Creating a Campaign for Black Male Achievement: Building a Collective Impact Strategy to Support Black Male Achievement in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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Creating a Campaign for Black Male Achievement: Building a Collective Impact Strategy to Support Black Male Achievement in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Doctor of Education Leadership (Ed.L.D.)
Capstone

Submitted by
Dorian O. Burton II

To the Harvard Graduate School of Education
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education Leadership

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Dedications

“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.” (1 Corinthians 13:1)

This Capstone is dedicated to my family who has always been there for me and shown me unconditional love.

My Father and Mother

The opportunities that I have would not be possible without the tireless support, work, and efforts of my father and mother, Dr. Keith Whitfield and Dr. Linda Burton. The two of you serve as my foundation and North Star. Your support and direction have shown me what is possible through hard work, family, and most importantly a strong faith in God.

My Children

Alanna, Bryce, Brayden, and Avery, the four of you are my world and my everything. You are my motivation and the reason I strive to be my best every day.

My Sisters and Brother

Nicole, Elan, Coren and Delancy, you are my confidants my role models and my comic relief. Life is so much better when you have sisters and a brother who you can laugh endlessly with and who have such strong faith in you that you never believe you can fail.

Team Prime

To four people who I consider family and who have contributed to my growth as a learner and opened my eyes to new worlds: Zoe, Raychel, Pete, and Brian thank you for always being there for me and helping me grow.
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My Harvard Community


My Brothers from Another Mother

Brian Barnes and Brian Rainville

And Special Appreciation to

Abstract

This capstone shows how I framed and enacted a collective impact strategy to build a campaign for African-American male achievement in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The project was anchored in TandemED, an initiative developed by me and my fellow Ed.L.D. cohort member, Brian Barnes. A core element of TandemED is creating targeted partnerships that are constructed by establishing integrated missions and collaborations within communities between individuals, families, organizations, and institutions and using these partnerships to implement a collective impact strategy. Therefore, my approach in Pittsburgh drew heavily on the science and art of creating and sustaining positive relational ties or social capital, while also having an appreciation for how these ties and capital are shaped by racial inequalities. As the extant literature suggests, a focus on race and its effects, more so than any other dimension of inequality, is pivotal to efforts designed to positively shape the challenging contours of life Black males in the U.S. almost unilaterally experience regardless of class. This approach makes sense because institutions and organizations that serve Black males (e.g., schools, nonprofits, local, state, and federal programs) often lack the capacity to redirect and innovate and frequently reflect siloed efforts that do not integrate economic, social, and educational programs and policies in ways that can lead to transformative change and the development of Black males. More importantly, the success of African-American males is inextricably linked to the success (e.g., social, economic and cultural) of the nation as a whole (American Psychological Association Task Force on Resilience and Strength in Black Children and Adolescents, 2008). In considering these issues, I developed and implemented a theory of action which involved building relational ties among institutions, organizations, families, and individuals in communities that extended to the
creation of a collective impact strategy and actionable recommendations for advancing a new narrative for success for African-American males and the communities they live in.
INTRODUCTION

With increasing national scholarly and policy attention being devoted to the field of Black male achievement by philanthropic, government, academic, faith-based, and nonprofit sectors, we are witnessing a growing body of information that attempts to debunk the deficit-oriented narrative of Black males through studying and promoting best practices that promote and create pathways to success for them and the communities they reside in (Seema & Sato, 2014).

It has not been since the Moynihan Report of the 1960’s, and Dr. Bobby Austin’s work at the Kellogg Foundation, Repairing the Breach (Austin, 1996), that concern for the achievement of Black males has been so prominently featured in public and private discourses. The topic has moved to center stage once again for numerous reasons, including startling realities such as 27% of Blacks living in poverty compared to 11.6% of Whites, (U.S. Census, 2011) and the ever-present achievement gap depicted in the Schott Foundation’s report, The Urgency of Now, showing that in 2009-10, the national high school graduation rate for Black male students was a mere 52% versus nearly 75% for white males (Holzman, 2012). Even more jarring are the tragic murders of Black men and boys such as Travon Martin, Jordan Davis, Tamir Rice, Michael Brown, and Eric Gardner. But, as Howard University’s Professor Ivory Toldson, Black Male Engagement’s CEO Trabian Shorters, Open Society’s Shawn Dove, and the U.S. White House’s David Johns fervently note, only a small portion of the narrative of Black males has been shared and mostly from a negative point-of-view. In order for the nation to make significant and sustained positive changes in the lives of African-American males, “the narrative of Black males has to be revised to include broader stories but most importantly, the voices of the Black males themselves” (Rinku, 2006, p. 24).
The issue of race is implicitly center stage in the work I present here because there are very few scholarly and theoretical works that suggest that any other dimension of inequality trumps the impact of race on problematic outcomes for Black males in more profound ways. Perspectives on critical race theory (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Kendall, 1995) and systemic racism (Feagin, 2006), for example, feature Black males as primary recipients in the U.S. for experiencing the most long-term and sustained impediments to social equality than any other group. Moreover, recent ethnographic studies of poverty and social mobility including Patricia Fernandez-Kelly’s, The Hero’s Fight, David Harding’s, The Living Drama, and Sandra Susan Smith’s, Lone Pursuit, chronicle the scarlet letter effect of race on the life chances of Black males from birth to death, signaling that race has yet to be decoupled in any meaningful way from notions of being a threat to society or failure for Black men regardless of class. This is why race matters most, in my opinion, in the project I describe here.

