

CIVIC MATCHMAKING: CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH PURPOSE TO INCREASE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

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Macrotrends happening now:

1. Wave of talent on the move (10,000 Baby Boomers retiring daily)
2. Largest Boomer health risk is isolation
3. Strengthening community fabric
4. Increased importance of volunteerism
5. Largest transfer of wealth in history of world

Q: How can retirees use their time and talent to benefit community?

A: Civic matchmaking!

Q: Want to implement in your community?

A: "Give 5 in a Box" – community implementation kit
(Info at SGFgive5.org)

Give 5 Program: Find a volunteer opportunity participants feel passionate about and volunteer a minimum of 5 hours a month with that organization

How does it work?

- Listen to community to identify community problems
- Volunteer immersion behind-the-scenes and non-profit training to make volunteer opportunities more meaningful
- Non-profit partners selected based on community's strategic solutions
- Cohorts spend five days learning about the community and visiting 23 non-profits. At program graduation, they sign a letter of intent to continue a relationship with at least one of the non-profits

Q AND A

How did this program get started?

- First call from City Manager to AIRP to see if a similar program already existed and found that nationwide, no program like this existed. City then invited 50 non-profits to lunch to determine their interest and results were overwhelmingly positive. City found that the volunteers have significant skills, want to be challenged and could significantly increase non-profit capacity. City developed program from scratch and partnered with local university to measure impact.

How many non-profits are in Springfield?

- 2,300 non-profits in Springfield. Each cohort of the program can include only 23 agencies, or 1% of local organizations. City partners with non-profits related to their strategic goals.

Is this replicable in non-university towns? Would there be challenges without a university partner?

- University partner is NOT necessary. University researchers are helping to develop program, and implement “Give 5 in a Box.” They’re creating measurement systems, but are not involved in day to day implementation of program.

Any long-term plans for engaging non-retirees? (i.e. mentorship programs)

- They can picture addressing young professionals and entrepreneurs in different ways. Current Give 5 program is targeted to people with 5 day a week availability, but they would like to impact those other groups in the future, perhaps by connecting with other existing programs. They’re also considering partnering with specialized groups, like retired teacher organizations.

How do you intend to measure the reduction of isolation?

- Springfield is still working on developing. Universities have done social capital studies which drove many of the questions within Springfield's pre- and post- surveys. For example “In the last week, how many times have you had a conversation on the phone with somebody?” Planning to get health systems and indicators involved as well to learn about mental and physical health. They’d like to continue to test cohorts long into the future to see if participants are happier and healthier in the long-term.

How do you handle or plan to handle volunteers that do not stay engaged?

- Non-profits sign agreement which includes providing city data on how volunteers are doing (hours volunteered, impact, etc.) and city is just getting ready to collect first round of data. They are engaging with participants through social media and other methods to identify when they disengage, but it is a volunteer program, so there’s a fine line to engagement.

What kind of staff resources are you currently allotting to the program?

Both Cora and Greg spent significant time, mostly in their spare time, to develop program. They hired one part-time contractor to help with set-up and implementation. Give 5 in a Box will eliminate this requirement for other cities to implement easily. Ongoing maintenance is less significant.

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