STRONG CITIES, STRONG COMMUNITIES
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

FINAL REPORT

2012-14

G | M | F The German Marshall Fund
of the United States
STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

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FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM MANAGEMENT TEAM

The German Marshall Fund of the United States

G|M|F

STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

VirginiaTech

Cleveland State University

PARTNERS

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Rockefeller Foundation
Innovation for the Next 100 Years

Chester, Pennsylvania

City of Cleveland, Ohio

City of Detroit

City of Fresno

The Kresge Foundation

City of Memphis

Midtown Detroit

City of New Orleans

Seal of the City of Youngstown

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The management team of the Strong Cities, Strong Communities (SC2) Fellowship Program — The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), Cleveland State University (CSU), and the Virginia Tech Metropolitan Institute (MI) — is pleased to present this final report on outcomes and impacts of the program. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and The Rockefeller Foundation were our primary champions in conceptualizing and funding this pilot program to build capacity in local government through embedded mid-career professionals. As a pilot initiative, the SC2 Fellowship program has proven that project-based and cohort-oriented urban fellowships can deliver tangible results in distressed cities.

SC2 fellows were embedded in city government or non-profit organizations in each of the program's seven pilot cities — Chester, Cleveland, Detroit, Fresno, Memphis, New Orleans, and Youngstown — for continuous period of time ranging from 20 to 27 months. The fellows collaborated with federal agency partners, city staff, elected officials, local organizations, and citizens on specific projects identified by each city as critical to improving economic opportunity and revitalization. This report provides an overview of the fellowship program, its key components, and ultimately how it delivered on its goal of building capacity in local government.

The first section, SC2 Fellowship Program Overview, contextualizes the program within the larger federal initiative led by the Obama administration's White House Council on Strong Cities, Strong Communities. SC2 is part of a robust suite of place-based efforts (including the Promise Zones and Choice Neighborhoods) that leverage federal resources to strengthen neighborhoods, cities, and regions by enhancing the capacity of local governments. The administration launched SC2 to pilot a new model of federal-local collaboration to improve how the federal government engages, leverages, and supports locally driven economic development and job creation goals. In addition to the fellowship, the initiative includes three other components: Community Solutions Teams, the National Resource Network, and the Economic Visioning Challenge (led by the Economic Development Administration).

The Program Overview section offers a description of the robust activities that provided focused support and professional development to each fellow. A high-level public management academy and project-specific mentoring provided by the management team strengthened core competencies and linked the fellows to peer networks. To further broaden local impacts of the program, GMF initiated separately funded peer learning activities to advance key policy themes central to the fellows' work in each city. These activities have helped to push priorities forward, established new leadership networks, and engaged a broader group of stakeholders in each pilot city around the fellows' work.

The Impact section highlights the specific accomplishments of the fellows. As the true stars of the initiative, the fellows delivered tangible results in their host cities while engendering trust and confidence from their city colleagues and stakeholders in the process. Thirteen of the 17 original fellows moved to their host cities for the fellowship program; establishing relationships and learning the nuances of civic life, local politics, and government systems required an enormous amount of resiliency. Early in their tenure, many fellows faced political, fiscal, and leadership challenges all too familiar to distressed cities. Other experienced changes in local administration during their fellowship, including municipal bankruptcy in the case of Detroit. Despite these factors, all fellows exhibited an unwavering commitment to service. This commitment is reflected in their specific accomplishments and project outcomes, which are organized under the following themes:

- Advancing Downtown and Neighborhood Revitalization: projects that enhanced the people, places, and economies of downtowns and neighborhoods.

- Developing Workforce Pipelines and Talent Ecosystems: projects that focused on human capital development as a strategy for long-term economic growth and revitalization.

- Enhancing Community Access, Engagement and Partnership Development: projects that prioritized increasing community engagement, building partnerships, and enhancing access to critical services.

- Fueling New Efficiencies in City Government: projects that strove to improve city processes and systems in order to strengthen transparency, accountability, and efficiency.

In summary, there are successes attributable to the program itself and to the impact of fellows' on-the-ground work in each pilot city. Selected accomplishments include:

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Led recruitment and a highly competitive selection process that accepted only 17 of the 242 applicants (7 percent acceptance rate).

- Successfully partnered with SC2 cities to select fellowship placements and projects that matched candidate expertise and skill sets.

- Provided a comprehensive management and leadership training program that strengthened core competencies for fellows, enabled peer-to-peer learning, and built a cohort of professionals through seven management academies focusing on 15 topics, with over 20 facilitators.

- Offered supplemental activities and support for the fellows, including mentoring, access to professional development and training funds, and access to broader networks of urban leaders in the United States and abroad.

- Built and strengthened relationships in SC2 cities with important stakeholders to support fellows and the program with financial, programmatic, and professional resources.

FELLOWS' ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Developed and executed a multi-pronged approach to catalyze interest and investment in downtown Fresno through local events, business outreach, anchor institution engagement, and federal-local collaboration (Cole Judge and Gretchen Moore).

- Built a framework for public-private-partnerships to advance strategic priorities in Chester and channeled that framework to bring new partners to the table to set a vision for a special cultural arts district (Arto Woodley and Ricardo Soto-Lopez).

- Strengthened employer-city relationships in New Orleans to create a pathway for local hiring in growing industry sectors, and built strategic partnerships with anchor institutions in Memphis to attract and retain a talented workforce (Annette Hollowell and Surayyah Hasan).

- Launched new systems to prioritize vacant property demolitions in Cleveland, streamline the process of redeveloping vacant properties through Cleveland's land bank, and build capacity for efficient code enforcement and blight remediation in Youngstown (Tim Kobie, Christopher Alvarado, Chris Dorle and Kathleen Fox).

- Improved access to critical services in New Orleans by implementing the safety net sustainability and coverage expansion policy recommendations in the Greater New Orleans Primary Care Safety Net Access Plan, and developing a strategy for expanding the availability of broadband services, especially in distressed neighborhoods (Maxwell Ciardullo and Jennifer Terry).

- Implemented strategies to strengthen grants management processes in Detroit, upgrade case and docket management technology in Detroit's law department, and establish a Performance Management Platform to enhance strategic resource alignment and internal coordination in Memphis (Elizabeth Palazzola, Dekonti Mends-Cole, Bernice Butler).
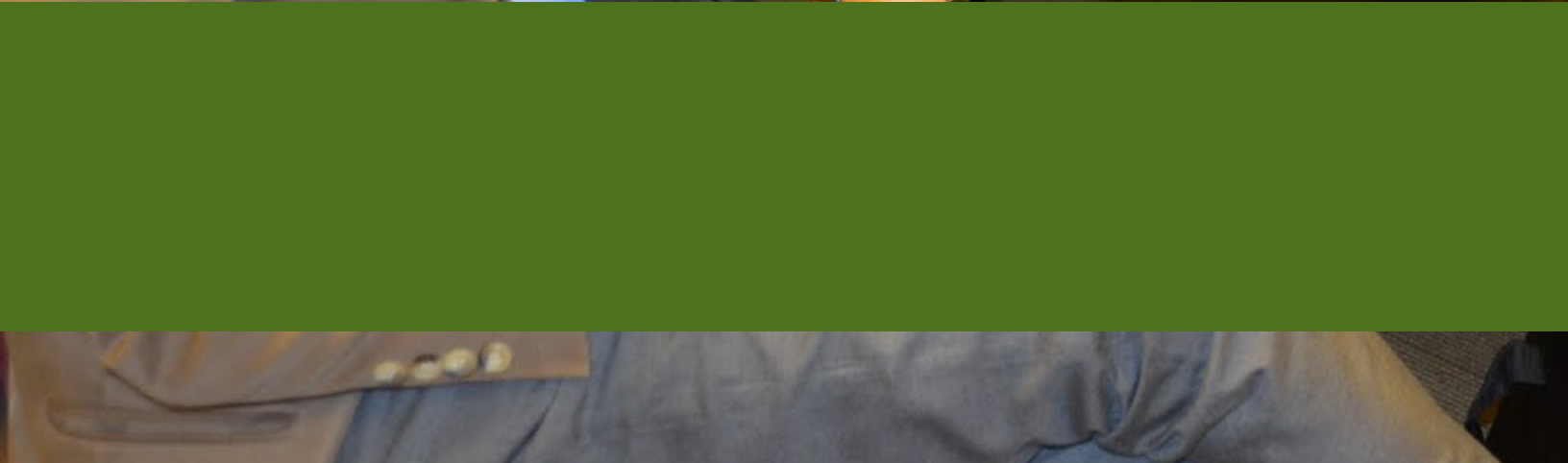
SC2 FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM OVERVIEW

BUILDING CAPACITY
TO ADVANCE REVITALIZATION

Many U.S. towns, cities, and regions are working to rebuild their economies after losing many of their traditional economic drivers over the past four decades. Rebuilding and revitalizing the economies of these places, particularly the most distressed, is a key challenge and opportunity in the 21st century. The Obama administration has led this effort with a focus on place-based initiatives, an important step toward leveraging federal investments in an integrated way on a regional scale to have the most transformative impact. As part of this, in 2011 the White House launched the Strong Cities, Strong Communities (SC2) Initiative as a new federal interagency pilot program to revitalize the economies of challenged cities. SC2 is now part of a robust suite of place-based efforts (including the Promise Zones and Choice Neighborhoods) that leverage federal resources to strengthen neighborhoods, cities, and regions by enhancing the capacity of local governments to develop and execute economic visions and strategies.

The SC2 Initiative was launched to pilot a new model of federal-local collaboration to improve how the federal government invests in and offers technical assistance to support locally driven economic development and job creation goals, while helping to coordinate funds at the local, state, and federal level. The initiative includes four components that work together to strengthen selected cities: Community Solutions Teams, a Fellowship Program, the National Resource Network, and the Economic Visioning Challenge. Together, these components reflect a combination of short and long-term engagement strategies that provide distressed communities with federal technical assistance, increased capacity, and comprehensive planning to help them achieve their long-term economic goals.

In the pilot phase of the initiative, the administration selected seven cities for the fellowship program — Chester, Cleveland, Youngstown, Detroit, Fresno, Memphis, and New Orleans — based on an assessment process conducted by teams of HUD officials and consultants with local mayoral support and participation. The pilot cities received SC2 Community Solutions Teams (CST) consisting of federal agency staff to collaborate with local government in order to improve coordination among federal agencies, programs, and investments. The pilot cities also participated in the SC2 Fellowship Program.

The SC2 Fellowship Program, made possible by a gift from the Rockefeller Foundation, directly benefits local governments by placing highly skilled professionals with a commitment to public service in the seven pilot cities. The program recognizes that distressed cities need professionals with technical expertise to help revitalize their local economies, but may not have the capacity or resources to hire additional talent. Fellows are placed in local government agencies or local non-profits for a two-year fellowship period. They dedicate their time to specific projects identified by each pilot city as critical to creating sustained economic and social change.

HUD, through a competitive process, selected The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), Cleveland State University (CSU), and the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) to manage the Fellowship Program. GMF serves as the management team lead while experts from Virginia Tech's Metropolitan Institute and CSU's Levin College of Urban Affairs provide mentorship to each Fellow, and CSU delivers a Management Academy as part of the program.

Upon selection, the management team traveled to each pilot city to meet with city officials, Community Solutions Team members, and potential local partner organizations to identify specific project opportunities for the fellows. Through a highly competitive national selection process, the pilot cities selected 17 fellows from 242 applicants based on a number of qualifying factors, including how well their experiences and expertise aligned with each city's project needs.[1]

In September 2012, each fellow was placed in one of the seven pilot cities to work on projects in various fields, including community and economic development, public administration, education, public finance, health, and transportation. Projects range from the creation of performance measurement systems to designing systems to strategically reuse vacant land.

The fellowship period began in September 4, 2012 and officially ended on September 3, 2014. Three fellows ended the program two months early to pursue new professional opportunities in their host cities. Seven fellows secured an extension to the fellowship though the end of November 2014. The extension was awarded on a competitive basis to enable fellows to complete their projects and ensure a proper transition. Of the seven, four have remained in the cities for employment within their host organizations or in other organizations in the city. In total, 10 of the 15 fellows stayed in the host city following the fellowship; of the 10 that stayed, seven of them had moved to their host cities for the fellowship program, signaling that a deep commitment to the city was built through their time in the program.

1 Two fellows, Erika Selke (Detroit) and Genna Petrolla (Cleveland), left the program in December 2013. Their contributions to the host cities are reflected in the program's year one report and on the website. This report focuses on the remaining 15 fellows.