I devoted my Ed.L.D. residency year to this strategic project, which uses a collective impact approach to launch a campaign for Black male achievement in Pittsburgh. The project is intended to support youth in building leadership skills and agency by using storytelling models that allow them to recapture their own narratives, and by tapping into available media and marketing tools to support them in conveying their message. This capstone documents my work on my strategic project.

The presentation of my capstone is organized in the following fashion. First, I provide a detailed narrative of TandemED’s entry into Pittsburgh to contextualize the challenges and opportunities I identified in the inaugural stages of the project. Next, I present a Review of Knowledge for Action (RKA) to provide further insight into
TandemED’s theory of action relative to Black Male Achievement (BMA) and show how it is based on existing scholarly research and best practices in the field. I then describe and analyze the process TandemED used to develop a campaign for black male achievement and youth development in Pittsburgh that was relevant and presented an accurate narrative using a collective impact approach. I conclude with a self-reflective discussion of the implications of the strategies I employed for growing the city of Pittsburgh’s BMA efforts, my own development, and, more importantly, the larger field of individuals engaged in working with black males and the communities in which they live.

Meeting a Kindred Spirit

In the summer of 2012 I received a telephone call from a 617 area code that would have a profound impact on my thinking and the direction of my life for the subsequent three years and beyond. As I cautiously answered the phone, thinking it was someone from Harvard calling to tell me they had made a mistake with my admittance, I was presently surprised to hear the voice of one of my new peers and colleagues in the Ed.L.D program, Brian Barnes. I had never spoken to Brian and knew little about him other than what appeared in his student profile. Although our conversation was brief, during our dialogue we made a pact bound by the fact that we were African-American men committed to making a difference in the world and that we would successfully complete the Ed.L.D. program at Harvard, together. When we arrived on the Harvard campus in the Fall of 2012 and met in person, we knew instantly that our summer commitment would indeed be realized. Not only did we share a common racial bond, but
we also had unique experiences to bring to the table that, when integrated, would enhance our work in new and exciting ways.

Brian was an ordained minister, former math teacher, and school leader who had been in Boston for a decade and had lead Boston Public Schools’ Office of Faith-Based Partnerships. Originally from Huntsville, Alabama, Brian grew up in the highly-segregated South in a two-parent church-going family with his sister. Having excelled in mathematics and science in high school, Brian was selected and accepted for fellowships at National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and regularly attended gifted students’ programs during the summer at Alabama A & M, a Historically Black College located in Huntsville. Although he excelled academically, he experienced extreme racism from his teachers and educators that were not reflective of his experiences in his immediate community, which was supportive. Brian recounted several stories of racism on which he was told by a teacher after a presentation that he needed to learn to get the “black out of his voice.” In another instance, he was told that the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) wasn’t for people like him. I, on the other hand, was a nonprofit leader who had worked in Houston, Newark, and Harlem for organizations including Education Pioneers; Stand for Children, and the Harlem Children’s Zone. I grew up in Southern California under circumstances that were markedly different from Brian’s. In fact, my experiences through childhood and adolescence were very similar to the majority of kids residing in the low-income disadvantaged neighborhoods I later worked in. The simple (yet complex) version of my story is that, after twenty years of marriage, my parents divorced because of my father’s abusive tendencies. My father, against court orders and without my mother’s consent, took me at age seven from my home in
Pennsylvania to California. This journey, which lasted ten years, involved secrecy, a myriad of residential and school changes, poverty, abuse, and no contact with my mother and sisters. It was not until my father remarried that he was willing to “let” me return to my mother and sisters. By this time, I was 17 years old; I was the proud owner of a 0.6 grade point average, had failed out of school, and was destined for a pathway that would have surely ended in an early death or incarceration. My mother and stepfather, both professors at Duke University, were elated with my return to the family and quickly implemented a plan of action to help me turn my life around. They provided me with what I lacked from the prior ten years: a caring environment, structure, predictability, and academic assistance. After five-and-a-half years of high school, I finally graduated and was accepted to Pennsylvania State University on probation. With my new lease on life, I vowed to never take an opportunity I was presented with for granted. From my personal experience growing up in poverty, I came to believe that education was the ultimate equalizer to most social disparities.

**Founding an Organization**

Although Brian’s and my lives were different in a number of ways, they were similar in that the game changer for us started with our communities and the adults in our lives wrapping around us in support. We both brought this perspective to our work at Harvard. Sitting in class regularly we were often struck by the deficit-based narratives presented about African-American communities and, most notably, Black men and boys. We analyzed the extant literature on schools and nonprofits and found that what was lacking was the community voice and presence in the “solutions” that were far too often mapped onto them. With funding from an innovation grant from the Harvard Graduate
School of Education, we were presented with an opportunity to take residency in the Harvard Innovation Lab, where we began to build our own organization geared toward addressing the problems and opportunities through a different lens. We developed TandemED, a national organization aimed at tackling issues of intergenerational poverty through supporting the creation of a collective impact strategy led by African-American communities. As an organization we believed that we could build thriving Black communities and break the vicious cycle of poverty by using community-based, multigenerational strategies that involved adult community members unifying and organizing their internal assets to invest in the development of their youth. We also argued that through uniting and placing Black leaders and communities at the center of the equation for success—as opposed to the margins—we could strengthen young Black men and youth in becoming purpose-driven, motivated, and self-directed adults who held a unified vision/narrative about their rich history, present opportunity, and the promise of sustaining a thriving community into their future.

