Activities of
The Dorothy Rider Pool Health Care Trust and The Rider-Pool Foundation
The Dorothy Rider Pool Health Care Trust and The Rider-Pool Foundation are developing innovative approaches to addressing complex social issues. Breaking away from traditional funding initiatives and requests for proposals, Pool Trust and Rider-Pool are investing in a multi-pronged strategy to develop capacity building, foster innovation and cross-sector partnerships, encourage data sharing and develop new styles of servant leadership.
Collective Impact Fellowship

The Rider-Pool Foundation has adopted a proactive approach to build the capacity needed to address complex social issues through the development of a Collective Impact Fellowship. Now in its fourth year, a group of not-for-profit leaders, who work in the neighborhoods that surround the downtown area of Allentown and represent multiple community systems (e.g. housing, health, education, human services, culture and arts, etc.), is selected annually to participate in a nine-month 180-hour learning collaborative led by national experts in systemic leadership, Collective Impact strategies, community engagement and program design and evaluation. Our goal is to have 50 Fellows who are servant and thought leaders that encourage better use of local resources and employ innovative problem-solving approaches.

Fellowship Community of Practice

A “Community of Practice (CoP)” was established to connect the cohorts of fellows, continue the learning, and co-create the culture for cross-sector collaboration. The CoP is a peer-led monthly meeting that utilizes various formats (lectures, group discussions, peer assist workshops, case reviews, etc.), to discuss issues relevant to the Fellows’ collective work.

Topics included:

- Social Needs Screening
- National Perspective of Collective Impact
- Diversity / Equity / Inclusion
- Data / Data Sharing Using Community Commons
- Ripple Effect Mapping
- PhotoVoice as a Community Engagement Tool and Lessons Learned from Implementation
- Emerging International Research on Effective Cross-Sector Partnerships
- How Non-profits Can Work with Government to Make Policy Changes
- Creating Effective Pediatric Asthma Care
- Backbone Functions – Challenges in coordinating cross-sector partnerships

The Community of Practice sessions result in over 400 hours of continuing education and relationship building among the non-profit sector leaders every year.”
**Ripple Effect Mapping**

A qualitative evaluation method called Ripple Effect Mapping was introduced, in order to measure the impact of the Fellowship. Fellows were interviewed to elicit stories that emphasize assets, successes, knowledge and skills gained through the Fellowship and Community of Practice. Over 130 “gains” were captured, coded and mapped.

**Significant increases attributed to the Collective Impact Fellowship were noted in:**

- **Social Capital** – Newly identified connectivity between groups, organizations and networks in the community.
- **Human Capital** – Developing and enhancing their resources and bodies of knowledge in order to increase their understanding, identify promising practices and access data for community building.
- **Political Capital** – The ability of people to understand and engage in actions that contribute to the well-being of their community.
- **Financial Capital** – Re-deploying new and existing resources for investing in capacity building and civil and social entrepreneurship.
- **Cultural Capital** – Giving preference to new voices and perspectives
- **Collective Impact Forum Funder Openness Action Learning Lab** – Our work around capacity building for cross-sector partnerships has provided The Rider-Pool Foundation the opportunity to be one of only eight foundations in North America selected to participate in an “openness and transparency” learning lab, where funders explore different ways to be better partners in collective impact and other cross-sector strategies.

**Rapid Prototyping**

The initiatives described in this document help us understand that, even though the Lehigh Valley is a mid-sized Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), our social issues are as complex as those of a larger MSA. The region has struggled to make progress on many of these issues — quality education, affordable housing, health disparities and mental illness. Many acknowledge value in cross-sector partnerships, but attempt to build “collaboration” through flawed principles that members know will not work. In order to avoid excluding any agency, collaborations become all-inclusive, resulting in unwieldy, ineffective efforts. These efforts often lack the servant leadership needed to function effectively. Finally, efforts are too provider driven with few places for authentic community involvement.

**They all have these factors in common:**

- Clear, agreed-upon focus area/common agenda among multiple agencies and systems
- Use evidence-based decision making driven by the best data and shared measurement
- A collaborative action plan that includes mutually reinforcing activities and continuous communication
- Provide consistency and coordination among all the participants
Based on this research, The Rider-Pool Foundation has developed a “rapid prototyping” (RP) approach to help partners improve their complex problem-solving skills. With support from the Collective Impact Fellows, planning models and readiness scans with defined milestones and final products were developed that guide partnerships through this rigorous process. At this time, there are two active RP initiatives (suicide prevention and youth homelessness).

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**Health Care Council/Community Health Needs Assessment**

The Health Care Council of the Lehigh Valley (HCC) was made up of representatives from Pool Trust and eight non-profit health providers. The HCC’s objective was to cooperatively develop a world-class Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) that would galvanize action to provide a dramatic, demonstrable and sustained impact on the health of the citizens of the Lehigh Valley. In 2016, the HCC completed its second three-year CHNA that is currently driving several social determinants of health initiatives.

**Data Platform Group**

Using Community Commons technology, a group of funders, academics, social service agencies, community-based researchers and planners have been convening to develop a data platform and protocol to better share, merge and analyze critical data. This work has led to the development of private, secure on-line “hubs” that allow for data to be shared between systems. Our first use of the hub allowed the District Attorney’s Office and Lehigh Valley Health Network to share data around police calls, emergency room visits and physical health-related hospitalization stays for people with mental health diagnoses and is leading to place-based strategies to better serve residents with mental illness.