DETROIT
Chris Dorle
Dekonti Mends-Cole
Elizabeth Palazzola
Erika Selke*

CLEVELAND
Chris Alvarado
Tim Kobie
Genna Petrolla*

YOUNGSTOWN
Kathleen Fox

FRESNO
Gretchen Moore
Cole Judge

CHESTER
Arto Woodley, Jr.
Ricardo Soto-Lopez

MEMPHIS
Bernice Butler
Surayyah Hasan

NEW ORLEANS
Maxwell Ciardullo
Annette Hollowell
Jennifer Terry

SC2 PILOT CITIES & FELLOWS

* Fellows who left program in December 2013

LINKING FEDERAL RESOURCES TO CITIES

As a core component to the federal SC2 Initiative, the fellows were embedded within a broader network of support in each of their host cities. The graphic below illustrates the web of federal and local stakeholder organizations that interacted throughout the fellowship program. The stakeholders in yellow are directly related to the fellowship program. Those in blue are related to the broader SC2 initiative. Finally, the organizations in green are local stakeholders from the public, non-profit, and philanthropic sectors that were instrumental to the success of the program.


SC2 FELLOWSHIP

One to four fellows worked in the SC2 pilot cities to create additional capacity for specific projects. In most cases, they were placed within city government but were not considered city employees. They reported to both their local project manager and the SC2 Fellowship management team.

The management team worked closely with all SC2 program stakeholders to ensure the success of the program, including managing the fellows and programmatic activities.

FEDERAL

The federal SC2 Community Solutions Team (CST) is an interagency, federal team deployed to work closely with city leadership for 24 months to to support the city's strategic and economic development priorities.

Federal agencies, including HUD, EPA, DOT, and DOJ, provide support for the CST and the pilot cities.

LOCAL + OTHER PARTNERS

Each SC2 fellow had a local project manager (LPM) who guided the fellow's day-to-day work and coordinated closely with the SC2 Fellowship management team.

The pilot city's mayor and other city officials and staff played an important role in setting priorities for the SC2 Fellow(s) and collaborating with the CST.

Each fellow's work was supported by local stakeholders, ranging from businesses to community organizations to citizens.

Partners such as the Rockefeller Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, and Midtown Detroit generously supported the work of the SC2 program.

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

Mayor Ashley Swearengin made downtown revitalization one of her economic development priorities. The Fresno SC2 Fellows helped achieve this through a focus on establishing frameworks for relationship-building and engagement between the city, the Downtown Fresno Partnership, citizens, local business, and anchor institutions to create powerful partnerships to help revitalize Fresno's downtown.
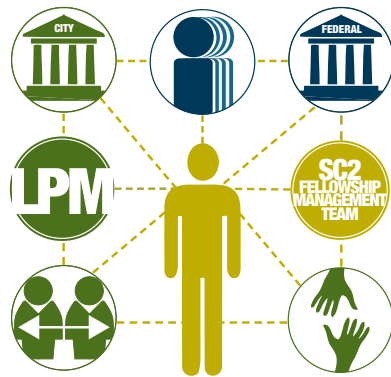
Fresno's two fellows, Cole Judge and Gretchen Moore, worked with the Fresno Downtown Partnership on event promotion and economic development.

Scott Stollman, the EPA lead of the CST team in Fresno, worked on downtown development along with a host of other issues including the Fulton Mall corridor, a recent recipient of a USDOT TIGER grant.

Kate Borders, former president and CEO of the Downtown Fresno Partnership (DFP); Craig Scharton, former director of the City of Fresno's Downtown and Community Revitalization Department, interim director of DFP; and, Aaron Blair, the current president and CEO of DFP, served as the local project managers for Judge and Moore.

The Downtown Fresno Partnership (DFP) hosted the two fellows.

Swearengin and her team were deeply engaged with the work of the entire SC2 team.

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

In order to build a strong local economy, Mayor A.C. Wharton recognized the need to address both issues internal to city government and external in the city itself. Placed within the city government, the two Memphis SC2 Fellows helped to solve two of these issues with the implementation of a data-driven performance management system and development of effective strategies for talent retention in the newly created Office of Talent and Human Capital.
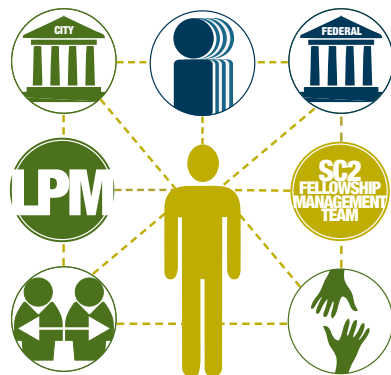
Memphis' two fellows, Bernice Butler and Surayyah Hasan, worked within the city on advancing specific key priorities put forth by Wharton.

Sarah Sieloff led the CST team in Memphis, where the interagency group worked to strengthen the city-federal partnership, improve neighborhood livability, and lift up small businesses.

Maura Sullivan, the city's deputy chief administrative officer served as the local project manager for Butler, and Douglas Scarboro, executive director of the Office of Talent and Human Capital, worked with Hasan.

The fellows worked with a variety of stakeholders, including the Greater Memphis Chamber and the Colleges of Memphis.

Wharton and his team were committed to working with the fellows and the larger SC2 team to advance Memphis's priorities.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

The city of New Orleans has seen a series of large-scale investments and interest in the city in recent years. Mayor Mitch Landrieu chose to focus the fellows' work on connecting those investments to the citizens of New Orleans, including improving access to health care, working with educational institutions and employers to create pipelines to good jobs, and creating and implementing plans to provide broadband access in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Three SC2 Fellows — Maxwell Ciardullo, Annette Hollowell, and Jennifer Terry — worked with the city of New Orleans on healthcare access, workforce development, and broadband access.

Erich Caulfield and the CST team have worked in the city on many initiatives, including developing a primary care health care access plan for low-income residents; establishing initiatives to support local startups and small businesses; and creating city-wide strategies to address substance abuse and mental health.

Chris Gunther, New Orleans Health Department; Nadiyah Coleman, director of workforce; Lamar Gardere, quality control/quality assurance manager for the ITI department; Karen DeSalvo, health commissioner for the City of New Orleans, and senior health policy advisor to Mayor Landrieu; and, Allen Square, chief information officer, served as the local project managers.

Other city staff worked closely with the SC2 team to connect the citizens of New Orleans with healthcare, jobs, and broadband.

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Detroit is transforming itself by restructuring the city government, rethinking urban policy, and revisioning the city's future. The Detroit SC2 Fellows worked to help position the city for change through direct technical assistance to the city, stakeholder engagement, and implementation of the Detroit Future City framework, all supporting a reform agenda for the city.

Two Detroit fellows, Elizabeth Palazzola and Dekonti Mends-Cole, worked directly with the city government and two fellows, Chris Dorle and former fellow Erika Selke, worked on implementation of the Detroit Future City framework.

Eugenia Metrakas and the CST team worked to improve public safety through police force retention, develop a platform for public-private partnerships to support transit investment, and deepen philanthropic partnerships to support the Detroit Future City framework.

Local project managers included Brent Hartzell with the city of Detroit's budget office; Boysie Jackson, chief procurement officer; Charles Raimi, deputy corporation counsel; and, Heidi Alcock, senior program manager for Detroit Future City, served as local project managers.

Detroit Future City hosted two fellows, and many other local businesses, stakeholders, and citizens engaged in their work.

The Kresge Foundation and Midtown Detroit, Inc., organizations that are deeply invested in Detroit's future,helped to fund the fellows' work and were part of a strong network of partners that make the SC2 work possible.

CLEVELAND, OHIO

Through active urban revitalization initiatives, Cleveland is dedicated to improving the quality of life for its citizens. The city has asked the Cleveland fellows to provide capacity in continuing this progress by pushing key items forward to improve internal operations related to vacant property deposition and create compelling branding and story telling that demonstrated that the city is "open for business."
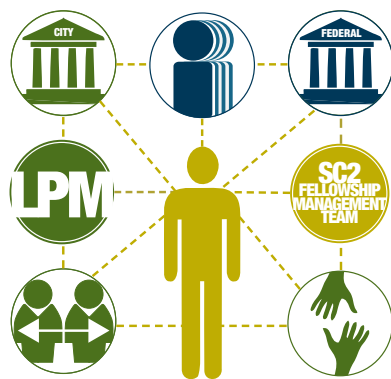
SC2 Fellows Chris Alvarado and Tim Kobie worked on issues related to vacant and disused property management and redevelopment. Former fellow Genna Petrolla focused on branding and economic development.

Bob Bitzenhofer and the CST team focused on workforce development, together with the Cleveland/Cuyahoga Workforce Investment Board and K-12 educators, to improve worker readiness and connect learning opportunities to jobs.

Terry Robbins, land bank manager, Ron O'Leary, assistant director of the Department of Building and Housing, and Tracey Nichols, director of Economic Development, worked with the individual fellows as their local project managers.

YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

Youngstown is reimagining itself through numerous city projects and developments addressing a shrinking population, stagnant growth, urban blight, and increased crime rates. Kathleen Fox's project reflects the need to track the city's progress and assess the effectiveness of the city's new policies to improve accountability and code enforcement.
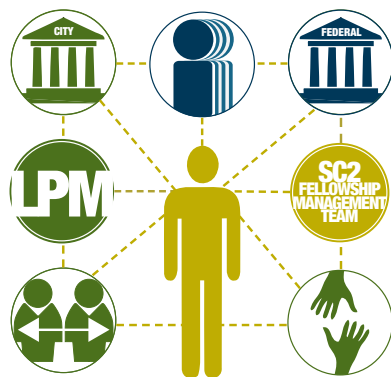
SC2 Fellow Kathleen Fox worked to develop, manage, and coordinate the implementation of a department-based performance management system.

Scott Smith and the CST team worked with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to establish a Diagnostic Center to improve public safety by using data to gauge the scope of community challenges, recognize trends, establish baselines, and determine data driven strategies to increase public safety.

Local project managers included DeMaine Kitchen, former chief of staff to former Mayor Charles Sammarone; and Sean McKinney, building and grounds commissioner and former chief of staff to Mayor John A. McNally IV.

Mayor John A. McNally IV and his team were committed to working with Fox and the larger SC2 team in Youngstown to advance the city's priorities.

CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA

Through the fellowship program, Mayor John Linder has built city capacity to address some of the key obstacles to Chester's revitalization. Fellows focused primarily on creating partnerships to move projects such as a modern zoning code rewrite forward, and used community engagement techniques to involve Chester's citizens in visioning their city's future.
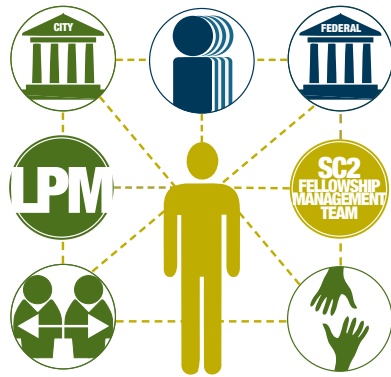
SC2 Fellows Ricardo Soto-Lopez and Arto Woodley worked within the city on downtown and neighborhood revitalization and building community partnerships, respectively.

John Fleming and the CST team successfully worked to bring a supermarket-style food bank to downtown Chester, and helped the city obtain a $1 million grant from USDOT designed to help leverage transportation investments for community development.

Julie Dietrich, director of government relations for Widener University and Summer Freeman from the office of Mayor John Linder worked with both Soto-Lopez and Woodley as their LPMs.

Widener University was a strong partner to the SC2 program in Chester, providing resources and local project management support.
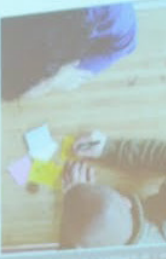
Mayor John Linder and his staff were committed to working with the fellows and the larger SC2 team to advance Chester's strategic priorities.

Maxwell
Maxwell Ciardullo

SG2
FELLOWSHIP
MANAGEMENT
ACADEMY

FELLOWSHIP COMPONENTS

FELLOWSHIP COMPONENTS

Through the SC2 program, fellows had access to a variety of resources and supportive activities that boosted their professional capabilities and enhanced the implementation of their fellowship projects. These resources included a proven management training program, mentoring, peer-to-peer learning activities, and professional development opportunities. Through a separately funded program, GMF also delivered peer-to-peer learning and leadership activities to a broader network of stakeholders in each pilot city. The program was tailored to advance both fellows' projects and key economic development priorities identified by each city. The activities also helped to strengthen the fellows as a cohort and developed a broader community of practice across the SC2 cities.

