



BLUEPRINTS FOR TOMORROW

A professional development program combining training, coaching and community knowledge with evolving design and finance tools, to achieve together, projects that support community priorities.

incourage

Toward a Community that Works Well for All

Over the last decade, Incourage has learned through research and grounded experience that holistic strategies work best to advance meaningful place-based change. Communities are complex, connected and always evolving so integrated and adaptive approaches to development are essential. Keeping abreast of innovation and new thinking is also needed to access emerging best practices that can accelerate impact. Finally, our shared responsibility to participate as joint stewards of our community's assets means that we must nurture new connections and build relationships based on trust. Guided by community priorities, and with a commitment to continuous learning, Blueprints for Tomorrow aims to support all of these things.

INVESTING IN COMMUNITY CHANGE

With guiding principles to be resident-centered, place-based and values-driven, Incourage has for more than a decade worked with local residents and institutions to advance a community that works well for all. Incourage's investment in Blueprints for Tomorrow is a demonstration of seeding community change.

Mapping the Future: Blueprints for Tomorrow

The economies that are thriving in our changing global marketplace are those that increasingly rely on localized strategies that put equitable opportunity, health and sustainability at the forefront. And as community development and finance are rapidly evolving fields – with evolving design principles, standards and new financial resources – a commitment to learn, then act on shared knowledge is necessary to shape south Wood County's future.

Breaking ground today, Blueprints for Tomorrow is a 25-month professional development program for local government, professionals of nonprofit organizations and Incourage.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

In 2012 Incourage conducted the largest-known community survey in south Wood County's history. Through this survey, residents identified four priorities with significant potential to enhance community life. These priorities offer focus for Incourage and local partner efforts, in areas like design and implementing development projects in the region. Priorities include:

- A strong economy
- Opportunities for young adults and families
- Nature and recreation
- Openness to new ideas and change

Participants will have the chance to build state-of-the-art field knowledge while applying new insights and techniques to current, priority community projects. Further, in applying knowledge of evolving design and finance tools, participants will work together to achieve projects that support community priorities.

Specifically, Blueprints for Tomorrow combines training and coaching to:

- Enhance local development projects at various phases of implementation;
- Spark new ideas for reuse of old spaces;
- Revisit new ways of maximizing current spaces; and
- Connect development projects to emerging value chains – relationships between local government, nonprofit organizations, producers, businesses and consumers – that recirculate local dollars to create a healthy, sustainable and growing local economy.

Blueprints for Tomorrow training curriculum also provides expert guidance on how to design and implement projects with the potential to attract local, regional and national investments to the region. The eight-month training curriculum includes four comprehensive and integrated tracks of learning:

- Healthy, Sustainable and Growing Local Economies
- Impact Investing and Financing
- Adaptive Leadership
- Collaborative Development Practices

Following the training curriculum (see training and curriculum sidebar), participating organizations receive 17 months of individualized technical assistance and coaching that is customized to specific needs of identified projects.

Leveraging Capitals

Building a community that works well for all people calls for leveraging a range of resources or capitals. While financial capital is important to realizing new development investments, other capitals are just as important. Each organization participating in Blueprints for Tomorrow brings capital that can help to advance a strong and inclusive local economy.

Benefits of Blueprints for Tomorrow

Through Blueprints for Tomorrow, participants who are in relationship with one another by virtue of sharing this place will have an opportunity to reflect on the learning, with the hope of acting together to shape our shared future.

Specifically, Blueprints for Tomorrow will deliver the following community benefits:

- At least one development project emerges through a financing phase;
- Other projects have received a range of practical guidance on project design, development and financing; and
- A strong network of local and regional development professionals establish working relationships that enhance future project development.

TRAINING AND CURRICULUM

Healthy, Sustainable and Growing Local Economies

Broadening the lens in which we invest in our future is essential to grow a diversified, resilient economy where many businesses can thrive, as well as a community where families want to live – a community that works well for all. Participants will connect community assets to markets demand, explore the role of local ownership, learn strategies for strengthening key sectors, and link local development projects in regional wealth-enhancing value chains.

Impact Investing and Financing

Impact investing seeks social and environmental benefits along with financial returns. As such, it serves to attract and align financial capital to serve the social and economic development needs of a community. This has relevance to our region, both for redevelopment projects and building strong value chains. Participants will gain knowledge and understanding of the range of impact financing tools. Emphasis will be placed on ways in which philanthropic and public capital can be combined to leverage larger private capital markets for local sustainable development.

Adaptive Leadership

Leading change is not easy. Adaptive skills, based on relationships, trust and respect, provide leaders with the skillset necessary to address complex issues that require collaboration with other individuals and groups. Participants will gain the skills to meet complex challenges to ensure healthy, sustainable organizations and economically vital communities.

Collaborative Development Practices

People make a community. Educating, mobilizing, and investing in the ideas of the people who live in a community can unlock demand for products and services as well as entrepreneurial energy that can growth in the local economy. Participants will learn collaborative practices and understand the important role that networks play in advancing social and economic goals.

