

2.1 Many Donors, One Fund: Developing Area Funds in Amazing Rural Places

Friday, January 31 - 8:15 – 10:00 a.m.

Session Leader

Elizabeth Myrick

Senior Associate, Community Strategies Group, The Aspen Institute
Former Program Director, Maine Community Foundation

Peer Leaders/Storytellers

Tom Cote: Organizer, Beacon Community Foundation (Daniels County, Montana)

Andy Morikawa: Executive Director, The Community Foundation of the New River Valley

Doug Friedli: Development Director, Nebraska Community Foundation

Session Topic (text from Agenda)

“That’ll never work here, “they said. But it did work. Find out how some very rural communities – remote, neglected, diverse, “without assets” – have managed to build broad-based community endowments using a variety of tactics, including matches, community events, alumni appeals, small-to-large donor efforts, and the kitchen sink! And get an overview about what it takes for a regional or statewide community foundation to build and service rural area funds.

Session Flow

Three “peer leaders/storytellers” will lead this breakout session. Elizabeth Myrick will facilitate the session and will also introduce the topic, presenters and the flow of the session to participants.

We have asked each presenter to focus on and briefly tell one specific rural area-fund-building story – one that is related to rural CED or anti-poverty work – from their foundation experience. Stories will be told *like a story*, always emphasizing the practical over the theoretical. Participants will be offered some specific “what to do’s, “what *not* to do’s” and “how-to’s” based on things presenters have learned. The session will flow like this:

Elizabeth	Intro, Context, Introductions	5 mins
Tom	Daniels Beacon Fund Story	10 mins
Andy	Floyd Fund Story	10 mins
Doug	Burwell Story	10 mins
Elizabeth	What it Takes in the CF Home Office to Launch and Support Area Funds	15 mins
Participants	Peer Advice and Stories <i>Open it up for others to present their approaches and challenges for advice and comment from Elizabeth, Tom, Andy, Doug & fellow participants.</i>	Remaining time

Presenters’ Assignment

- Know your environment.** Think about the area in which this fund was built *at the time the fund-building effort started*. JUST FOR CONTEXT, start your story by listing **three key things** that you (or the local organizers) knew (or assumed) about the place. Here are a few suggestions:
 - Type and quantity of rural giving that had gone on
 - Type and quantity of rural wealth that was there
 - Type and quantity of endowment-building or donor-based “competitors”
 - State of the economy – local and global

- Character of the place
2. **State the endowment-building goal.** Think about the endowment-building effort at the start of your story. Whether it was folly or not, if the local folks building the fund had a goal at the outset, could you tell us what it was in these terms?

To build our rural endowment, we will raise _____ dollars from _____ donors (type and number) in an area fund over _____ time.

3. **Tactics and Targets Chosen.** *This section is the guts and color of your story – and should take most of your story-telling time.* Look at the attached matrix arraying tactics and donor targets for building rural endowment. Now tell us the *real life experience* of your story...that is, what did people in the area do to build the fund -- but please focus it on the leading tactics (from the list) that were used, and delineate which donor targets the community was aiming for with each tactic. (If you used some tactic that is missing from the list, add it!)
4. **Capacities.** Briefly detail the relevant capacities that were used or newly developed over the course of this effort, in terms of:
- Financial (cash, in-kind)
 - Staffing (who did the actual work – from the CF and local volunteers)
 - Board involvement and role(s)
 - Expertise/policies learned/needed (deferred gifts, land gifts, CRTs, stock gifts, bales of hay, press relations, drinking large quantities of one-bean coffee in one sitting, etc.)
 - Relationships
 - Other
5. **So what? Outcomes and Lessons.** Tell us the rural endowment-building outcome (good or bad, significant or paltry) related to your story in terms of one or more of the following:
- Dollars
 - Range and number of donors
 - Type of gifts
 - Enhanced endowment-building efforts that it has led to (or not) in the area

Please finish up with your **lessons** by answering the following questions as they relate to your story and experience. Try to make your lead brief, clever and bumper-sticker-ish.

- ✓ What are the top *three truest (positive or tough) lessons* your foundation or the community learned in this particular effort to build an area fund? (Or, if you had it to do over again, what are top *three things* you would -- or definitely would not -- change about the design of this effort?)
- ✓ What *three lessons or pieces of advice* would you offer to another community that is in the process of beginning to build an area fund – or to a community foundation that is trying to develop a slew of area funds?