

Pathways Past Poverty Initiative

Preliminary Goals, Spring 2008

The Pathways Past Poverty Initiative (P3) began in Fall 2007 as a community-wide, grassroots mobilization focused on addressing growing poverty in Larimer County. Since then, more than 150 community members spearheaded by the United Way and the CSU Center for Public Deliberation have developed eight Approach Committees focused on "Pathways Past Poverty," to examine the problems and develop a list of goals for a community effort. The eight approach committees were formed around the following issues:

- Enhance childhood education and achievement
- Create more and better jobs that lead to self sufficiency
- Provide job training and increase skill sets
- Increase individual responsibility for financial stability
- Provide solid foundations for families
- Address diversity and inequality
- Strengthening youth and families
- Enhance safety net through policy change

Each committee was charged to research their area, examine best practices locally and nationally, and propose a short set of goals for the community effort. The preliminary goals for each area are listed on the following page. One page summaries for each goal are also available online at www.cpd.colostate.edu. At our April 30th open house, these goals will be presented and community input concerning their prioritization will be collected. In particular, input from the community concerning the prioritization of the goals will be sought as the project transitions into researching and developing specific programs and ideas to strive toward fulfilling the goals.

Open house participants will be given a survey to allow them to rank the importance of the goals, forms to provide written comment, and also will be able to provide oral comments during small group discussions throughout the evening. New small group discussions will begin every 30 minutes throughout the evening. In addition, participants will also be given a chance to identify if and how they would like to be involved as the project moves forward.

In May, the steering committee for the Pathways Past Poverty initiative will decide the next steps for the project. Over the summer and into the fall, committees will examine and propose specific programs to help the community reach the goals.

The open house, hosted by the Colorado State University's Center for Public Deliberation, will be held from 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, April 30, at the Northside Aztlan Community Center.

A follow-up forum will be held from 5 - 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 7 in Loveland at city council chambers. Focus groups are also being held on low-income audiences that may not be able to attend the public forums.

For more information, see www.pathwayspastpoverty.org or www.cpd.colostate.edu.

Overview of the preliminary goals

A. Providing Solid Foundations for Families Approach Committee Goals
Goal A1: Ensure families in Larimer County have access to child care that they can afford, that supports their children’s development, and supports their ability to be present and productive at work (including when children are sick).
Goal A2: Develop and implement a multifaceted integrated health care/wellness/preventative system to help ensure that every resident of Larimer County has access to quality mental, dental, physical, and vision services throughout their lifespan.
Goal A3: Develop and implement a multi-dimensional approach to low-income housing to help ensure that no persons or families lack access to adequate housing.
Goal A4: Develop and implement a seamless, affordable, integrated multi-modal transportation system, providing uninterrupted coverage for the area from Wellington to Berthoud and including Timnath, Windsor and Johnstown.
B. Provide Job Training and Increase Skill Sets Approach Committee Goals
Goal B1: Identify critical skill sets required for living wage employment in Larimer County
Goal B2: Identify and increase living wage job training opportunities which teach critical skill sets and increase the participation in this job training
Goal B3: Identify and create synergistic support systems which enable members of our community to successfully participate in essential skill set job training
C. Address Diversity & Inequality Approach Committee Goal
Goal C1: Increase awareness of diversity and poverty to create an inclusive and involved community that honors the value of all people in Larimer County
D. Strengthening Youth and Families Approach Committee Goals
Goal D1: Ensure that families facing poverty with the opportunity to take part in a community supported process that enhances their own individual and family resources. In this process, individuals take responsibility for building their future as they identify their goals and assess their resources (financial, emotional, mental, spiritual, physical, support systems, relationships and role models, and knowledge of the hidden rules of class). They continue with the process by making choices and creating plans to enhance their resources. (Definition of families includes, but is not limited to two parent families, single parent families, grandparents raising grandchildren, foster families)
Goal D2: Raise community awareness of the economic benefits of investing in and supporting children, youth and families.
Goal D3: Engage a broad range of community stakeholders in examining policies and implementing best practices that support children, youth and families.
E. Create More & Better Jobs Approach Committee Goals
Goal E1: Provide Better Jobs in Larimer County (better jobs are jobs that have a sustainable wage; value employees as people; and are long-term, career oriented)
F. Enhancing Childhood Education and Achievement Approach Committee Goals
Goal F1: Provide supportive programming for children and their families to improve school readiness and participation, as well as to insure that schools have necessary supports to educate children and families in poverty.
Goal F2: To have every governmental body in Larimer County place the health and well-being of children and youth as a top priority, demonstrated through budgetary processes, policy decisions and awareness efforts.
Goal F3: Increase the academic success of all youth in Larimer County.
G. Increased Individual Responsibility for Financial Stability Approach Committee Goals
Goal G1: Encourage people to have savings of 3 – 6 months of expenditures to create a cushion for emergencies such as job loss or health issues.
Goal G2: Increase the level of financial literacy in the community.
Goal G3: Level out the playing field for those in poverty.

Note: The “Enhance Safety Net through Policy Change” approach committee is on a different time frame from the others, as they work to educate themselves on relevant policies and wait to see what specific goals the project focuses on first.