**Lehigh County Mental Health Work Group**

At the request of the President Judge of the Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas, leaders from human services, law enforcement, corrections, health care, social services and other sectors are meeting to develop a cross-sector approach to addressing people with mental illness who are also chronically homeless with multiple incarcerations.

**Downtown Allentown Community Development Initiative**

Downtown Allentown Community Development Initiative is made up of the CEOs of the private and public sectors who support the community development occurring in the areas around the major downtown economic development. The group has been instrumental in the development of Building 21, a successful “Live Where You Work” housing campaign and is exploring the possibility of free or affordable internet services in the homes of all Allentown School District students living in the neighborhoods surrounding the downtown area.
Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley (PNLV)

Promise Neighborhoods are aspirational neighborhoods committed to the success of children, from cradle to career. Each neighborhood strives to mobilize its unique assets — people, businesses, programs and services, resources, public policy — within self-governing bodies that practice shared decision-making, shared resources, shared accountability, and shared outcomes for the children living and learning in the neighborhood. Striving to have these best practices become common practice, Promise Neighborhoods are quickly becoming the region’s premier vehicle for achieving neighborhood transformation, one child at a time.

Civic Health Symposia

Pool Trust and Rider-Pool have used symposia to encourage stronger cross sector partnerships through a “Learn, Connect, Act” approach where leaders from different sectors, who typically do not work together but share agendas and metrics, can come together to learn more about the issues they share, develop a better understanding of the roles their colleagues in other sectors play, and begin steps toward strengthening cross-sector partnerships.

Community Development in the Neighborhood Improvement Zone (CDNIZ)

More than a dozen funding organizations operating in the Allentown area have been meeting for over three years with the belief that place matters, that community and economic development can and must complement each other and that good ideas and efforts will come out of openness, transparency and collaboration.

The Allentown Children’s Health Improvement Project (ACHIP)

A $1.91 million, 30-month grant from The Dorothy Rider Pool Health Care Trust. Using a collective impact model, the new program brings together Lehigh Valley Health Network’s (LVHN) Department of Community Health and Women and Children’s services along with the Children’s Hospital at Lehigh Valley Hospital and the Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley (PNLV) in a partnership. The program’s primary goal is to improve the health of pregnant women and young children in Center City Allentown through home visits for early intervention. Allentown Promise Neighborhood uses its strong relationship with downtown residents to connect parents with young children and pregnant women to the ACHIP services. The health workers are embedded in the community they serve in order to better cultivate relationships with residents, leading to trust of the local healthcare system, which is a critical component to the program’s success with this at-risk population.

Neighborhood Improvement Zone (NIZ)

Created by state law in 2009, the NIZ is a special taxing district that encourages development and revitalization in downtown Allentown. The NIZ consists of approximately 128 acres in downtown Allentown and the new Riverfront district (the western side of the Lehigh River). All taxes generated in the NIZ (with the exception of school district and city taxes) can be used to pay debt service on any financed improvements within the NIZ. The NIZ has stimulated more than $1B in investments in downtown Allentown to date.
Pay for Success

The Lehigh Valley Early Childhood Pay for Success Task Force ("Task Force") is composed of a diverse group of stakeholders from business, state government, the Allentown School District (ASD), community foundations, and service providers. The Task Force's express purpose is to explore the viability, construction and implementation of high-quality early childhood Pay for Success (PFS) projects in the local community. The current articulated vision is "All children in the Allentown School District to be healthy and ready to learn upon entering school." The goal is to expand, enhance and finance the scaling of high quality pre-K for eligible three and four-year olds in the Allentown School District. More than 85% of ASD students are school-lunch eligible. The Task Force is planning an early childhood PFS project that uses the successful Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Federal Head-Start and Nurse Family Partnership models as the evidence-based foundation.

Building 21 – Allentown

The Allentown School District (ASD) in conjunction with Building 21, a non-profit-school designer and operator that employs an innovative model of experiential and personalized learning, opened a new public high school in the city of Allentown in the Fall of 2015. Building 21 focuses on reimagining secondary education by decoupling learning from school. Building 21 seeks to offer students a highly-personalized experience with a significant focus on problem-based, blended (online and in person) and applied learning. The school is part of the ASD. Building 21-Allentown blends the proven successes from existing models such as early college high school, career and technical education, small schools, blended learning, and competency/mastery frameworks together with an emerging body of work in neuroscience and learning theory and the fundamentals of student engagement and motivation.

The goals of Building 21-Allentown are to increase high school graduation rates, to better prepare students for college or career, and to allow students to pursue their passions as they build agency to positively impact their world. It is the hope of both Building 21 and ASD that this school serves as a “learning lab” and leads to the diffusion of more engaging, applied, and rigorous approaches to secondary education across ASD’s other schools. Building 21 and ASD have engaged in an extensive community outreach program. The school opened with 150+ students in 2015 and admitted its second class of 150 students in September 2016. The third class of students was recently recruited. Enrollment is on track to meet the expected growth to 600 students by year four. The local community raised more than $3.6M in less than two years (Fall 2016) to launch the school and get it to sustainability on public dollars by its third year of operation.

A summary report on Building 21’s progress at the two-year mark indicates:

- **Average daily attendance:** 90%
- **Students reaching college/career readiness for Reading:** 94%
- **Students reaching college/career readiness for Science:** 84%
- **Staff Retention:** 100%
- **Acquisition of building/property by ASD:** 100%