As TandemED evolved, and with the help of Dr. David Harris and Professor Charles Ogletree at Harvard Law School, we were able to move from the Innovation Lab to a new home and fiscal sponsor in the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, and to become the TandemED Initiative for Black Male Achievement and Community Improvement. Then, in May of 2014, we engaged the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to pilot a community-based effort in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that would complement the Foundation’s forty-million-dollar investment in that city. In the months that followed, we partnered with and secured additional funding from Pittsburgh Public Schools and the Heinz Endowments. This funding would support us in developing a
youth-led and community-supported campaign to counter the negative images and narratives about the identity of young Black men and youth, in particular, in the city’s East and Northside communities. Representing a subset of TandemED’s larger work in Pittsburgh, the campaign was targeted at developing a positive identity for Black males through messaging and marketing customized by youth over the course of three years.

The First Two Weeks: TandemED in Pittsburgh

“Residential segregation is basic in mechanism; it exerts its influence in an indirect and personal way: because the Negro people do not live near white people, they cannot associate with each other in the many activities founded on common neighborhood. Residential segregation becomes reflected in uni-racial schools, hospitals, and other institutions and creates an artificial city that permits any prejudice on the part of public officials to be freely vented on Negros without hurting whites.” (Myrdal, 1944, p. 92)

At the end of the narrow Mt. Pleasant road that traverses the hills of Pittsburgh, you will find a community neglectfully tucked away in near obscurity known as the North View Heights housing project or “The Heights.” As the road up the hill draws near its end, the entrance to the Heights falls in the shadows of a vacant elementary school adorning a large blue for sale sign. The buildings’ parking lots have long been void of cars, and rusted poles stand where basketball hoops once were. The cracked pavement appears frozen in time, serving as ground cover for a haunting schoolyard having long missed the scampering of children at play. The perimeters of the neighborhood are noticeably absent of businesses, grocery stores, or anything resembling a relevant tie to
the outside world. The community’s isolation makes it feel like a third world enclave hunched against a barren mountain in the hinterlands. As Brian and I drove into the community we were mindful that a week prior to our arrival in the Heights there was a mid-day shooting that stole the life of one 21-year-old young Black man and left another seriously injured. More recently, the body of a third man in an unrelated incident was found discarded in the tree line of this hollow community.

As we inched further into the neighborhood, we approached a dilapidated security station manned by a lone security guard. The station marked the sole entrance and exit to the neighborhood. The phrase “one way in and one way out” had a very literal meaning in this community. As we ventured deeper into the neighborhood, we saw children playing with their parents, folks sitting outside on their stoops talking as if they didn’t have a care in the world and with smiles all around. I rolled down my window and was soothed by the pleasant aroma of meat grilling from people cooking out. I began to sense that the Heights was surely a “community”— one which likely harbored all kinds of hidden potential and talent. Nonetheless, my thoughts soon drifted back to my own experiences growing up in similar neighborhoods and how typical it was to go about business as usual with smiles on one’s face even after traumatic incidents like shootings had occurred. Life was always stop and go with extreme highs and lows. As we exited the community, I become keenly aware that the only White face I had seen was the disheveled security guard at the gate.
Strong Families and Parents

The importance of a strong family and caring parents in a child's life can't be overstated. Parents are a child's first and most influential teachers. (Idaho Governor, Dirk Kempthorne, 2005)

A day after our trip to North View Heights we met with a parent who doubled as a community advocate. We met her at a local soul food restaurant on the North Side. She greeted us with open arms and a tight hug. Her smile, embrace, and demeanor felt familiar and brought me back to the feeling of seeing an aunt, grandmother, or cousin after a long period of time. She was genuinely happy to see us. I ordered a sweet tea and the house specialty omelet, and Brian a breakfast sandwich while she had coffee and the restaurant’s famous shrimp and grits. I was moved by her passion as she wasted no time telling us her story as a lifelong resident of the North Side, small business owner, and mother of two school-age children who attended Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS).

When our food arrived at the table, in true pastor fashion Brian blessed the meal. The blessing brought the conversation to a much deeper level and provided the space for a more candid conversation between strangers. It was obvious that the sharing of a common faith cut through some of the reservations she had about us as outsiders, and also in her eyes legitimized why two outsiders came to Pittsburgh to work. She lit up as she spoke in great detail about the opportunities and challenges she faced in the neighborhood. She communicated to us what she deemed as her calling and with each advancing word she moved closer and closer to tears. Finally she couldn’t hold back her tears anymore and began to cry. She loved the North Side and was dedicated to change it for the better. An hour after our meeting she sent me an email “God knows it was a true
A Resilient City

The ability to persist (i.e., to absorb shocks and stresses and still maintain the functioning of society and the integrity of ecological systems) and the ability to adapt to change, unforeseen circumstances, and risks. (Adger, 2003, p. 79)

We ended the day at a local basketball tournament hosted at the Garland Parklet or more affectionately called the “Penney Hoop Court.” The tournament was hosted by a PPS administrator in honor of his brother who was murdered in the neighborhood in 2008. Brian and I were supposed to meet a local rapper, activist, and owner of “One Hood Media,” Jasiri X, to talk about our work. Jasiri had other obligations and needed to reschedule.