All activities sought to support established and emerging leaders in each city. For the fellows, this included strengthening core competencies to manage complex projects and stakeholder networks. For city personnel working alongside of the fellows, this also included connecting leaders to national experts and establishing an SC2 leadership network across the cities. Collectively, these supportive activities maximized the impact of the program and contributed to the overall goal of building capacity in the pilot cities. The following section provides a brief snapshot of the supportive activities and their affects.

SUPPORTIVE ACTIVITIES STRUCTURE

The management team supports the fellows in their work supporting the pilot cities through programming that compliments the SC2 work underway in each location.

MENTORING & PROJECT ADVISING

Experts from the fellowship management team, Joe Schilling (Virginia Tech) and Kathy Hexter (Cleveland State University), served as mentors to provide ongoing support to the fellows during the program. In addition to mentoring and project assistance, the mentors provided access to national experts and practitioners on policy and management issues, connections to local partner organizations and resources, and exposure to new approaches and out-of-the-box thinking.

In addition to mentoring, the management team also engaged project advisors for selected fellows who needed specific coaching or assistance for their projects. These advisors were hand-selected by the SC2 management team to assist the fellows in program development, project management, management of complex groups of stakeholders, and other topics to ensure the success of the fellow's project and guide their growth as an urban leader.

IMPACT

Fellows were *very satisfied* with the level of contact they maintained with their mentor and their mentor's availability.

> " *What sets the SC2 Fellowship apart from other fellowship programs is that it provided the fellows with the opportunity to draw on national and international contacts and networks on urban transformation. That's why its so important that this program be continued.*
>
> - Heidi Alcock
> senior program manager for Detroit Future City

resources connected knowledgeable personable mentoring experienced advice project accessible dedicated bright flexible

MANAGEMENT TRAINING ACADEMY

Cleveland State University's Center for Leadership Development (CSU) directed the SC2 Management Training Academy. The Academy consisted of a comprehensive management and leadership development curriculum led by outstanding practitioners and faculty from CSU's Levin College of Urban Affairs and other participating institutions. The Levin College faculty has been nationally recognized for their expertise in public management, urban and regional planning, economic development, non-profit administration, neighborhood development, and real estate.

CSU tailored its nationally recognized Public Management Academy specifically for the fellowship program to address issues facing the seven pilot cities and to support fellows' projects. Held quarterly in one of the seven cities, the three-day Management Academy was an opportunity for the fellows to build skills, network, and learn from each other. In addition to the academy courses, fellows received project-specific mentoring and coaching to assist them in troubleshooting specific issues and applying the learning concepts from the academy to their work.

The academy was a vital element of establishing a cohort and sense of camaraderie amongst the fellows; it was also a critical opportunity for the management team to engage with the fellows, trouble shoot issues, and provide additional coaching. Rotating the academy to each of the cities enabled the host fellows to showcase their work and connect local leaders to the fellowship cohort.

IMPACT

Top *Five* Learning Modules:

1. Understanding Ourselves & Others
2. Ethics & Integrity/ Change Management
3. Performance Management
4. Negotiation & Conflict Resolution
5. Survey & Research Data Collection/ Data-Based Decision-Making

Fellows *overwhelmingly* felt that the time commitment required for them to participate in the Academy was worthwhile *(3 days every 3 months)*.

" *It's been great to be able to talk through ideas, issues with people who are neutral (in the sense of not being in my city) but who want my project to be successful — because we all want each other's projects to be successful.*

" *The most important benefit was the opportunity to establish a strong cohort of SC2 Fellows and to learn about them, their challenges, the cities they are working in, the lessons they were learning, and how those lessons might apply to my work. I gained significant insights into a number of leadership and management theories, gained new skills and information, and honed skills in which I already had some base knowledge.*

TRAINING ACADEMIES

Fellows Jennifer Terry and Elizabeth Palazzola during a workshop on communication skills in Detroit. Each Management Academy focuses on developing one or more skill sets to assist the fellow in their project implementation and beyond.

TRAINING ACADEMIES

Cleveland — October 2012
Understanding Ourselves & Others
Public Sector Leadership/ Managing in Public Organizations

New Orleans — January 2013
Project Management I
Survey & Research Data Collection
Data-Based Decision-Making
Performance Measurement

Detroit — April 2013
Developing & Leading Teams/ Communication Skills
Project Management II

Chester — July 2013
Ethics & Integrity /Change Management
Labor Relations/Negotiation & Conflict Resolution

Memphis — October 2013
Facilitation Skills/Influence Skills
Diversity & Emotional Intelligence

Fresno — January 2014
Budgeting
Effective Presentations

Cleveland — April 2014
Capstone Presentations

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

As part of the SC2 Fellowship Program, fellows had the opportunity to learn not just from one another, but also from colleagues working in cities throughout the United States and Europe to broaden their knowledge base and skills sets. Through GMF's Urban and Regional Policy Program, for example, fellows were able to access to transatlantic programming and a diverse network of U.S. and European practitioners to enhance their fellowship experience.

To facilitate these opportunities, each fellow had access to $2,500 to support professional development activities during the fellowship. Fellows were required to submit a proposal to GMF requesting funds from their professional development allocation; GMF evaluated and approved proposals, in addition to supporting the fellows in identifying conference and training opportunities.

Fellows participated in both domestic and international professional development activities in four categories: leadership development and career coaching; exploring best practices; certification and training; and presenting and/or participating in national conferences.

IMPACT

8 number of fellows who used their funds for more than one profession development opportunity

4 number of fellows who used their funds for international/ transatlantic trips

20 Number of cities visited by fellows in their professional development opportunities

TYPESOFPROFESSIONALDEVELOPMENTACTIVITIES

24%: Leadership Development and Career Coaching

14%: Exploration of domestic and international policy best practices

24%: Certification and Training

38%: Presentation and participation in national conferences
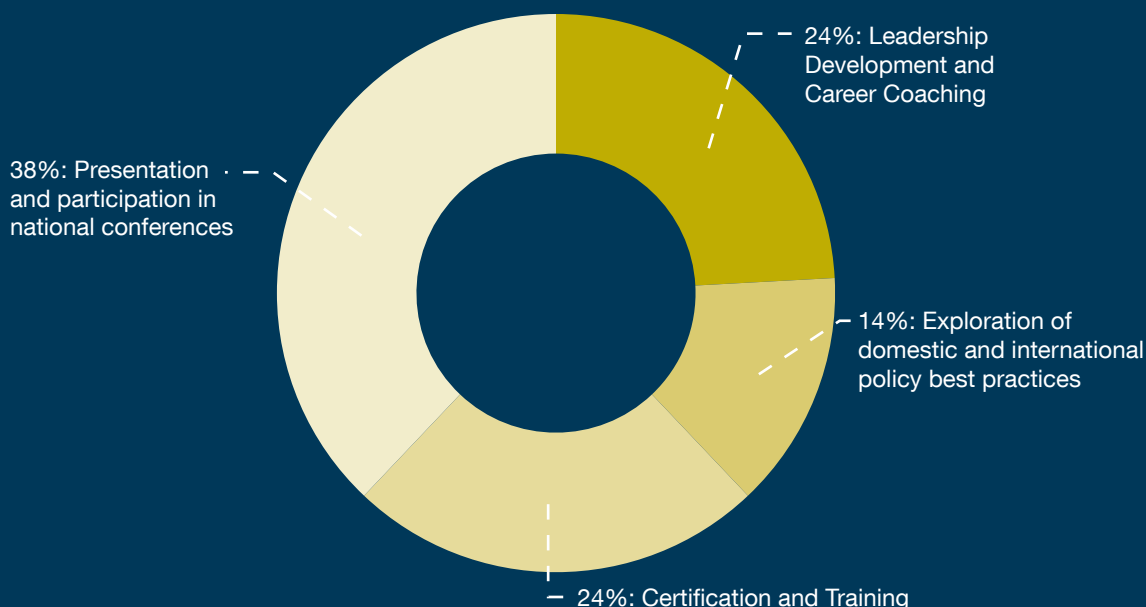
THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Being selected as an SC2 Fellow unlocked opportunities for the fellows to hone their thought leadership skills and craft a public point of view on pressing urban policy issues. As part of the fellowship requirements, fellows wrote monthly blog posts reflecting on their SC2 experiences. GMF selected outstanding contributions for publication on its blog, Urban Current. Fellows wrote about their project successes, innovations in their cities, and how their work linked to a broader policy context. GMF collaborated with two media companies during the fellowship to provide customized training and guidance for blog writing and thought leadership. SC2 fellows' blog posts were widely read by both domestic and international audiences over the two-year fellowship period. Several fellows even had their work reposted by local online media in their cities. In addition to blogging, many fellows actively stoked their social media profile through regular posts on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. GMF helped to extend the reach of the fellows thought leadership by regularly pushing out information, blog posting, and retweets to its global network.

IMPACT

92 blog postings authored by fellows were published on Urban Current website

Urban Current has a high readership in SC2 Cities
5 of the top 10 cities of reader origin are SC2 cities

Fellows thought leadership had an international reach
29% of readers come from outside North America

Cole Judge's blog "The Failed Experiment of the American Pedestrian Mall" had the most views with over 1,700

Kathleen Fox had three of the top five posts: Makers, Millennials and Maple Syrup: The Future of Youngstown, Ohio, Why not a Y-Line?, Get SMARTS

BLOG POSTS

"White House Support for "Detroit 2.0" Technological Innovation"
Chris Dorle

"Cleveland's Vacant Land: A Canvas for Creativity"
Chris Alvarado

"Is the housing market making us look insane?"
Tim Kobie

"How New Opportunities Transform Lives in New Orleans"
Annette Holllowell

"The Lincoln Street Art Park: From Industrial Discard to Urban Oasis"
Elizabeth Palazzola

OUR FAVORITE TWEETS

Arto Woodley, Jr. @AWJR
Promise of fellowships exists in: durability, integration, & cultural shits via Tom Burns @ MI_VirginiaTech #uf2014 #urbanfellows

@gmfus
Gretchen Moore @GMoore14
"Leadership, infrastructure and resources" required for success in cities. @AWJR #uf2014 #ahamoment @gmfus #sc2

German Marshall Fund @gmfus
"Bernice Butler, #SC2 Fellow, Memphis: Change the pronoun...Make it about the identity of the city so it becomes about us and not about we."

SC2 LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

GMF's Urban and Regional Policy Program was awarded funds from the Surdna Foundation to build additional capacity and expand the impact of the SC2 Fellowship Program within each of the seven pilot cities.

To meet this goal, the SC2 Leadership Activities Initiative built civic capacity, engaged and connected local stakeholders, and encouraged innovative thinking around economic development and community revitalization strategies. GMF designed three activities under the initiative to link and leverage the efforts of the local leaders, the SC2 federal team, and SC2 fellows in each city: a two-day "Bootcamp" in each city, peer exchange travel grants, and a national network workshop.