Blueprints for Tomorrow Design Team

Blueprints for Tomorrow curriculum has been designed in partnership with national thought leaders. These experts in the fields of adaptive leadership, communication, development, finance, and investment are familiar with south Wood County through previous work with Incourage.



Bobbie Hill, Principal | Concordia

As a Concordia principal, Bobbie works with communities to help them realize their potential through consensus building and collaboration. She is committed to helping communities become healthy civil societies that are interconnected and integrated. She is currently directing projects in Wisconsin, Louisiana, and Hawaii. While Concordia has provided engagement, leadership and capacity building, planning and organizing for these locations, they have learned about the richness and resiliency of people and these communities. Bobbie has organized several local and statewide networks and associations which are concerned with issues related to education, the arts, and community advocacy. Bobbie has worked with government leadership in New Orleans to create legislation that supports community-based planning as a prerequisite for investments.



Lisa Richter, Principal | Avivar Capital

Lisa Richter is a principal and co-founder of Avivar Capital, a national consultancy that assists foundations and other institutions to design and execute impact investing strategies. Lisa brings over two decades of fund management and investing experience spanning asset classes, return expectations, geographies and issue areas, and frequently incorporating place-based or sector focus to increase equitable access to opportunity. Clients range from small to the nation's largest independent and community foundations, banks and institutional investors, with interests ranging from driving particular place-based outcomes to impact theme-based strategies that apply traditional asset allocations to earn market-rate expected returns. Prior to that, Lisa led the National Community Investment Fund. This national Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) places equity and debt in development banking institutions and built its national network of development banks and credit unions that increase asset building credit and financial services.



Melissa Scholz, Principal | Scholz Nonprofit Law

Through Scholz Nonprofit Law, Melissa unites her expertise in nonprofit law with 25 years of experience as a community leader and fundraiser. Prior to forming Scholz Nonprofit Law in 2007, Melissa worked at a large Wisconsin law firm. There, she developed a broad knowledge of legal issues affecting nonprofits. Melissa brings this tax and business savvy into her own firm, where she tailors her service to the unique needs of nonprofits and mission-driven businesses. Melissa received her B.A. in History from Stanford University. While at Stanford, she helped start the Stanford Public Service Center, which became a national model for other centers – including UW-Madison's Morgridge Center for Public Service. She received her J.D. from University of Wisconsin Law School in 1995.



Madeleine Beaubien Taylor, Ph.D., Founder and CEO | Network Impact

For more than 20 years, Madeleine has worked with public and nonprofit organizations and national foundations on strategy, program development and assessment, most recently with a focus on social impact networks. She has contributed to the design, implementation and evaluation of a wide range of network initiatives in the U.S., including network organizing to support policies that benefit rural people and places, cross sector initiatives to promote immigrant integration, regional collaborations to end homelessness, and network efforts to increase place-based civic engagement. She is the author with Peter Plastrik of *Net Gains: A Handbook for Network Builders Seeking Social Change*, considered one of the top publications on the topic and *Connecting to Change the World: Harnessing the Power of Networks for Social Impact* (2014).



Janet Topolsky, Director, Community Strategies Group | Aspen Institute

For more than 30 years, Janet Topolsky has been helping community leaders, organizations and policymakers across the country find, create and spread innovative community and economic development strategies. Currently, she directs the Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group. CSG designs and manages structured peer-learning-for-action initiatives for community practitioners and organization leaders nationwide who are addressing hefty economic development, resource stewardship and community capacity building issues. Janet leads CSG's Community Development Philanthropy work, which builds the capacity of community foundations to grow community endowments and make strategic investments that enhance economic prospects for families, businesses and communities. She also helps organize and strengthen regional livelihood efforts that connect low-wealth places and populations to regional development and prosperity.



Katherine Tyler Scott, Managing Principal | Ki ThoughtBridge

Katherine is managing principal of Ki ThoughtBridge, a company specializing in an integrated adaptive approach to leadership development through change management, conflict resolution and negotiation skills. Ki ThoughtBridge's mission is the transformation of individuals, organizations and communities. Katherine has written extensively on the topics of leadership, governance, organizational development, and change management. She is the author of *Creating Caring and Capable Boards: Reclaiming the Passion for Active Trusteeship*; *The Integrated Work of Leadership*© and *The Inner Work of the Leader: Discovering the Leader Within*, and *Transforming Leadership*. She has written numerous articles and is a contributing author to several books. Katherine's most recent contribution is "The New Basics: Inner Work for Adaptive Challenges" in *The Transforming Leader*. *The Transforming Leader* was nominated for a 2014 Outstanding Leadership Book Award at the International Leadership Association Conference in San Diego, California.