The teams comprised former high school or local basketball standouts who had “hoop dreams.” Each team was broken out by the neighborhood the young man resided in. The outdoor pavement court sidelines were packed by a few 100 kids from each neighborhood all hanging out having a good time cheering on their team and talking a little friendly “trash.” In the center of the court and on the back of each backboard were the letters “AR” with the number “3” under it. The initials represented Anthony Rivers, the young man who the tournament was held in memorial to, and his former basketball jersey number. Anthony was a native of the city, father of three, and former basketball star who, to this day, stood out as the Penn State Greater Allegheny University basketball
team’s all-time scorer. Anthony was killed by a 14-year-old over a gold chain; you could
tell the impact his family has had on the community by the number of people the event
brought out.

We were introduced to another PPS administrator who had close relationships
with the young men on the court. With each point scored, he gave a brief bio of the player
and how they could have gone to college if they had the grades or the support. Given the
aerial displays and pro-like dunks I believed him. That night each player had the taste of
the stardom that a broken system had robbed him of. We stayed at the court late into the
night. As the crowd dispersed we gathered with a few other men under the bright lights of
the court. We congratulated them on the success of the event and they told us how far the
event had come since the inaugural game in 2008. They told us how the kids cheer and
police each other to ensure that there is a positive atmosphere at the game. The
conversation led to a young man named Leon Ford who they said we needed to talk to.
His story dimmed the mood. The 21-year-old Ford was unarmed, shot, and paralyzed by
the Pittsburgh police during a routine traffic stop. To add injury to insult, Ford was facing
an unjust 20-year sentence for reckless endangerment to police enforcement and resisting
arrest. As I headed to the car I begin to reflect on how shared experiences and tragedies
had banded a community together. I was very much reminded that I was in a place that
would bend but wouldn’t break and was above all resilient.

Role Models

Role models live their values in the world. Children admire people who act in
ways that support their beliefs. It helps them understand how their own values are
part of who they are and how they might seek fulfilling roles as adults. – (Price, 2014:2)

Not long after our trip to the court I went to a football game at Perry High School. The school was playing a team from Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania. Immediately I noticed a difference: one team was almost completely White and the other completely Black. The 50-yard line, in my mind, became an invisible barrier between very different worlds that takes us back to an era in which “colored’s” and whites were not allowed to mix. There were also notable distinctions in the stands on each team’s sideline. The White team travelled with their band of what appeared to be 40 to 50 students, a squad of cheerleaders, a team of baton and flag twirlers, and a host of hometown supporters. The Black team’s sideline was different in very unsettling ways. In what was supposed to be a “home game” they were not greeted by the fanfare of trumpets and drummers playing the school fight song, but rather a few cheerleaders and parents trying to stay hydrated and brave the 90-degree Saturday weather.

As I walked to my seat, I was greeted by an assistant coach whose day job involved being a social entrepreneur with the intent of helping low-income Black communities. In the days before the game, he and I met at a local coffee shop so that he could inform me about the work he was engaged in the community as well his passion for the children he coached. As I headed to my seat, he motioned me to walk on to the field to meet the head coach. The three of us met in the center of the field and he told me how hard they have worked, how proud of the kids he was, and that he also had first game jitters. After exchanging pleasantries, I wished him the best of luck and retreated to the
stands. As the game ensued it became apparent who was going to win-- the White team was up nearly 20 points. As the referee threw yet another penalty flag against the Black team, a Black parents yelled, “It’s got to be fair ref, some of the calls have to go our way.” I found the remarks poetically tragic and applicable to a much broader context. As, the temperature rose and the White team continued to score yet another touchdown, I saw the coaches for the Black team continue to encourage and motivate. It is clear to me that although under-resourced, and at times out-manned, there were role models and mentors here.

**The Potential for a Movement**

“Actors must be organized in ways that enhance the efficacy of individual efforts, align those efforts, and increase the likelihood that a collection of such actions might accumulate towards efficacious solutions.” (Bryk, Gomez, & Grunow, 2011, p. 147)

During our second week in Pittsburgh, Brian and I were introduced to a young Black entrepreneur. We met at his office, which doubled as the Young Men and Women's African Heritage Association. His energy and honesty about the Black community in Pittsburgh was infectious. He spoke using grand hand gestures, a wide smile, and a pitch in his voice that resembled the tone of a young child after he unwrapped his first gift on Christmas. There was no shortage of energy in the room. At one point, he stood up from his seated position and began drawing the picture of his vision in the air with his finger as if his finger were a Sharpie. Deeper in the conversation we learned about the several hats he wore. He was a small business owner, a senior pastor at a church in a predominantly
black suburb not far outside the city, a mentor to over 80 kids from across the community, and had aspirations to run for mayor. During the course of the meeting his phone rang constantly, to the point that our conversation was stop and go. With each call he told people about the Black men from Harvard sitting on his couch and how they should come over and meet us. One of his colleagues actually took him up on the offer. He affectionately called her his sister but they were not actual kin. She was a young woman around 25-years of age who had recently been promoted to run community programs for the mayor’s office. We told her about our purpose in Pittsburgh and our own personal stories. As we moved toward the end of our tale, the two city natives looked at each other and simultaneously nodded in confirmation. They had accepted us.