TIMELINEOFSC2LEADERSHIPACTIVITIES

	BOOTCAMP		PEER EXCHANGE		NATIONAL NETWORK WORKSHOP

| FRE | | | | MEM | CHE | | NOLA | | YT | | CLE | MEM | CHE & NOLA | FRE & CLE |
| | | | | | | | | | | | CLE | YT | | |

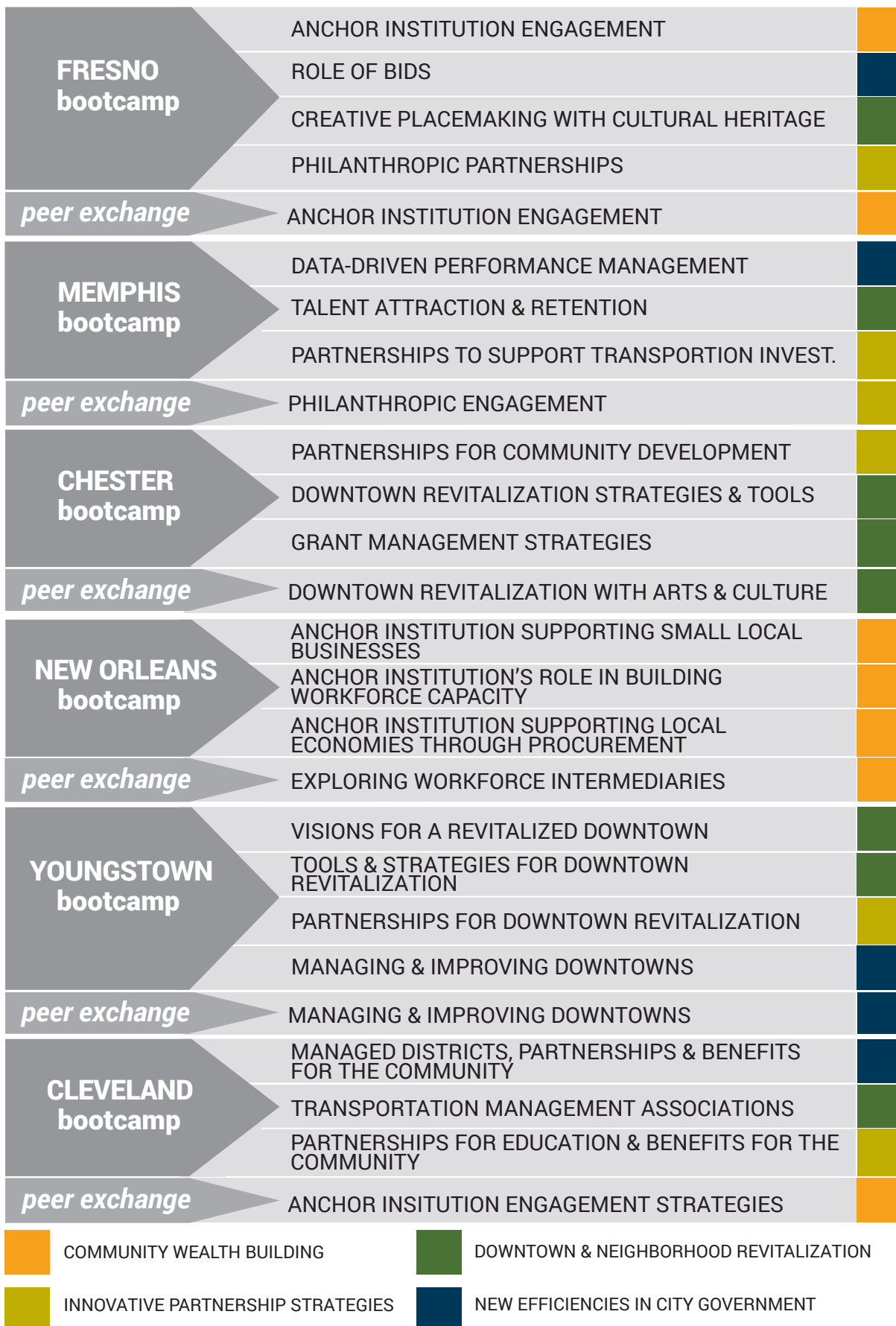| JUNE 2013 | JULY 2013 | AUG 2013 | SEPT 2013 | OCT 2013 | NOV 2013 | DEC 2013 | JAN 2014 | FEB 2014 | MAR 2014 | APR 2014 | MAY 2014 | JUNE 2014 | JULY 2014 | AUG 2014 |

GMF viewed the activities as an opportunity to create a strong network of economic and community development practitioners to support the SC2 Fellows work and city revitalization initiatives, as well as share knowledge and resources. The activities were based on a peer-to-peer learning model supplemented by impulses from expert practitioners from other communities and dialogue facilitated by GMF staff. The strategy was to inspire innovative thinking around community revitalization strategies and economic development, but not to encourage replication of unique solutions that worked in case study communities.
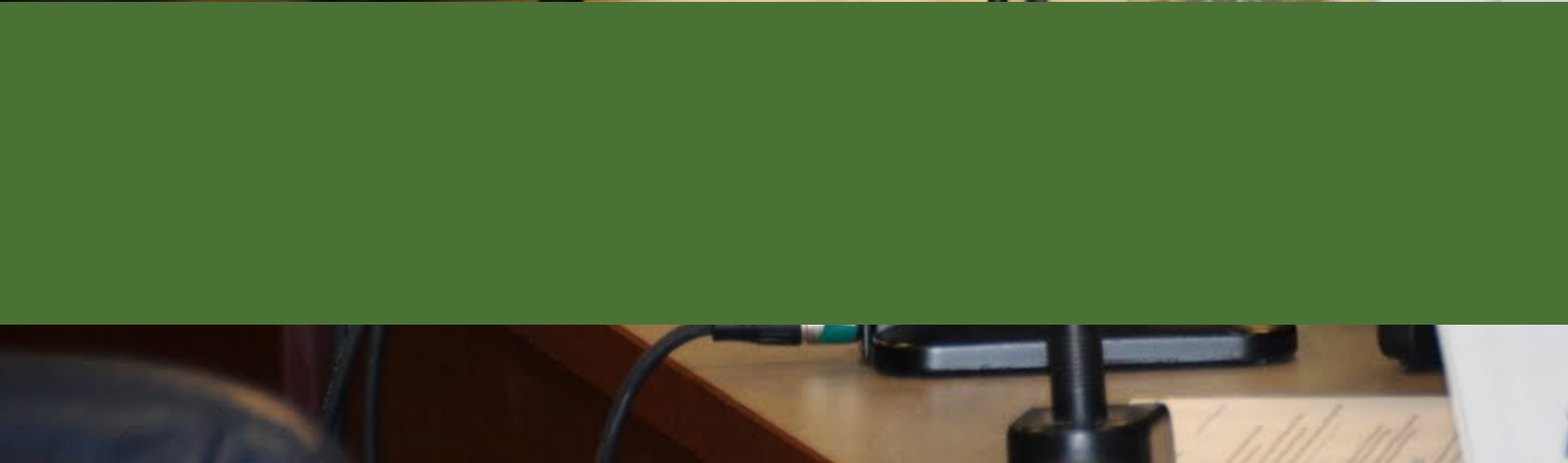
As a result of the SC2 Leadership Activities, each participating SC2 city had concrete outcomes. These outcomes ranged from the creation of a Presidential Council in Fresno to tackle the city's most serious problems with the help of local leaders, to the announcement of a Economy Opportunity Strategy for Disadvantaged Job Seekers and Businesses by New Orleans' Mayor Landrieu.

For more information regarding this initiative, please visit the Urban and Regional Policy programs webpage at http://www.gmfus.org/topic/urban-regional-policy.

THEMES ACROSS THE SC2 CITIES

FRESNO bootcamp

- ANCHOR INSTITUTION ENGAGEMENT
- ROLE OF BIDS
- CREATIVE PLACEMAKING WITH CULTURAL HERITAGE
- PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERSHIPS

peer exchange
- ANCHOR INSTITUTION ENGAGEMENT

MEMPHIS bootcamp

- DATA-DRIVEN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT
- TALENT ATTRACTION & RETENTION
- PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT TRANSPORTION INVEST.

peer exchange
- PHILANTHROPIC ENGAGEMENT

CHESTER bootcamp

- PARTNERSHIPS FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES & TOOLS
- GRANT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

peer exchange
- DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION WITH ARTS & CULTURE

NEW ORLEANS bootcamp

- ANCHOR INSTITUTION SUPPORTING SMALL LOCAL BUSINESSES
- ANCHOR INSTITUTION'S ROLE IN BUILDING WORKFORCE CAPACITY
- ANCHOR INSTITUTION SUPPORTING LOCAL ECONOMIES THROUGH PROCUREMENT

peer exchange
- EXPLORING WORKFORCE INTERMEDIARIES

YOUNGSTOWN bootcamp

- VISIONS FOR A REVITALIZED DOWNTOWN
- TOOLS & STRATEGIES FOR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION
- PARTNERSHIPS FOR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION
- MANAGING & IMPROVING DOWNTOWNS

peer exchange
- MANAGING & IMPROVING DOWNTOWNS

CLEVELAND bootcamp

- MANAGED DISTRICTS, PARTNERSHIPS & BENEFITS FOR THE COMMUNITY
- TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS
- PARTNERSHIPS FOR EDUCATION & BENEFITS FOR THE COMMUNITY

peer exchange
- ANCHOR INSITUTION ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Legend:

- COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING (orange)
- DOWNTOWN & NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION (green)
- INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES (yellow-green)
- NEW EFFICIENCIES IN CITY GOVERNMENT (dark blue)

FELLOWSHIP
IMPACTS

FELLOWSHIP IMPACTS

The overall goal of the SC2 Fellowship Program is to support economic revitalization and social change through capacity building projects that advance key priorities in each city. Under this broad revitalization umbrella, the fellows engaged in a diverse set of projects that reflected critical needs in each host city or organization. Some fellows worked on a suite of projects through the course of the fellowship period, while others focused on one large initiative. The management team, the fellow, and the fellow's local project manager worked collaboratively to determine the portfolio of work assigned to the fellow. This scope of work was formalized in a project plan agreement (PPA) that was executed at the beginning of the fellowship period and updated as needed.

When considering the diverse range of the fellows' portfolios, four common themes emerged that describe the focus of their collective work:

1. Advancing Downtown and Neighborhood Revitalization: projects that enhanced the people, places, and economies of downtowns and neighborhoods.

2. Developing Workforce Pipelines and Talent Ecosystems: projects that focused on human capital development as a strategy for long term economic growth and revitalization.

3. Enhancing Community Access, Engagement, and Partnership Development: projects that prioritized increasing community engagement, building partnerships, and enhancing access to critical services.

4. Fueling New Efficiencies in City Government: projects that strove to improve city processes and systems in order to strengthen transparency, accountability, and efficiency.

The following section provides a deeper look at the fellows and their selected accomplishments. Each fellow was required to prepare a final report documenting the full scope of their work and project accomplishments. Executive summaries of these reports are available on GMF's website at http://www.gmfus.org/initiatives/strong-cities-strong-communities-fellowship

ADVANCING DOWNTOWN & NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

In recognition of the importance of place-based initiatives to the SC2 approach, many cities selected fellowship projects that focused on holistic strategies for downtown or neighborhood revitalization. Fellows working on projects under this theme enhanced the people, places, and economies of downtowns and neighborhoods through revitalization planning, stakeholder engagement, and investment strategies. Projects included implementing a downtown campaign in Fresno, developing a cultural corridor strategy in Chester, and streamlining vacant land banking in Cleveland. Through their projects, the fellows worked to establish compelling visions for change, effective cross-sector partnerships, and feasible strategies that recognized the unique needs and qualities of each place.

SOURCE: Ron Antonelli/Bloomberg
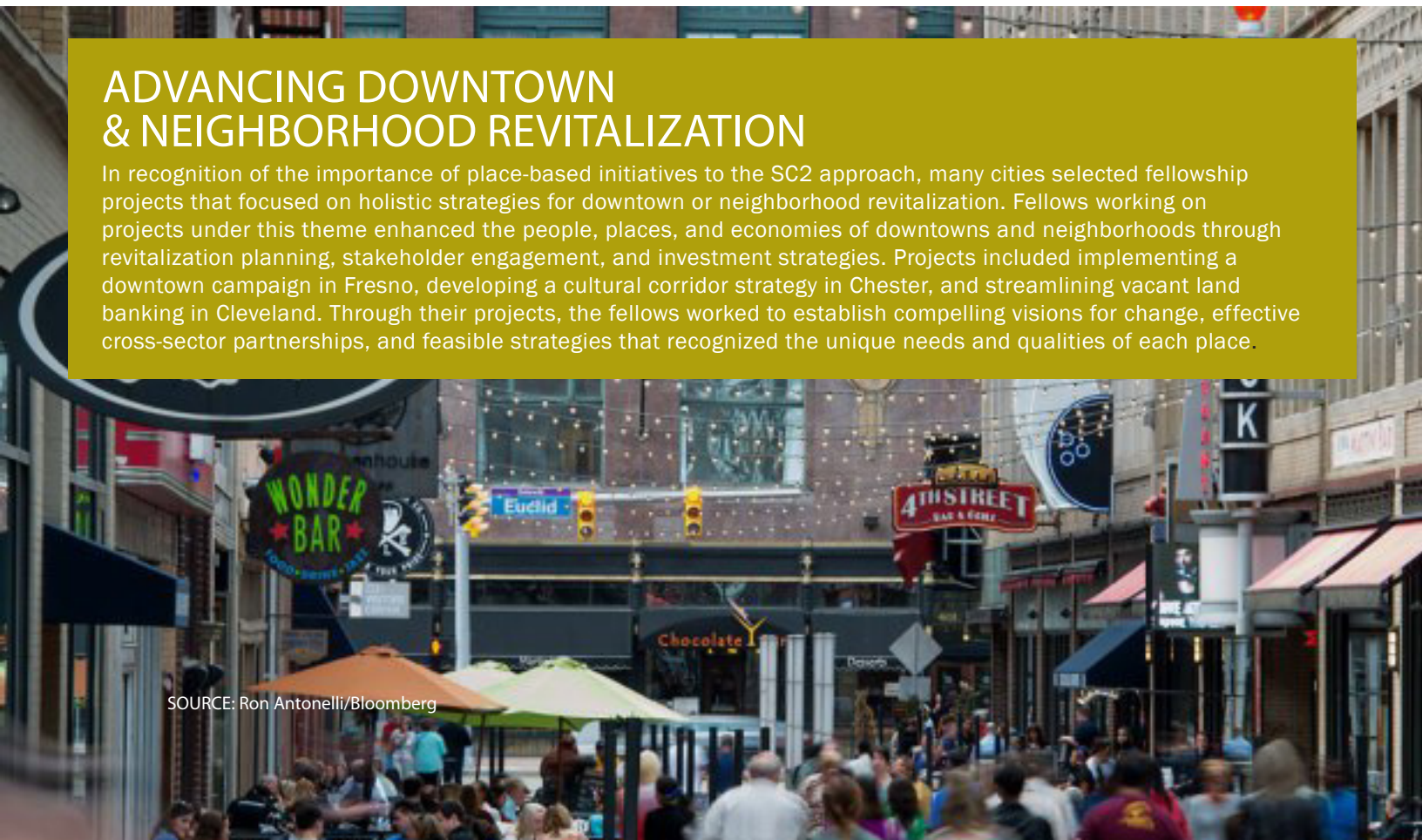
COLE JUDGE
Economic Development | Fresno, California

