



CREATING COMMUNITY VITALITY SERIES

A 2021 Monthly Training Series

Identity Workbook

Overview:

The "work from home" revolution is just getting started and causing people to reevaluate where they call *home*. As a result, communities have the unique opportunity to better position themselves for success by ensuring that they have the amenities, infrastructure and social offerings in place to retain and attract an increasingly mobile workforce. The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Community Revitalization Office (CRO) has created this three-part series focused on building your place's identity, supportive ecosystems and community in a format promoting monthly education, inspiration and application. Use this workbook to reflect on the future you would like to see for your community, identify session ideas that rise to today's needs and develop a path forward.

Key Themes:



Identity

Recognize Your Core Strengths + Weaknesses



Ecosystems

Identify Institutions, Amenities and Infrastructure to Support



Community

Strengthen and Promote Assets + Interactions

Monthly Topics:



Community Vitality Kickoff



Placemaking



Storytelling



Leadership + Network



Attractions + Assets



Housing



Services + Infrastructure



Food + Small Scale Production



Workforce + Entrepreneurs



Public Spaces



Cultural Promotion + Events



Community Involvement + Conclusion

Community Vitality Kickoff

Educational Webinar | January 13, 2021



The inflection points across 2020 will likely lead to seismic shifts in our communities for years to come. In addition to prompting us to reimagine community vibrancy, culture and connection, those shifts will also require exploring whether our systems, tools and solutions have supported desirable outcomes for the communities served. This webinar will encourage participants to question: How do we define community? Can we create community as community developers? What have been our contributions, where have we fallen short and where might we need to reset? What tools and approaches are there to help us remain responsive to the diverse needs of our constituency?



Speaker

Monique Johnson has served as a social enterprise leader, a community and economic development practitioner and an advocate for next generation leaders. Her 20 years of experience spans the non-profit and public sectors of commercial real estate development, small business and real estate finance, and organizational and talent development. In her current role as Chief Operating Officer for the Better Housing Coalition (BHC), Johnson works to formulate and operationalize the company's strategic growth goals.

Inspirational Podcast | January 18, 2021



Speaker

Melody Warnick is a freelance writer whose work has appeared in CityLab, Reader's Digest, The Guardian, The New York Times, and many other publications. Warnick is also the author of *This Is Where You Belong: Finding Home Wherever You Are*, which explains the concept of place attachment and helps people fall in love with where they live.

What session ideas stand out and rise to today's needs?



What resources are needed to help you develop a path forward?



When thinking about the future you would like to see for your community, what activities may help you make that vision a reality? Consider three potential projects:

1



2



3

After viewing the webinar and listening to the podcast, what questions would you ask the speakers? Based on topics covered, where would you like to follow up?



Placemaking

Educational Webinar | February 10, 2021



When we think of placemaking, we typically imagine how we dress up our favorite public space, but the concept of place is so much bigger. Place is ubiquitous. It effects everything we do and it is one of the largest determinants of the type of life we lead. We are always surrounded by place. How places are built, how they function and how they are designed dictate how people go about leading their lives. Our places have the ability to make us proud or make us feel ashamed. They have the ability to bring us closer to one another or make us feel alone. In this webinar, participants will learn how the places we shape determine our physical, mental, social and economic health. In understanding how much our places shape our lives, you'll begin to understand how much better we need to do in shaping our places.



Speaker

Jeff Siegler is the founder of Revitalize, or Die. and a founding partner of Proud Places. Having a background in urban planning, revitalization, real estate, economics and organizational development has afforded him a unique vantage point for addressing the issues plaguing communities today. Siegler believes there is no work more important than restoring our communities back to health, and revitalization has the power to transform people's lives by fostering a stronger sense of community, providing opportunity, promoting equality and enhancing residents quality of life.

Inspirational Podcast | February 15, 2021



Speaker

Laura Scherling specializes in interactive design, research, and management. She has over 10 years of experience in marketing and advertising and currently works and teaches at Columbia University's School of Professional Studies. Scherling is the co-founder of GREENSPACENYC, a non-profit collaborative that develops and curates free educational programming, hands-on workshops and public design projects that encourage dialogue, enliven public spaces and promote the future of a more equitable and sustainable city.

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Storytelling

Educational Webinar | March 10, 2021



At one time, storytelling was at the center of every tribe and culture. It strengthened relationships between people, connected us to our past and future and cultivated pride in one's place. Stories provided strength and structure and how we knew, "These are my people." Aided in part by the immensity of the internet and the saturation of social media, we've exchanged local stories for national and international distractions. We've weakened our places because we know each other less: an increasingly more virtual existence leads to increasingly less local lives. In this webinar, learn how you can fight fire with fire!



Speaker

Phil Eich is the founder of Storyville Social, an agency dedicated to bringing human connection into the marketing of cities across the country. Through photography, videography, writing, podcasting and social media management, Eich combines the art of storytelling with the art of marketing, putting a face on our places by telling the stories of the people who live there. In this webinar, you'll learn more about Storyville's simple, sustainable, and easy-to-implement framework to create beautiful and authentic local storytelling that cultivates pride, bolsters small businesses, and attracts and retains talent and investment.

Inspirational Podcast | March 15, 2021



Speaker

Raven Bates has a dedicated passion for nonprofits and is driven by the work they do to transform lives and communities. Spending her entire career gaining experience in all aspects of mission-oriented work, Bates brings a well-rounded and diverse perspective as a nonprofit professional. In 2017, she joined the Virginia Community Development Corporation (VCDC) and serves as the administrator of the Mission Elevation program, an extension of VCDC's commitment to ensure communities are vibrant for all residents. Joined by Andrea Dono of Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance and Debbie Haight of Historic Manassas, Bates will review their experiences in the program and introduce you to tools that will help your organization thrive.

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Leadership + Network

Educational Webinar | April 14, 2021



When it comes to clarifying, prioritizing and building relationships in your community, it helps to have clear intentions and a realistic strategy. Floricane’s principal consultant, John Sarvay will facilitate a conversation about the difference between connectivity and being connected and explore ways in which community organizations can best leverage relationships and technology to grow and strengthen community networks. In this webinar, participants will identify ways to expand their relationship circles, and leave with a clearer sense of where to invest your networking energies in service to your mission and vision.



Speaker

John Sarvay founded Floricane, a Richmond-based strategy, engagement and culture consultancy, in 2008 after 12 years at Luck Stone Corporation. For 12 years, Floricane has worked with organizations and communities to cast a more clear gaze toward the future, and to develop strategies to create a future different from the past. Sarvay lives in Richmond with his wife, two young children, and a rambunctious puppy.

Inspirational Podcast | April 19, 2021



Speaker

Sarah Milston will speak on how The Spark Mill was formed with the belief that change shouldn't be boring. They can't promise it won't hurt a bit, but they're experts at helping companies and organizations of all sizes make leaps, manage transitions and plot transformative futures. Consulting is core to The Spark Mill's work and values, and they commit to a carefully curated process that has been customized and built with you, as well as peppered with creativity!

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