The young woman was a person of action and she immediately got on the phone to set up a meeting between us and the young black professionals of the city. By the time we arrived back home, she had sent out emails to over sixty local “movers and shakers” requesting that a potluck meet-and-greet take place a few days later. At the potluck, which was in our honor, we were greeted by no less than 30 individuals moving in and out of the space. A few local government officials and even one state representative were present. A historically Black newspaper, the New Pittsburgh Courier, came to report on our initiative. The group was a mix of mid-20 to mid-30-year-old Black professionals who were extremely friendly, yet cautious, and inquisitive about our arrival in Pittsburgh. Most worked at local nonprofits with various missions throughout the city. I was struck by the expressed dedication of these individuals, but was also curious about the fact that, while many of them were friends, they were all somewhat unaware of the work that each other was doing on the ground.
“Let the Church Say Amen”

“Throughout African American history as many church historians have pointed out, the Black church has not only promoted the spiritual development of African Americans but the social and political development as well. There is no institution in the African American community more grassroots than the black church. It is owned operated by local community members and responds to the needs of the local membership.” (Austin, 1996, p. 56)

One Sunday as I stepped into one of the prominent African American churches in Pittsburgh my ears were greeted by the soulful melodies of roughly 500 people in the middle of praise and worship. The pews were lined with Pittsburgh natives young and old. The choir was setting a tempo that you couldn’t help but clap your hands to and sway back and forth. Three small children were sitting in the pew directly in front of me, futility stomping their feet, trying to stay on beat with the church drummer. As the senior pastor opened up with the Morning Prayer, the parishioners flooded the aisles and clasped hands one after another and the 500 made a chain of one.

The sermon that day focused on God letting some things sink so that others could rise. As an outsider I was embraced with hugs and acknowledgments from strangers as if I had grown up there. Then, in the quiet space of prayer, I took time to reflect on my first two weeks in Pittsburgh. I thought about North View Heights and how the end of Mt. Pleasant road might not be a dead end but could be more akin to the end of a rainbow complete with hidden treasures or a pot of gold. I reflected on parents’ tears and their love for their community. I thought about how beautiful it was to see young Black men cheering on other young Black men and unifying after a traumatic event. I wondered
what life would be like if each of these young black males believed they could be great and had the support to bring their dreams to fruition. I opened my eyes and raised my head in church that day and I thanked God for the opportunity he had put before me to make a difference and for the assets in the community around me. I felt a renewed sense of meaning and individual purpose and my beliefs about the endless potential for Black male success became even deeper despite it being one of our nation’s greatest challenges. In that instant, I believed the narrative could be changed in ways that promoted the promise of Black men being one of the nation’s greatest opportunities for success.

**REVIEW OF KNOWLEDGE FOR ACTION**

Based on TandemED’s first two weeks in the city of Pittsburgh, it was obvious that there were great challenges to overcome and many of the deficit-based narratives associated with poverty-stricken communities held true—namely, the city experienced deeply segregated and divided neighborhoods, rampant urban blight, and there was a strong presence of persistent violence with African-American males as the central perpetrators and victims of it. While I am willing to concede the presence of these challenges, I also assert that the more dominant narrative in the community was one of resilience, and that parents and community members cared deeply about their neighborhoods and children. In addition, there were strong albeit under-resourced role models in the community who were continuously striving to make a difference. Moreover, there were deep assets and social capital within the community. And, there was a loving and competent community of nonprofits and social programs in place that were making small scale changes, but were not able to scale their impact because they were working in silos rather than integrating their efforts in ways that could lead to real-time city-wide change for Black males and the communities they lived in.
After observing the geographic and social landscape of Pittsburgh, I knew my strategy had to draw on best practices and research related to building pathways and opportunities to success for African-American males and youth, as the success of this population presented the greatest overall public value for developing the city’s Black neighborhoods into thriving communities. I also knew that I needed to use a collective impact framework that would acknowledge the deficits but also leverage the rich assets of Pittsburgh’s Black communities. The sources I used to develop my theory of action include existing research, my past experiences (e.g., personal and professional), my professional experiences in Pittsburgh as co-founder of TandemED, and my learning and growth as a member of the cohort three Doctoral of Education Leadership Program (Ed.L.D) at Harvard University. The topics I explored include creating public value, understanding why race matters in creating social capital, building a collective impact strategy, and storytelling for movement building.

The Strategic Triangle and Public Value

What is public value and how did it shape TandemED’s work in Pittsburgh? Harvard Graduate School of Education and Kennedy School’s Professor Mark Moore has argued that just as the private sector has clear goals and outcomes that are based on private value which is usually articulated by some monetary amount, the public sector must also set goals and outcomes that articulate their larger value to society (Moore, 2004). Moore (1997) developed a model known as the Strategic Triangle that tracks the following questions to determine the public value proposition created by any action, strategy, or organization:

1. What is the important “public value” the organization seeks to produce?
2. What “sources of legitimacy and support” would be relied upon to authorize the organization to take action and provide the resources necessary to sustain the effort to create that value?