In support of the Downtown Fresno Partnership (DFP), Cole Judge worked on economic and business development projects to help create a vibrant, strong downtown economy to benefit the entire Fresno region. Her work in Fresno included providing resources to downtown businesses, furthering economic development efforts, assisting the Economic Development Corporation in relocating businesses in the path of high speed rail, and coordinating the "I Believe in Downtown Fresno" campaign. As a member of the DFP team, Judge conducted best practices research on pedestrian malls converted to main streets, looked at data that included pedestrian count methodologies and reviewed the use of main street marketing and business improvement districts. As high speed rail construction and service begins in the coming years, Downtown Fresno's 130 vacant properties may become an asset and Judge created a downtown vacant property database and coordinated with the Economic Development Corporation to share available vacant property data with those affected by high speed rail relocations.

select accomplishments

- Managed Mayor Swearengin's "I Believe in Downtown" campaign, engaging over 1,600 Fresnans in dialogue on downtown revitalization and the Fulton Main Street Project. This galvanized 450 supporters to attend the City Council vote to secure the $16 million multimodal TIGER grant to restore the Fulton Main Street.

- Initiated the "Open for Business" program by presenting to over 20 different Fulton businesses (translated into Spanish), conducting best practice research on construction mitigation ideas, and producing a 16-page guide with tips and photos on ways businesses can thrive during construction.

- Analyzed 200 U.S. pedestrian malls and published "The Failed Experiment of the American pedestrian mall," with recommendations for the future of the Fulton Mall. This report became a pivotal document in the vote on reopening the Fulton Street Mall as city and community leaders used its findings to support the I Believe Campaign.

RICARDO SOTO-LOPEZ
Implementing the Chester 2020 Vision | Chester, Pennsylvania

In October 2012, Mayor John Linder and the City Council adopted Vision 2020 and a resolution establishing the Historic Chester Arts and Cultural District. These provided the public policy framework required for arts, culture, and historical promotion as the basis for the redevelopment of downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Ricardo Soto-Lopez worked closely with Bill Payne, city planning director, and Paul Fritz, city planning consultant, on this major citywide revitalization effort. Soto-Lopez developed a framework for the Chester Cultural Corridor (C3) that created an arts and cultural district linked to Deshong Park. He also worked on revamping the city's zoning ordinance. His work on the C3 focused on developing a shared vision for DeShong Park, an underutilized, county-owned park located along a primary corridor in the city. Soto-Lopez also helped to convene the C3 partnership, an ad-hoc community organizing effort engaging citizens in the work of advancing the arts and cultural district in Chester. Central to this effort is the recovery of Deshong Park. He focused early-on on developing a new city wide zoning ordinance needed to implement the comprehensive plan and meet the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Code. The new zoning code is based on principles of smart growth, mixed-use, and sustainable development, and utilizes both use-based and form-based regulation to achieve high quality infill redevelopment projects that respect the existing urban fabric.

select accomplishments

- Engaged citizens through a series of community listening sessions and surveys in summer 2013 with over 160 participating community members to develop a plan for the reuse of Deshong Park and the Chester Cultural Corridor strategies based on community preferences.

- Established a new working agreement and relationship between the city and county for community use of DeShong Park.

- Worked with a coalition of public and private partners under the lead of the Pennsylvania Humanities Council to secure a grant from the Pew Foundation on June 16, 2014 to advance the Chester Cultural Corridor project, an important part of the city's downtown revitalization strategy.

CHRISTOPHER ALVARADO
Land Banking | Cleveland, Ohio

An important priority for Cleveland's neighborhood revitalization strategy was to streamline the process of putting vacant properties back into productive, revenue-generating reuse through the city's land banking program. With a backlog of purchase applications in various stages of review, Chris Alvarado was brought into the city's Department of Community Development to accomplish three objectives: 1) clear the backlog of applications and create an on-line application process to prevent future backlogs; 2) streamline the tracking, review, and approval process across various city departments to increase the number of applications that result in successful sales and the reuse of formerly vacant land; and 3) increase awareness of the city's Land Bank program among Clevelanders. The improvements Alvarado made to the Land Bank application review process allow for more aggressive marketing of vacant land for beneficial reuse unencumbered by the concern that increased application volume will result in a larger backlog of unresolved cases. Each approved application that results in a sale buttresses neighborhood revitalization efforts, encourages Clevelanders to improve their properties and communities, and helps the city's bottom line through decreased maintenance costs for vacant property.

select accomplishments

- Cleared the backlog of applications.

- Wrote a more user-friendly application that could be filled out electronically and imported directly into the Land Bank tracking system which resulted in an initial 168% increase in the number of applications reviewed.

- Put in place an integrated land bank database management system between community development and planning and partnering Community Development Corporations (CDCs).

- Improved the City's system for tracking the status of land bank applications.

CHRIS DORLE
Detroit Future City Implementation | Detroit, Michigan

Detroit Future City (2013) is a comprehensive strategic framework plan for the city of Detroit to help stakeholders make decisions around a shared vision that improves the quality of life in Detroit while achieving fiscal sustainability. Executive Director Dan Kinkead and Senior Program Manager Heidi Alcock led staff members at the Detroit Future City Implementation Office to strategically coordinate decision-making, and manage, support, and guide projects that implement the Detroit Future City framework. Chris Dorle was a member of the Implementation Team Office, helping to lead implementation of the City Systems Element of the Detroit Future City Strategic Framework. Dorle focused on three transformative areas: 1) strategic infrastructure renewal; 2) landscape as 21st century infrastructure; and 3) diversified transportation for Detroit and the region. Detroit has a powerful imperative to establish more resilient, cost effective, and innovative systems to improve quality of life for Detroiters. Dorle's work thoughtfully and strategically linked infrastructure to current and future needs through strategic investments and system renewal.

select accomplishments

- Established new working relationships with key partners within the city and community to implement elements of the City Systems vision.

- Leveraged the federal SC2 network and White House team on the ground in Detroit to bring new resources to Detroit, including working with the U. S. Department of Energy to identify opportunities to increase renewable energy production and/or pilot new energy technologies in the city.

- Led the process that resulted in hiring a chief information officer for the city and helped raise funds to hire a deputy director for the office. The potential impact of this is far reaching; providing reliable data for decision making within the city and greater transparency of data for the public.

- Together with Greening of Detroit, launched the Detroit Green Corridor Initiative in October 2014, which focuses on deploying carbon buffers across the city.

INSIDE THE FELLOWSHIP: PLANNING FOR SUCCESS IN THE MOTOR CITY

Christopher Dorle spent 18 months in Afghanistan working for USAID, coordinating with the military, the State Department, and U.S. allies. The work was both fulfilling and exhausting, and he started to feel a pull back to his home state of Michigan, which was having problems of its own due to the recession.

"I would call home to my brother who had just bought a house in Harper Woods, a suburb right outside Detroit with my niece and my sister-in-law," recalls Dorle. "He was getting killed on his house, watching his property values decrease. And he's done everything right: He's a good guy who got an associates degree and bought a starter house, and boom, having done nothing wrong, he's in debt because of the housing collapse. So, I started thinking, how can I come back and throw my energies into fixing the problems in Michigan and in Detroit?"

Dorle, a Saginaw native who was educated in Ann Arbor, applied for and received a Strong Cities, Strong Communities Fellowship, sending him back to the Motor City to address some of the region's tremendous challenges.

When Dorle and the three other Detroit fellows arrived, they were placed on the 11th floor of City Hall and set to work looking at the city's financials. It was a complicated moment, as Detroit reckoned with the idea of emergency management. Dorle eventually left City Hall for Detroit Future City, a long-term planning organization.

"The key is to have a plan," he explains. "When I first saw Detroit Future City's framework, I was like, 'This! Yes, this.' It took me back to my corporate strategy days; it took me back to the campaign planning days in Afghanistan. This is what was needed. It was brilliant. I tried to figure out how I could get involved. City systems was a natural fit."

Detroit has extreme challenges when it comes those systems. The city's infrastructure was designed for a population of 2 million; fewer than 700,000 people reside there now. The key is to focus investment, building density, and economies of scale in thriving neighborhoods, and then connecting those vibrant cores in a considered way.

"How do we look at delivering services more efficiently across the city?" asks Dorle. "We can either choose to deliver poor quality of services – as we have been – or we can look for ways to deliver the world class services that we need to be a competitive city."

At the same time, we have parts of the city where there are higher levels of vacancy," he continues. "But people still live there, and because of the social contract as a country and as a city, we're still going to deliver those services. So how can we do it? This can be an opportunity to pursue service innovation."

Detroit has 20 square miles of vacant land, which is often considered a liability. But it can also be an asset: that space can be put to use cleaning the air, managing stormwater, producing energy and creating amenities. A large portion of Dorle's work focused on implementing green and blue infrastructure, whether that means new trees, rain gardens, water conveyance systems, bioswales to filter run-off, or retention ponds.

"Detroit is still a blue-collar town," muses Dorle. "We want our land to work, same as we do."

In October, Detroit Future City held a large-scale planting near the freeway. Volunteers from all over the city came out to work. They hope that, in 20 or 30 years, visitors will drive into Motor City on beautiful tree-lined streets. Other projects include transforming 30 to 50 vacant lots across Detroit's East Side through green infrastructure and working to cultivate incentives for progressive systems policy.

"For example, we're working with the Detroit Water and Sewer Department to look at how they do their billing," explains Dorle. "[Can they] allow a pilot project for using natural systems to manage stormwater. Property owners – and potentially surrounding communities – who participate would receive a rebate or a lower water bill."

Detroit Future City is also working with the Department of Energy, developing a strategy to use vacant land to generate renewable energy, making the city a global leader in sustainability while also providing a cheaper, cleaner source of energy for residents, businesses and the government.

These are hugely ambitious goals, so even though the fellowship is ending, Dorle is staying put in Detroit.

"I can't leave these problems. I've just started," he insists. "How can we create a city that people want to live in? A city that people want to move to? And one that is sustainable over the long term."

By Lee Stabert, Issue Media Group
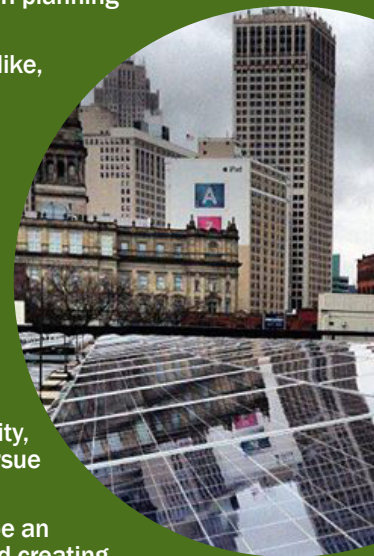
DEVELOPING WORKFORCE PIPELINES & TALENT ECOSYSTEMS

Part of the overall SC2 initiative was to enhance economic recovery and growth in the pilot cities. In response to this, several fellows focused on the critical need to support talent development systems that prepare the current and future workforce for jobs in emerging economic sectors. Projects included implementing the Pathways to Prosperity program in New Orleans and developing effective strategies for retaining talent in Memphis. Through their projects, the fellows effectively collaborated with major employers, anchor institutions, and educational partners leading their city's talent development systems.

