomes that are key to the development of children and youth;
- j) Engaging colleges and universities to do research about encore efforts related to the education and development of vulnerable children and youth. Building on existing programs to develop a national network;
- k) Developing a certification program, to help give older Americans the confidence that they have the skills and the ability to help in this effort and to give organizations assurance that older Americans have the ability to serve productively; and
- l) Identifying ways to organize the ideas above around historic milestones in 2015, like the 50th Anniversary of the Foster Grandparent Program and the White House Conference on Aging; or annual events such as Grandparents Day; or high-profile programs such as the My Brother’s Keeper initiative begun by President Barack Obama.



Photo Credit: Corporation for National and Community Service

“In the coming decades, there will be a lot more older people in the United States, in a period when it will also be imperative that the country continue to invest heavily in the education and development of our young people.

Why not match talent with need, connect supply with demand?

Doing so constitutes a solution hidden in plain sight.”

- Marc Freedman
CEO and Founder, Encore.org

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