3. What operational capabilities (including new investments and innovations) would the organization rely on (or have to develop) to deliver the desired results?

![Strategic Triangle](image)

*Figure 1: Strategic Triangle (Moore, 1997)*

Guided by Moore’s model, I developed the following propositions around courses of action I would take in Pittsburgh:

1) Legitimacy and Support: Build a steering committee comprised of a broad coalition of stakeholders that have legitimacy and support the African-American community’s development of a campaign for black youth development and that pays special attention to developing positive narratives targeted at BMA.

2) Organizational Capacity: Employ a collective impact strategy to build capacity and ensure stability and growth of a campaign in the city of Pittsburgh that builds
the necessary infrastructure to address issues and opportunities in the Black community immediately with the right people at the table.

3) Public Value: Build relationships through the collective impact strategy to create the needed capacity and a network of innovative leaders and institutions with the habits of mind around personal agency and responsibility, to anchor an asset-based movement for social change.

**Understanding Why Race Matters in Building Social Ties and Social Capital**

“The struggle being waged today, where there is any struggle being waged at all, is closer to the one that was addressed in 1896 in Plessy v. Ferguson, in which the court accepted segregated institutions for black people, stipulating only that they must be equal to those open to white people. The dual society, at least in public education, seems in general to be unquestioned.” (Kozol, 2012, p. 121)

Let’s be very clear. In order to launch any type of intervention for young Black males in in Pittsburgh, whether it be to address the daily ills they face or to empower them to take advantage of opportunities not yet known to them, one must begin with raising the question: **How does race matter in the lives of these young men and boys?**

As cited in Burton, Bonilla-Silva, Ray, Buckelew, and Hordge-Freeman (2010, p. 440), “Race involves the assumption that individuals can be divided into groups based on phenotype or genotype and that those groups have meaningful differences” (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). According to Nagel (1994, p. 12), “race is more than an individual characteristic: It is an ongoing phenomenon that is accomplished in interaction with
others and that is situated in social contexts.” Race matters because it is a dominant feature used in creating inequality and differential access to resources. People use race as the basis to produce hierarchies of power and prestige. Through racial discrimination practices, segregation, and geographic isolation, people of color—particularly African-American males—may have little access to the social networks or social capital that are critical to their success (Omi & Winant, 1994; Royster, 2003). These were a critical set of assumptions and points of understanding in the work I planned to do for my capstone.

In the 2014 report commissioned by the Open Society Institute and the Foundation Center, *Building A Beloved Community: Strengthening The Field Of Black Male Achievement*, the authors draw our attention to the fact that to change the narrative of African American men, we have to first focus on the issue of implicit bias and how society interprets and acts upon issues of race and racism. As the reports stated: “However many young Black men you educate and help build out their life opportunities, those opportunities diminish every time they walk down the street, because there are so many micro-aggressions against them. If we really want to change their lives, we have to change perceptions.” (Seema & Sato, 2014, p. 23). My goal in the work I completed for my capstone was to contribute to extant efforts to change perceptions by using collective impact strategies to reconstruct the narrative.

Relational ties and social capital became an equally important part of my storyline. Social capital refers to resources that are accessible through social interactions and extended networks of social ties. Said another way, social capital concerns the value that can be extracted from social relations (Coleman, 1988). Like other forms of capital, social capital is not evenly distributed in society, particularly with respect to race (Lin,
Rather, the social networks through which social capital flows develop in accordance with the “homophily principle,” which states that similar people are more likely to interact with each other than dissimilar people (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). In other words, people are attracted to people much like themselves. Different degrees of similarity between individuals, in turn, give rise to different types of social capital. *Bonding social capital*, for example, reinforces the similarities that exist between strong ties (such as family and close friends) which boost solidarity and strengthens support reciprocity. In contrast, *bridging social capital* reaches across gaps in social structures to link diverse groups, generally through weaker ties (such as acquaintances) (Granovetter, 1973).

While bonding social capital is useful for generating support that allows people to maintain their status, bridging social capital offers the possibility of social mobility through academic achievement specifically because it “bridges” social divides which are often the product of racism. Consider for instance the problem of finding a job. Although a person's strong ties may be more motivated to help with the job search because they have much in common (by virtue of the homophily principle) both with each other and the job-seeker, there is likely to be a great deal of overlap in the job leads they can provide. On the other hand, because more distant acquaintances travel in different arenas, they are more likely to hear about fresh job opportunities that they can then pass along to the job-seeker (Granovetter 1973, 1983). In communities where unemployment is high and jobs are scarce, these weak, bridging ties take on even greater significance for those pursuing upward mobility.
Studies show that bridging social capital has a particularly strong effect on the social mobility of the poor and disadvantaged (O’Regan, 1993). Some research suggests social capital has a greater impact than human capital on the fortunes of the poor (MacLeod 2008). However, the disadvantaged generally possess few of these valuable bridging ties due to longstanding social isolation and exclusion across multiple domains primarily due to racial inequalities (Wilson 1997; Krivo, Washington, Peterson, & Kwan. 2013) How does one optimize the development of these critical ties for African American men and boys when their networks are constrained and they are excluded from valuable informational ties especially when it comes to achieving academic and employment success? Based on my previous work I knew that I had to help develop ways to give African-American men and boys access to networks with valuable information and connections they could use for advancement. Hence, a focus on social capital and the strength of weak ties was a necessary element in the work I planned to do in helping Black men and boys write new narratives that would involve networks that created valuable social capital for them. An essential caveat here is that some of those networks had to comprise ties to individuals and groups who possessed highly advanced forms social capital and network bases outside of the local communities that Black men and boys resided in. In essence I am saying that in order for the project to work, the ties had to include a range of actors from Pittsburgh—those who held the key to valuable information and to secondary or weak ties that help individuals and communities move forward. Lin’s (2001) work added further credence to this rationale as he linked social capital to racial inequality. Lin (2001) addressed issues of access by indicating that
different levels of information are presented to different groups based on the construction of equality and race.