SOURCE: www.workforce.com

ANNETTE HOLLOWELL
Workforce Development | New Orleans, Louisiana

In support of SC2's efforts to enhance economic recovery and growth, Annette Hollowell worked in the city's Office of Workforce Development and helped to coordinate the Pathways to Prosperity Program. She developed training programs and conducted outreach for unemployed and underemployed city residents and identified emerging economic sectors to align training programs to available jobs. Hollowell worked closely with the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System (SLVHCS) and the New Orleans East Hospital to secure Healthcare Workforce Partnership Planning Grants through the New Orleans Works (NOW) Collaborative. These two individual grants provide $25,000 in funding for each healthcare provider to work with Delgado Community College and a consultant to develop training opportunities that meet the needs of the employer and support technical, academic, and soft skill development among the local workforce. With NOW support, the SLVHCS and New Orleans East Hospital will develop replicable programs to address basic soft skills and literacy development for employees and potential employees to fill vocational positions, thereby placing them on a career ladder that leads to higher paying careers in the healthcare industry.

select accomplishments

- Helped recalibrate the city's work force development office into a trusted and credible convener and broker among training providers, job providers within the health care sector, and local residents.

- Secured over $200,000 in NOW Collaborative grants to the SLVHCS while it plans for the 2016 opening of the new VA hospital as part of the city's new medical corridor district.

- Brought together the SLVHCS, Delgado Community College, and the New Orleans Works Collaborative to launch the Hudson Thomas Project, a first-of-its-kind incumbent worker training program to support existing VA employees in advancing in their careers, opening up new highly coveted government service jobs for local residents.

- Collaborated and coordinated with the newly reopened New Orleans East Hospital on an employee recruitment initiative, which resulted in a 56 percent local hiring rate.
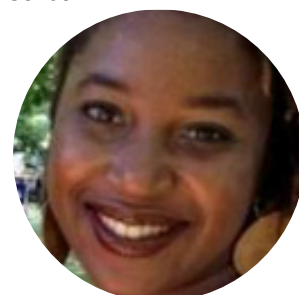
SURAYYAH HASAN
Talent Retention | Memphis, Tennessee

Mayor A.C. Wharton's Office of Talent and Human Capital (OTHC) was established to secure the city of Memphis' competitive position in the knowledge economy by supporting innovations that focus on retaining, recruiting, and developing a talented and competitive workforce. To further this work, the mayor created The Colleges of Memphis initiative, supported by a parallel effort, the Greater Memphis INTERNnet (GMI). The Colleges of Memphis (COM) began in 2010 as a collaborative of 14 local institutions to increase visibility and marketability of higher education in Memphis and connect students, faculty, and staff to resources, networks, and experiences to attract and retain talented individuals.

Hasan was specifically responsible for strengthening student and institutional connections to their counterparts and to Memphis and building a collaborative action network to increase postsecondary educational attainment. To do this, Hasan increased representation in local media, hosted events, and refined the group's web presence, including establishing a partnership with the Memphis Business Journal to produce quarterly pieces on the role of higher education in relation to the local business community. Additionally, the Greater Memphis INTERNnet (GMI), a "high tech" and "high touch" tool for students seeking internships and companies seeking interns, endeavors to retain talent and combat "brain drain" by using internships to advance opportunities for knowledge-based work and improve education outcomes by growing talent along the cradle-to-career pipeline.

select accomplishments

- Helped OTHC narrow its focus, set a clear strategy, and build a sustainable network to support talent development systems in emerging economic sectors.

- Established COM as the backbone organization for the Community Partnership for Attainment Collaborative Action Network (CPA CAN), which has partnered with other local organizations to develop a citywide post-secondary attainment goal of 55 percent by 2025.

- Organized COM Day of Service and COM Night, which allowed students to connect with their counterparts at other institutions to have meaningful experiences in Memphis.

- Led the development of a successful grant application to the Lumina Foundation ($125,000).

(Greater Memphis INTERNnet) is the best way to give students some entre into internships in Memphis. It's not easy, especially for first generation college students, without family connections wired into this world."

- Mayor A.C. Wharton, City of Memphis

INSIDE THE FELLOWSHIP:
BIG IDEAS IN THE BIG EASY

Hurricane Katrina struck during Annette Hollowell's first week of law school at University of Mississippi. The self-proclaimed "army brat" had moved around throughout her childhood, but her parents were farmers who grew up picking cotton in Mississippi and she had gone to college at Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans.

She knew she had to do something, so she spent every available school break volunteering with the Student Hurricane Network, a group that organizes trips for law students and professors to support legal aid organizations across the Gulf Coast.

"That really spurred my desire and my commitment to come back to the Gulf Coast," recalls Hollowell who eventually joined the organization's board.

She got that chance several years later when she became a Strong Cities, Strong Communities Fellow in New Orleans, placed in the Office of Workforce Development as the city's Pathway to Prosperity Coordinator.

In that role, Hollowell was responsible for identifying training opportunities for local job seekers, often in the biomedical industry. A number of major hospitals were expanding, and the city wanted to make sure local residents were able to access opportunities from the very beginning – from construction work to jobs in the completed facilities.

Another part of her role was to act as city representative to the New Orleans Works (NOW) Collaborative, a collection of funders that convenes to support workforce partnerships in the biotechnology industry. The group works with employers and education and training providers to identify what jobs will be available, determine the necessary skills, and tailor career support and training to those positions.

New Orleans faces some unique challenges when it comes to workforce development. The city has a huge literacy gap, and, according to a 2013 Loyola University report, 52 percent of the city's black men are unemployed.

"We're looking at innovative ways to address all that," she insists. "Some of these issues have been with us a long time and some of it is magnified now in this post-Katrina climate. We're all looking at best practices, looking at models that exist, and kind of throwing everything at the wall to see what sticks...There are studies saying that in order to bring people up to par to meet the current needs of industry in Louisiana, it would take another 30 years. There's a huge gap between where people are when they leave the K-12 system and where they need to be to be employable. What are the investments employers have to make to fill that gap?"

For health care work, that means creating pathways for residents who aren't college educated, but who have finished high school, have a GED or are on track for a GED. The goal is to upgrade their skills, often by placing them into a program where they can pursue a certificate or technical degree.

"It's a moving target," explains Hollowell. "We're trying to be as responsive as we can to industry needs. We don't want to prepare people for something that was relevant two years ago. It requires constantly looking at the data, looking at the information, looking at the need, and being sure that we are positioning people to pursue opportunities."

Not only did Hollowell have to wrap her head around the ever-evolving field of workforce development, but working in city government also presented a steep learning curve for the young attorney.

"I was used to working on the community side, and working directly with residents," says Hollowell. "It was different being inside the bureaucracy and seeing the talent, the opportunities, and the challenges."

That community engagement started early for her. After graduating from college, Hollowell worked as a community organizer with the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation, focusing on communities that were the site of traumatic historical memories. That included Philadelphia, Mississippi, where three civil rights workers were kidnapped and murdered by the Ku Klux Klan in 1964. Forty years later, the community was still reckoning with the tragedy.

"Over the course of several months, we sat down, creating spaces for people to tell their stories, and really understand what life was like during that time, whether you were living on the black side of town, the Choctaw reservation, or the white side of town," recalls Hollowell. "We were creating opportunities for people who had grown up together their whole lives, working together, to actually talk about this history that no one talked about and that the schools didn't teach. That was a really great opportunity for me to see what systemic, sustainable change looked like."

Now that the fellowship is ending, Hollowell is staying in New Orleans, helping grow the Verbena Group, a small consulting firm she launched with her husband.

"I think that a lot of the skills that I learned as an organizer, I've had to utilize in this workforce conversation," she continues. "It really is about building broad partnerships, about understanding people's motivation for being at the table. A lot of my role was just being transparent, and trying to bring more people into the conversations that we're having around workforce needs in the city."

By Lee Stabert, Issue Media Group

ENHANCING COMMUNITY ACCESS, ENGAGEMENT, & PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Effective community participation and collaboration strategies are vital components of successful revitalization efforts that reflect community needs and aspirations. Distressed cities often have legacies of distrust and skepticism of government-led initiatives. Building back trust requires meaningful engagement, willingness to build new partnerships and alliances, and transparency. Fellows working on projects under this theme prioritized increasing community engagement, building partnerships, and enhancing access to critical services in their cities. Projects included creating outreach strategies for health care services in New Orleans, developing cross sector partnerships in Chester, and expanding broad band internet access in New Orleans. Engagement and partnerships was an issue that cut across many fellows' projects, which created a unique opportunity for peer-to-peer learning and sharing of best practices across the program.

SOURCE:: Fresno Downtown Business Hub

ARTO WOODLEY
Creating Effective Public-Private Partnerships | Chester, Pennsylvania

Like many U.S. cities, Chester struggles with how to build local civic capacity and partnerships around a shared vision for change. The mayor looked to Arto Woodley to help foster cross-sector collaboration and strategic partnerships to address the most difficult and deeply entrenched issues facing the city. The goal was two-fold: to help Chester become an entrepreneurial community and to increase public, private, and philanthropic resources. Woodley used his experience with faith-based and neighborhood organizations, as well as with private investment, to develop frameworks for two civic organizations, a Public Private Partnership (P3) Initiative to bring together private sector, non-profit, and government leaders (including the SC2 CSTs), and a Faith and Neighborhood Council to bring together the various faith and neighborhood leaders in the city. Mayor Linder's vision was to use these networks to create an "entrepreneurial community" utilizing the gifts and abilities of Chester's citizens. After gathering research from Jacksonville, Florida, and Camden, New Jersey, which have more mature public-private ventures, Woodley launched a preliminary partnership platform for both organizations in the first half of 2014.

select accomplishments

- Built trust among community members and launched The Faith and Neighborhood Council in June of 2014 to work with the city on the mayor's priorities of public safety, education, and employment opportunities for Chester residents. A framework for the council was developed and turned over to the city and faith leaders for implementation.

- The P3 is convening around public safety issues as a first step in what is hoped will become an ongoing collaboration that will continue to be convened by leaders at Widener University.
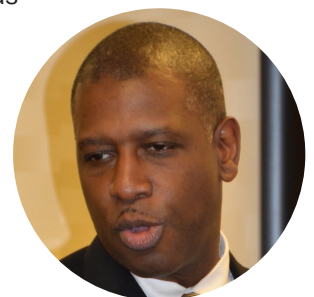
GRETCHEN MOORE
Community Engagement | Fresno, California

Gretchen Moore worked with the Downtown Fresno Partnership to build partnerships and establish an efficient framework for producing and promoting community events, projects, and activities to stimulate the economy and revitalize downtown Fresno. The long-term objective was to use the management, evaluation, and promotion of successful downtown events and partnerships to present Fresno as a vibrant and active city that is attractive to residents, visitors, and investors. Moore focused on creating a sustainable framework for boosting downtown Fresno's regional and statewide profile and created a strategy to promote and track downtown events. To consolidate efforts in downtown Fresno, the city assigned the Fulton Mall event permit management to the Downtown Fresno Partnership, for which Moore created a new, formalized permitting process for Fulton Mall events. Downtown Fresno's cross-sector stakeholders also played a role in the SC2 effort, including collaboration with Fresno State's Mass Communications Department, led by Moore. She also led the establishment of the Downtown Do-ers, a quarterly networking meeting for 50 of Fresno's hospitality, destination, events, culture, and tourism representatives.

select accomplishments

- Organized events that combined to bring 200,000 people downtown and generated over $1.2 million in the local economy.

- Launched a DFP membership program for local business, recruited sponsors for downtown events, provided one-on-one marketing support to 16 small business owners through new partnerships, expanded DFP web site with new features and content; and created a current and accessible online event calendar for promoting downtown activities and events.

- Facilitated a peer exchange visit among high-level civic leaders from the Fresno's Presidents' Council to Cleveland's University Circle Partnership to examine the catalytic roles of anchor institutions for facilitating downtown revitalization.

- Awarded Fresno's Leading Young Professionals' 2014 Connect Award for uniting multiple individuals or organizations under a common goal to promote positive change in the Fresno community.

MAXWELL CIARDULLO
Health Care Access | New Orleans, Louisiana

Maxwell Ciardullo worked with the City of New Orleans Health Department to provide access to health care to all city residents. He implemented the safety net sustainability and coverage expansion policy recommendations included in the Greater New Orleans Primary Care Safety Net Access Plan. Ciardullo laid the groundwork for a significant expansion of health coverage for uninsured residents in the Greater New Orleans Region and produced and executed a plan to increase enrollment in the area's Medicaid waiver, which provides no-cost access to primary and mental health care to low-income individuals. He also provided input and guidance to leadership about the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) provisions to expand health coverage through Medicaid and the Health Insurance Marketplaces. Though the governor ultimately decided not to expand Medicaid, New Orleans officials made a strong and broadly supported economic case for expanding health coverage to all. Ciardullo translated the overwhelming amount of information and misinformation on the ACA's Health Insurance Marketplace into useful and understandable materials for the safety net health centers and the public in order to insure that low- and middle-income uninsured individuals understand that they may be eligible for subsidies to purchase private health insurance.

select accomplishments

- Increased enrollment in Greater New Orleans Community Health Connection (GNOCHC) by 10,000, led the Greater New Orleans region in enrolling 37,000 people in marketplace plans, and produced reports, policy briefs, and maps that leave the Health Department better prepared to advocate for further coverage expansions.