Barbara Wyckoff, Principal | Dynamica

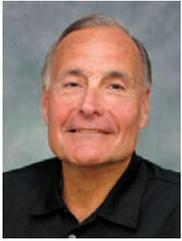
Barbara has over 30 years of experience promoting community economic development in both the U.S. and overseas. She has worked to bring together the private sector, non-profits, indigenous communities, government agencies, investors and others to implement innovative solutions. Barbara uses an economic development approach that links community assets to market demand for sustained livelihoods, community participatory processes and creative leadership development. She has coached communities throughout the country in doing economic development differently, using tools such as value chains, the capitals matrix, and community-based forestry. Barbara's background in providing technical assistance, training, and grants management helps get to the root of what is happening in an organization, develop collaborative solutions, turn organizational change into an opportunity for growth, and establish strategic and productive relationships with donors and other entities.



Kelly Ryan, President and CEO | Incourage

For nearly 20 years, Kelly Ryan has led Incourage as President & CEO. An organization guided by principles to be resident-centered, place-based and values-driven, Incourage envisions a community that works well for all people. A physical demonstration of Incourage's investment in community and the residents who share this place is the Tribune (tribunebuilding.org). Concurrently with the Tribune, Kelly is leading the redesign of Incourage to connect all of its capitals in furtherance of its vision. Frequently speaking and writing about the opportunity for philanthropy at the intersection of people, place and prosperity, Kelly was named Citizen of the Year for Wisconsin Rapids in 2012. And the NonProfit Times named her one of 50 most influential leaders in the nonprofit sector for her commitment to workforce and economic development. By invitation, Kelly has presented at the White House and Rockefeller Foundation's Centennial Celebration, is an Aspen Institute Scholar, serves on the Hitachi Foundation Board of Directors, the National Fund for Workforce Solutions Partners Council, and is a contributing author to *Here for Good*. Follow Kelly on Twitter @kryan_incourage

Joining the team of national thought leaders in designing Blueprints for Tomorrow are the following Incourage staff:



Gus Mancuso

Prior to joining Incourage, Gus spent over 40 years in public schools, the majority as a high school administrator. He was a high school principal for nearly thirty years, mostly at Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln High School. Throughout his career, resolving conflict associated with change and people have been a constant in his work. In his role at Incourage, Gus serves on the Resident Engagement Team, working with people and organizations, establishing goals, and creating a vision/plan to solve them. His adaptive skills in leadership development, managing change, conflict management and negotiation skills have helped him lead positive change on community projects, including the Tribune Building. His foundation in adaptive skills has been enhanced through working with Ki ThoughtBridge for the past three years as a training colleague. Gus and his wife, Barb, have three grown sons.



Chelsey Mazurek

Chelsey began her career in Marquette University's University Advancement Department. In 2008, she accepted a management position at Adventure 212 Fitness in Stevens Point, directing its marketing/sales and customer service departments. She returned to her hometown, Wisconsin Rapids, in 2011, to join the Incourage team. In her role, Chelsey leads the Tribune Building Project strategy and execution, facilitating communication and collaboration between internal and external Project partners. Chelsey graduated from UW-Stevens Point with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication. She and her husband, Dave, are currently raising their two young daughters.



Heather McKellips

Heather was president of Highland Training and Development prior to joining Incourage. There, she conducted training, developed curriculum/programs and facilitated learning in communication, conflict resolution and change management, among others. As a member of Incourage's Resident Engagement Team, Heather works with people and organizations to promote the principles of cooperation and a shared vision for the community. Her adaptive skills in leadership development, managing change, conflict management and negotiation skills have helped her lead positive community change. Heather's work with Ki ThoughtBridge for the past three years as a training colleague have strengthened this adaptive skills foundation. Heather lives in Grand Rapids with her husband, Tim, and their three teenage sons.



Jenny Rigenbach

Jenny Rigenbach spent 11 years as a child and youth practitioner, experiencing first-hand the pride and challenges of skilled low-wage work. Jenny translated this experience and passion to research, advocacy and program leadership. The last 15 years, she has bridged the gap between public systems, education and philanthropy to create quality job opportunities for Wisconsin workers and growing economies for Wisconsin communities. Jenny was instrumental in developing Incourage's Workforce Central program which helped create a manufacturing-centered workforce partnership that continues to meet the needs of local employers, workers and job seekers to advance a strong regional economic development strategy. Jenny graduated from Almond-Bancroft High School and earned a Bachelor's degree in Community Engagement and Education from the UW-Milwaukee. When she is not working, you will find Jenny enjoying chasing after three growing boys with her husband Mike.

BLUEPRINTS FOR TOMORROW

Action Milestones

June 4, 2015:

Breaking Ground Celebration

June – August 2015:

Interviews with Participating Organizations

September 2015 – April 2016:

Learning Calendar (2 days/month in-person)

April 2016 – September 2017:

Technical Assistance

The Tribune Building Project (tribunebuilding.org) is an exemplary demonstration of property reuse and redevelopment. As such, the USDA recently recognized Incourage with a rural Community Development Initiative grant to share learning from the Project with local organizations while continuing to co-learn about community development strategies with partnering organizations. Blueprints for Tomorrow is made possible by this USDA grant and Incourage.



Notes

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