**Building a Collective Impact Strategy**

“The dominant approach taken by funders and nonprofits is a theory of isolated impact: nearly 1.4 million nonprofits are trying to invent independent solutions to major social problems. We may not have a silver bullet, but we do have silver buckshot—lots of little things we can do that together make a big difference and that is called collective impact.”

(Kramer, 2012, p. 43)

“Critical performance in many complex systems is dependent on the coordinated activity of a team of individuals. Cockpit crews, surgery teams, firefighting teams and military crews are all examples of teams who operate in situations where ineffective performance can have disastrous consequences. Such teams are comprised of individuals who have high degrees of expertise in particular areas, requiring that information contributed from different team members converge in support of critical decisions.” (Converse, 1993, p. 26)

As implied in the above quote, the public and nonprofit sector are siloed systems that fail to integrate economic, social, and educational policies and resources in ways that maximize impact and collective transformative change for the residents they aim to serve. These siloed systems often lack the capacity to redirect and innovate when faced with
tackling adaptive challenges and problems, and as Kramer (2012, p. 7) and other scholars on the topic have articulated, “there is scant evidence that isolated initiatives are the best way to solve many social problems in today’s complex and interdependent world.” Thus I pose the question: **How can we move our efforts from the siloed approach to one which employs collective impact?**

Preskill, Parkhurst, and Juster (2014) stated that collective impact (CI) occurs when a group of actors from different sectors commit to a common agenda for solving a complex social or environmental problem. More than simply a new way of collaborating, they argue that collective impact is a structured approach to problem solving that includes five core conditions, which are outlined in Table 1 below:

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Five Conditions of Collective Impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common Agenda</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shared Measurement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mutually Reinforcing Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuous Communication</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Backbone Support</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, Hanley-Brown, Kania, and Kramer (2012) added three preconditions that have to be in place to successfully bring a CI strategy to fruition. The three preconditions are: (1) an influential champion; (2) adequate financial resources, and (3) a sense of urgency for change. The authors stated that when these three conditions are met one can create the opportunity and the necessary motivation to bring people together in ways that build capacity and create a set of shared outcomes that are sustainable. Lastly, Hanley-Brown and colleagues (2012) articulated that from the preconditions, the one with the most important weight was the presence of influential champions, or what they referred to as a dynamic leader. Dynamic leadership is of the utmost importance when catalyzing and sustaining CI efforts.

Leaders across sectors including public policy government, economic, education, and health organizations address two major types of problems or challenges: (1) technical challenges, which can be solved with known solutions/solid management principles, and (2) adaptive challenges, which are those problems that are not so easily solved, or, as Harvard Professor Ronald Heifetz (1994) puts it, are challenges that deal with a “conflict in values, or bridging the gap between the values that we stand for and the current conditions under which we operate” (p.12). Given that most challenges faced in the public sector rarely are technical and readily fall in the adaptive category, a collective impact approach allows for adaptive problem solving by building relationships and encouraging multiple organizations to collectively build capacity and resources to create innovative solutions and a coordinated response to challenges with no easy answer (Hanley-Brown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012). Heifetz and Laurie (1997, p. 127) confirmed the importance of leadership in tackling adaptive challenges, stating that “getting people
to do adaptive work is the mark of leadership in a competitive world.” These collective approaches to problem solving drive communication and results that capitalize and depend on individual or organizational expertise across sectors, or, as Everett Rodgers (2002, p. 991) states, “diffusion is essentially a social process through which people talking to people spread an innovation.”