- Increased connections between local residents and the network of high-quality community health centers in the region, particularly in hard-to-reach communities and neighborhoods that face some of the most significant barriers in accessing health care.

- Significantly broadened the Health Department's connections to community stakeholders and residents, who now know it as a trusted partner.

INSIDE THE FELLOWSHIP: FROM PEDESTRIAN MALL TO DYNAMIC DOWNTOWN

When Strong Cities, Strong Communities Fellow Gretchen Moore first got the call that the team at the Downtown Fresno Partnership wanted to interview her, she actually had to google the Central Valley metropolis.

"That's how familiar I was with it," she recalls with a laugh. "I came out here to interview and really loved the team. It wasn't my intention – I kind of got drafted – but it was definitely the best placement of all the cities for me."

Moore grew up in suburban Ohio and had spent the previous decade of her career working in Cleveland, mostly as commercial program director at the Westown Commu-nity Development Corporation. Her work ran the gamut from historic preservation to ur-ban planning, writing grants, and helping mom-and-pop restaurants write business plans.

It's no wonder Fresno wanted her. A city of about 500,000 in central California, the sprawling municipality is surrounded by rich farmland that helps feed the nation. That's a great asset but also a challenge. With no natural boundaries, over the last 40 years, the footprint of the city has grown to eight times its original size. Meanwhile, the health of downtown Fresno has declined in proportion to the footprint of the city.

"Our biggest challenge coming in was how do we make a case for downtown?" says Moore. "When I first started just two years ago, people were continually saying, 'We don't need a downtown – we have suburban shopping malls.' Or, 'It's too far gone – let's just move City Hall somewhere else.'"

Moore set to work creating sustainable public-private partnerships to stimulate revitalization and economic develop-ment in the struggling urban core. She and her team believe that these partnerships can have a ripple effect. Turns out there were a lot of people doing great work, but they were all working in silos. The Downtown Fresno Partnership established a three-step approach to educate, engage, and then activate those strategic partners.

One of the major goals was simply to get people to come downtown. Every winter for the past three years, Moore's organization has installed an ice rink. Last year it drew 38,000 skaters.

"In a lot of places that's not a big deal, but in Fresno, where it's warm, building an ice rink with real ice was really novel," explains Moore. "It kind of tricked people into coming downtown. We surveyed the audience and a significant portion of people had not been downtown in over five years."

Fresno has a checkered past when it comes to urban revitalization initiatives . The city is home to one of the country's most notorious pedestrian malls, the Fulton Mall, which was installed in 1964 to much fanfare. Unfortunately, national tides of suburbanization were not kind to the six-block converted main street. A huge portion of Moore's work over the last two years has been dedicated to the effort to reintroduce traffic to Fulton Street, and also changing the city's perception.

"A lot of people saw [the pedestrian mall] as another great blunder," she muses. "Fres-no failed again. It's just one more in a long list of things we tried that didn't work out. But another way to look at that is that in the '60s, when everyone was fleeing to the suburbs, Fresno was one of the first places to try something really big to make that flight stop… Yes, it didn't work out the way they wanted, but they were leaders in innovation. I think there's an opportunity for the city to have a shift in cultural thought about what this city is about – let's try something again."

The campaign was a success and construction is expected to start early next year.

Another powerful initiative was the Downtown Booster Squad, an amalgam of organizations, businesses and institutions that meet quarterly to share their agendas. They can then promote each others events and projects, and they find ways to collaborate. For example, when Broadway in Fresno produced Wicked, participating restaurants stayed open on Saturday afternoons for the matinee.

"It doesn't seem like a big deal, but before, people would come downtown and there was no place to eat," explains Moore.

Moore also helped create the Red Wave PR internship program with a grant from Wells Fargo. Fresno State University students provided 1,600 hours of marketing support to 16 downtown businesses and a professor built a semester-long curriculum around that work.

"When we had the vote to bring traffic back to Fulton Street, our interns actually came back – even though the program was the semester before – and sat in city council chambers in their 'open for business' t-shirts that we gave out," recalls Moore, who has decided to remain in Fresno and continue this work. "The fact that, even after it was over, they still cared about what happened and were still excited to see the change coming downtown, that was invaluable."

By Lee Stabert, Issue Media Group

FUELING NEW EFFICIENCIES IN CITY GOVERNMENT

At a time when many cities are facing budget constraints, improving the efficiency and accountability of the public sector is an essential element of a framework within which local economies can prosper. Finding innovative ways to improve processes and make services simpler, better, and less costly is a critical element to promoting fiscal stability and vitality. Fellows working on projects under this theme strove to improve city processes and systems in order to strengthen transparency, accountability, and efficiency challenges. Projects included improving grants management systems in Detroit, implementing a data-based performance management system in Memphis, and creating a process for prioritizing the use of demolition funds in Cleveland.

Source: www.myFOXDetroit.com

JENNIFER TERRY
Broadband internet access | New Orleans, Louisiana

The city of New Orleans is developing a citywide strategy to expand access to broadband internet for lower income residents, business owners, non-profits, and city departments and agencies. This policy focuses on using city assets to expand broadband access by improving the affordability of broadband, improving mobile access to broadband, and connecting people to digital literacy training. Telecommunications services are vital to cities and relocating this function from the private sector to the municipality can decrease delays and pushback, as well as increase service delivery. Jennifer Terry conducted research to identify factors affecting broadband provisions and user adoption as well as other communities' best practices in expanding broadband internet access, identifying possible funding sources to help pay for broadband access expansion projects, and understanding the local telecommunications industry perspective. Terry and the city broadband team mapped data in a web-based platform to compare the locations of target populations with the locations of broadband infrastructure. Terry used the information gathered to develop specific policies to allow the city to leverage its strengths to support expanded broadband access as well as support broadband pilot projects.
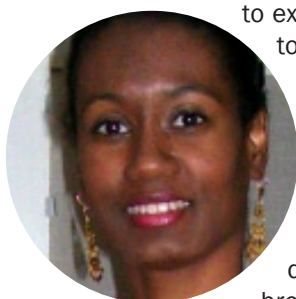
select accomplishments

- Conducted best practice research and analysis on approximately 40 U.S. and international communities — extracting concrete policy lessons on how these cities tried to improve the quality and/or decrease the cost of broadband in their communities; documenting the multiple factors affecting broadband deployment, pricing, subscription, and use; and advocating for a government role in planning for broadband.

- Researched the technological, political, legal, financial, business, socio-economic, and other factors affecting broadband provision by private sector telecoms and lesser broadband use by lower income people in New Orleans and in other locations.

- Mapped the distribution of broadband infrastructure and broadband adoption rates in New Orleans.

- Supported the development of new technologies and revisions to human resources processes in the City's Healthcare Department.

- Assisted the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission in developing a digital literacy training program by providing comments to the proposed curriculum and soliciting feedback from colleagues with a background in K-12 education.

TIM KOBIE
Vacant Property Disposition | Cleveland, Ohio

In Rust Belt cities and elsewhere, decreasing population and suburbanization have left core city neighborhoods vulnerable to blight and lacking the density to support healthy civic life. The city of Cleveland recently estimated that there were approximately 8,300 properties in need of demolition, with over 2,000 already having passed legal review. The city will need between $80 and $90 million dollars to address all of its vacant and distressed properties. Demolition is a critical process for many cities so that vacant properties can be redeveloped or creatively reused. With limited funding available, the city had conceptualized a process to more strategically prioritize demolitions. Tim Kobie was brought on by the City of Cleveland's Department of Building and Housing (B&H) to use his extensive data skills to develop a system to prioritize demolitions that would take this process from concept to implementation. Working closely with his local project manager Ron O'Leary, the department's assistant director, Kobie and the B&H staff developed a system that assigned each property in the demolition inventory a score, based on a number of factors including safety, proximity to schools, and other property and neighborhood characteristics. Priority scores were first produced in February 2013. The system enables the city to be much more strategic in using demolition to stabilize neighborhoods and to maximize cost recovery. Kobie also worked with a task force to identify bulk property holders, particularly those with large numbers of code violations, and with Community Development Corporations to improve the city's Code Enforcement Partnership Program.

select accomplishments

- Designed the processes and systems needed to achieve a long-time department goal of automating and prioritizing demolitions to improve safety and increase investment and collections. Prioritizing demolitions enables the city to improve safety and increase investment, as well as to increase collections by prioritizing bank-owned properties (banks paid their demo bills 35 percent of the time and all other owners paid at a rate of 13 percent)

- Changed standard operating procedures and implemented departmental reporting systems for greater efficiency and accountability.

- Developed a tracking and monitoring system for the city's code enforcement partnership with Community Development Corporations.

BERNICE BUTLER
Data-Driven Performance Management | Memphis, Tennessee

Bernice Butler worked as a member of the Office for the City Administrator and served as the coordinator and data manager for the mayor's priority, "Advance a Culture of Excellence in Government." She implemented a data-based performance management system for the city of Memphis as a way to improve public sector processes and make services simpler and less costly. Her initial project goal was to develop and implement a CitiStat management program that would allow the city to address issues with data and strategic resource alignment. After meeting with each city department head during her first month as an SC2 Fellow, Butler reshaped the project's original goal. Instead of simply implementing a CitiStat program, she proposed that the city embrace a three-pronged Performance Management Platform consisting of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), a Data Warehouse, and ChoiceStat.

select accomplishments

- Led the development of 195 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for selected city services and departments that were operationalized in early 2014.

- Assisted in training over 50 city staff in the new KPIs.

- Helped launch and staff the Memphis' Choice Stat sessions (first session in October 2013), where the mayor and representatives from the CAO's office and city department directors carefully examined data on key performance indicators (KPIs) in a public hearing format.

KATHLEEN FOX
City Management Infrastructure | Youngstown, Ohio

Kathleen Fox worked on two different projects over two mayoral administrations. In 2012, Mayor Charles P. Sammarone commissioned Public Financial Management consultants (PFM) to undertake a comprehensive evaluation and generate recommendations for city government cost effectiveness and improved service delivery. One of PFM's recommendations was for the city to institute a process for annual performance planning for city department heads. Fellow Kathleen Fox assisted the city of Youngstown in developing, managing, and coordinating the implementation of a department-based performance management system. After gaining an understanding of the scope and challenges of city operations, Fox created departmental functional responsibility charts and a performance planning template. Eight department heads created performance plans using SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timebound) goals, objectives, and deliverables with an emphasis on "achievable" This project was intended to provide city department directors, the mayor, and related city boards and commissions with the management information they needed in order to ensure more efficient, better integrated, and improved city service delivery.

When Mayor John A. McNally, IV took office on January 1, 2014, code enforcement and blight remediation became a top priority for the incoming administration. Fox planned, successfully sought funding for, and assisted with implementation of a technical assistance, training, and capacity building program for code enforcement and blight remediation in Youngstown. Her work laid the foundation for transformation of the City's code enforcement, blight remediation, and demolition operations.

select accomplishments

- Improved city processes by completing, presenting, approving, and monitoring eight performance plans under Sammarone's administration (Health, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Law, CDA/Planning/Zoning, Economic Development, Information Technology, and Water.)

- Researched and co-authored (with Sean McKinney, City Commissioner of Buildings & Grounds) an 18-page report containing 70 written recommendations, titled "Preliminary Report to Mayor John A. McNally, IV, City of Youngstown, Code Enforcement, Blight Remediation and Demolition."

- Researched, identified, and brought in outside experts and connected the city with national networks in long-term relationships to provide technical assistance, training, and capacity building opportunities for code enforcement, demolition and blight remediation.

- Awarded grants from the Wean Foundation and Youngstown Foundation to fund technical assistance, training, and capacity-building for Code Enforcement, Demolition, and Blight Remediation.

"When I came into office in January 2014, it was immediately clear that our citizens expected a renewed city focus on responsive, effective, and efficient code enforcement and blight remediation in order to stem the tide of neighborhood decline. As mayor, I made blight remediation a top priority using the Strong Cities, Strong Communities resources. Our SC2 Fellow worked with city staff and community development organizations to review our code enforcement and related processes, make recommendations, and obtain resources for technical assistance and training that are improving our service delivery in this critical area."

— Mayor John A. McNally, IV, Youngstown

DEKONTI MENDS-COLE
Law Department Efficiency | Detroit, Michigan

An often overlooked consequence of declining city budgets is the increase in legal liabilities for a city. The increasing number of claims against the city of Detroit have contributed to the $18 billion long-term debt liability that drove the city into Chapter 9 bankruptcy. The law department is an underutilized resource and is well placed to be a data collection resource for the city's risk management. The focus of Dekonti Mends-Cole's fellowship was on implementing a new case management system in collaboration with the Mayor's Office, Law Department management, and emergency manager's team to develop a long-term strategic cost-saving approach to the Law Department's restructuring. The methodology included a comprehensive systems change for how the law department does business and improved risk management through detailed data collection. The new legal IT system allows for tracking of incidents to identify patterns and better mitigate risks. The data-driven decision-making approach will not only save costs to the law department, but also the city as a whole.

select accomplishments

- Laid the groundwork for implementation of a new case management system to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery.

- Achieved staff buy-in and support of the new more efficient system via training sessions and new lines of communication.

- The new system increased productivity, enhanced city accountability and risk management, lowered liability costs, and improved security of legal data. Immediate cost-saving resulting from the shift to the new system was over $250,000.

ELIZABETH PALAZZOLA
Grants Management | Detroit, Michigan

Detroit's historically decentralized grants management function, along with years of resource constraints and outdated data management systems, resulted in a high number of audit findings related to grants, limited ability to track existing and apply for new grants, and a general lack of oversight. Elizabeth Palazzola designed and implemented a citywide grants management system and created a new unit within city government to provide oversight and assistance to grant-funded operating departments, such as transportation, health, and planning. Her goals were to reduce the number of audit findings issued against City departments by improving training, more strategically using funds, and better managing financial data. She focused on finding ways to change existing procedures to ensure that the proposed processes would be financially and organizationally sustainable and not be easily cut during a new mayoral term or budget cycle. Palazzola researched and evaluated the state of grants management in Detroit and developed a report that compiled her findings and provided a number of recommendations. Palazzola presented her report to senior city leadership, City Council, and the emergency manager's staff. After presenting her recommendations, she continued to work behind the scenes to bring the grants module online, present the plan to additional departments, and work with city leadership to develop an implementation plan. She was able to successfully sustain her efforts through the city's financial oversight, Emergency Management, intense staff turnover, bankruptcy, a new city council structure (election by district), and a new mayoral administration.
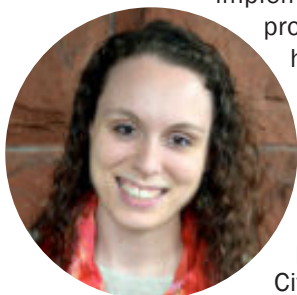
select accomplishments

- Laid the groundwork for a new grants management system that was adopted publicly as a Mayoral Initiative, and adopted in part by the emergency manager who was appointed in Spring 2013. The city created a new grants unit and hired a grants unit manager to serve as a central point of contact. The new system is expected to increase the city's access to grant-funded resources through improved accountability and transparency and reduced negative audit findings.

- Built a cohort of engaged stakeholders across departments and provided support and training to facilitate implementation, improve performance, foster teamwork, and ensure sustainability.

- Led effort to launch Adopt-a-Park program to clean up civic spaces and inspire neighbors to cooperate and work together on other projects.

INSIDE THE FELLOWSHIP: CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS IN CLEVELAND

Timothy Kobie thought he was going to be an engineer. He liked math. He liked science. But early on in his time as an undergraduate at Case Western University in Cleveland, he changed course.

"I ended up getting a degree in sociology," he recalls. "I really liked studying people, what they did, and how they interacted."

That decision set him on a winding path that eventually led to a Strong Cities, Strong Communities fellowship, applying data to demolition decisions in cash-strapped Cleveland.

While at Case Western, Kobie completed two service terms with Americorps, teaching environmental education around the city. That got him thinking about how to work in urban spaces and with people who live in cities. From there, he attended Cleveland State, earning a masters in urban planning, and followed that with a doctorate in urban studies and public affairs. Well-armed with credentials, Kobie wasn't sure what he wanted to do next.

"Did I want to work for a university?" he recalls asking. "Or did I want to try something in the private sector? The non-profit world? An opportunity came up to work for a non-profit in Washington, DC called Social Compact that was doing data mining for community and economic development. I went there and really liked what I was doing, but my wife and I really missed the midwest and northeast Ohio. We started looking for opportunities to come back."

Kobie applied to SC2 and was placed with the City of Cleveland's Department of Building and Housing. They were working on prioritizing demolitions, using data to make thoughtful decisions that were good for neighborhoods and communities.

"They knew that they wanted to protect and promote investment, and they also wanted to address safety," recalls Kobie. "From there, I stepped in and built the model around those broad concepts."

Kobie had written his dissertation on foreclosures and their impact on property values, using much of the same Cleveland-centric data he was now synthesizing. Foreclosures are often a precursor to vacant and abandoned homes.

"After the foreclosure happens, the people leave and the bank owns it," he explains. "In a place like Cleveland, the bank is not going to be able to resell it. There's just not the market. You see that in a lot of other cities such as Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and Detroit."

"You have also all these issues around safety," he continues. "People in the neighborhood see this going on, they see their property values going down, they don't feel safe, they don't want their kids walking to school. So, the people who can, they move out. And the people that are left are the ones on a fixed income. You just have this downward spiral of vacancy and it spreads to the houses nearby."

Kobie argues that if you can come in and knock down enough of these blighted properties in key areas, then you might create a market for the remaining vacant and abandoned homes. Or you'll be able to get a private developer to come in, knock the remaining ones down, and build new construction.

All of this came down to data, and building a script that could rank properties for demolition according to a set of agreed-upon metrics. For example, if a property is bank-owned, the department has a higher likelihood of recovering the demolition funds – no small thing in a cash-poor department – and therefore those properties got a higher score. Some of the data they crunched told them more than they initially thought.

"Every so often you come across a piece of data that means more than you think it does," explains Kobie. "On this project, we looked at the number of times that a property was boarded up. Our initial thinking was that this cost our department a lot of money – we were looking at it from a cost-savings perspective. But the way the board-up data actually gets generated is when a citizen calls into the department. So, really, that data piece takes into account community concern. If nobody cared about the property, we would never know to board it up. It was really surprising and really cool."

Though the fellowship is ending, Kobie has accepted a permanent job with the Department of Building and Housing. He plans to keep working on the demo project – Cuyahoga county recently passed a $50 million bond for demolition – and to tackle other challenges involving data and analysis.

All of this work is happening in concert with a wave of positive energy in Cleveland. In certain neighborhoods, investment is booming. Home prices in hot areas are even eclipsing suburban values, something unheard of even ten years ago.

"These are success stories and you want to talk about them, but at the same time, you have other neighborhoods in the city that are really struggling," says Kobie. "We want to make sure that we're not leaving these other places behind. Downtown Cleveland is booming – you have all these new restaurants, we just had the Gay Games downtown, they were shooting movies downtown last summer; the Republican Convention is coming in two years; LeBron came back to Cleveland. But if you go 30 blocks east, you really have to focus on what we can do to lift those neighborhoods, whether its strategic demolition or upping code enforcement. It's a balancing act."

By Lee Stabert, Issue Media Group

EVALUATING SUCCESS

EVALUATING SUCCESS

As a pilot program, the SC2 Fellowship was an opportunity to test the concept of building local capacity by placing of mid-career professionals in city departments to advance strategic projects. The fellowship management team learned a great deal through the development and implementation of the program; these insights will help refine the fellowship program for any future iteration and contribute to a growing community of practice around the promise of urban fellowship programs across the United States.

As part of the cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the management team, led by Virginia Tech's Metropolitan Institute, conducted a formal program review using qualitative and quantitative data drawn from surveys, focus groups, interviews, reports, and other sources. The primary evaluation questions that the team considered were as follows:

1. How did the fellowship contribute to the professional development goals of the fellow?

2. How did the fellowship facilitate peer-to-peer learning amongst the fellows and the cities?

3. How did the fellowship supplement capacity in the organization, city and/or community?

At the core of the evaluation was the concept of capacity building as an important measure of the fellows' impact and influence on the program's overall success. For the purpose of the evaluation, the management team and the fellows collectively developed a working definition of capacity and capacity building that drew upon existing literature and practice. This definition states that capacity is an entity's ability to fulfill its goals through both operational and dynamic capabilities. It also assumes that building capacity via the fellowship leverages resource assets and capacity already existing within the city. Operational capability is the ability to maintain current operations, while dynamic capability is the ability to shift resources to effect change. The team also differentiated between tangible and intangible resources that work to build capacity.

DIMENSIONS OF CAPACITY BUILDING UNDER THE SC2 FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM			
OPERATIONAL CAPACITY	DYNAMIC CAPACITY	TANGIBLE RESOURCES	INTANGIBLE RESOURCES
Projects that supported the current operations of an organization, the status quo.	Projects that altered the resource base of an organization or focused on change.	Projects that built financial resources, physical assets, systems, technology, personnel	Projects that built organizational reputation, trust, employee experience and knowledge, management skills

Highlights from the full evaluation report include:

How did the fellowship contribute to the professional development goals of the fellow?

- Held seven management training academies, with a total of 15 professional training sessions, led by over 20 facilitators, to develop strategic management and leadership competencies;

- Supported the fellows' participation in 29 supplemental professional development activities with seven fellows participating in two or more activities;

- Facilitated public speaking and thought leadership activities for fellows throughout the program.

How did the fellowship facilitate peer-to-peer learning amongst the fellows and the cities?

- Facilitated peer-to-peer learning sessions on fellowship projects during the seven management training academies.

- Developed an urban fellowship symposium and final fellows convening in Washington, DC with

policy and thought leadership content.

- Connected four fellows to GMF's transatlantic urban and regional policy programming to expand their peer network.

- Connected fellows to peer learning opportunities through SC2 Leadership Activities (bootcamps, peer exchanges, and the national network workshop) funded by the Surdna Foundation. This expanded the fellows network by introducing them to over 400 national and international experts and city peers.

How did the fellowship supplement capacity in the organization, city, and/or community?

Based on the evaluation, an overarching conclusion is that mid-career fellows can serve as important catalysts for helping change dysfunctional, outdated, and ineffective processes, programs, and systems that commonly plague distressed cities. Urban fellowship programs also sow the seeds for building the next generation of city and civic leaders committed to regenerating urban communities.

As documented throughout this assessment report, the SC2 Pilot Fellowship Program taught important lessons about the many roles that mid-career professional can play in helping develop capacity within public and nonprofit organizations in distressed cities. For example:

- When the conditions are right (a good placement/match and a good project), mid-career fellows can serve as catalysts for change within public and nonprofit sector organizations. Many of these changes will have lasting impacts within the organizations and the community at large.

- Development of new capacities or the enhancement of existing capacities takes time to scale to have maximum impact—these placements must be thoughtful and strategic, with sufficient resources and political support above and below the fellows.

- Foundations (national and regional) played critical supporting roles in several of the SC2 fellowship placements and more generally in urban fellowships; and the principles of place-based urban policy interventions often aligns with their longstanding efforts to support place-based strategies that further the goals of "equitable" economic revitalization and community development.

- Urban fellowships, to have maximum impact, should be carefully coordinated and aligned with other public and nonprofit regeneration programs, policies, and initiatives within a particular place or community.

- Urban fellowship programs, whether housed in just one city or across a cohort of cities, can develop a range of different types of capacity in the short term and serve as catalysts for changing dysfunctional systems and organizational cultures; SC2 is one model of this emerging community of practice.

Based on the results of the fellows' work and the successful operation of the program, the management team believes that a project-based, cohort-oriented fellowship program was an essential component to the mission of the SC2 initiative — developing and enhancing the capacity of distressed cities to further their economic progress. Throughout the implementation of the program, the management team has noted opportunities to strengthen the program's value to the participating cities and the overall SC2 initiative.

In conclusion, we believe the SC2 Fellowship program illustrates the multiple benefits that urban fellowships can provide. Thus, policymakers and civic and philanthropic leaders should consider urban fellowships as part of their respective place-based urban policy playbooks. They provide different types of assistance that can complement other governmental programs and non-profit/philanthropic initiatives designed to stabilize and regenerate distressed cities.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

MANAGEMENT TEAM

THEGERMANMARSHALLFUND
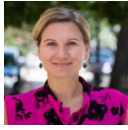
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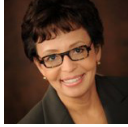
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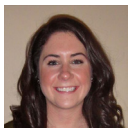
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