Several organizations within U.S. cities have taken a collective impact approach to enriching Black communities and supporting Black male populations. For example, the program Strive focuses on the holistic socioeconomic growth of every child in the community. They employ early childhood interventions and parent support programs and engage leaders in influential supporting roles across sectors that navigate across traditional lines in a way that focuses on collective decision making and impact. Aiming to build a model education system, Strive encourages collaboration of community leaders across various sectors. Strive also identifies the problem in education as the under-preparedness of high school graduates for college or careers and garners the strengths of the individual communities through a four-prong framework reflective of the collective impact model: (1) shared community vision; (2) evidenced-based decision-making; (3) collaborative action; and (4) investment and sustainability. The Strive model has gained recognition and has received philanthropic support from reputable funders. Strive grew from its beginnings in Cincinnati to a nationwide network, which currently has a presence in 37 states and Washington, D.C., and has shown impressive results across their 55 partner sites utilizing a CI approach. For example in their Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky partnerships, youth readiness for kindergarten has increased 11 points to 55 percent, and fourth grade reading achievement is up 16 percent.
Although organizations like Strive and others have shown significant promise in using CI strategies to move communities forward; we must also consider that there are potential obstacles to building unified approaches to specific challenges and sustaining efforts across several sets of actors. As we consider those challenges we should begin with the key task and long-standing test of getting the right people to the table. As articulated by Jim Collins (2001) in his bestselling book, *Good to Great*, there are three principles to producing results by having the right people at the table. First, you must understand who are the movers and producers; if you start by identifying the right people first, you can be more flexible and nimble in navigating adaptive challenges. Second, through identifying the right combination of actors, you rarely need to concern yourself with maintaining a motivated team. Collins (2001) identifies the right people as self-motivated and indicates that being part of a team of leaders who are producers creates a culture of motivation where the expectation is to produce impactful results. Third, if you have the wrong people at the table, no other efforts matter because you cannot sustain and rarely achieve impactful results. “Great vision with mediocre people still produces mediocre results” (Hanley-Brown et al., 2014).

In a deeply saturated nonprofit space like Pittsburgh there are challenges with figuring out whom the right people are as well as getting those people to agree on the right set of things to do. To take a collective impact approach, organizations need to be able to not only work together but also to develop shared outcomes and step away from the “normal” in an effort to share responsibility and credit for their success and failures and most importantly be able to collaboratively create new innovative solutions. Above all this, a shift in mindset in both individual and organizational culture is required to
understand that success does not rest on the backs of one organization but on the expertise and interventions that all organizations at the table are able to contribute (Hanley-Brown et al., 2014). Sadly, many organizations that seek to take a collective impact approach to a social problem opportunity can see the finish-line but unfortunately will fail to ever reach it because they don’t build the necessary capacity with the right set of actors nor do they make the necessary mindset shift required to get there (Hanley-Brown et al., 2014).

**Storytelling for Movement Building**

“Stories not only teach us how to act – they inspire us to act. Stories communicate our values through the language of the heart, our emotions.
And it is what we feel – our hopes, our cares, our obligations – not simply what we know that can inspire us with the courage to act.” (Ganz, 2007, p. 525)

In 2006 the Schott Foundation for Public Education issued a report entitled *A Positive Future for Black Boys: Building the Movement*. Among the key findings reported was the need to build a campaign for Black males and particularly Black male youth that used them as the primary constituency and central drivers of the work, stating that “the most to gain will drive a campaign to be both more ambitious and more pragmatic than anyone else can make it” (Rinku, 2006:30). The report also communicated that the focus on individual campaigns needed to be translated and interconnected with similar constituencies nationally, moving toward the establishment of a sustainable movement. Harvard Kennedy School Professor Marshall Ganz, one of the
leading minds in the field of movement building, has discussed the issue in depth, conveying that such movements take shape as a result of purposeful actors on both the individual and organizational level that “assert new public values, form relationships rooted in those values, and mobilize political, economic, and cultural power to translate these values into action” (Ganz, 2010, p. 2). Moreover, in order to build a sustained movement, participants must create a set replicable actions that drive political will and policies towards reform.

Psychologist Julian Rappaport provides an important definition for organizing, and more specifically, for empowering individuals and communities. He states that true empowerment is “a process: the mechanism by which people, organizations, and communities gain mastery over their lives” (Rappaport 1984:3). He goes on, in his article Empowerment Meets Narrative: Listening to Stories and Creating Settings, to articulate the importance of storytelling in the process of empowerment stating:

“For many people, particularly those who lack social, political, or economic power, the community, neighborhood, or cultural narratives that are available are either negative, narrow, "written" by others for them, or all of the above. People who seek either personal or community change often find that it is very difficult to sustain change without the support of a collectivity that provides a new communal narrative around which they can sustain changes in their own personal story.” (Rappaport, 1995, p. 6).

As highlighted above, the importance of storytelling is essential in the process of organizing, and empowering communities to build a sustainable movement. Ganz (2012) notes that we can activate and inspire others through the sharing of challenges we have
faced, the choices we have made, and life lessons learned through a variety of our own individual experiences. He brings us to the understanding that stories “allow us to express our values not as abstract principles, but as lived experiences that have the power to move others” (Ganz, 2012, p. 530). Ganz also offers the following framework as a guideline for effectively conveying a public narrative.

Table 2

TELLING YOUR PUBLIC STORY Self, Us, Now (Ganz, 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure the “Plot” of a Narrative</th>
<th>Essential Elements of a Public Story</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenge:</strong> Why did you feel it was a challenge? What was so challenging about it? Why was it your challenge?</td>
<td><strong>Story of self:</strong> why you were called to what you have been called to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Choice:</strong> Why did you make the choice you did? Where did you get the courage – or not? Where did you get the hope – or not? How did it feel?</td>
<td><strong>Story of us:</strong> what your constituency, community, organization has been called to its shared purposes, goals, vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome:</strong> How did the outcome feel? Why did it feel that way? What did it teach you? What do you want to teach us? How do you want us to feel?</td>
<td><strong>Story of now:</strong> the challenge this community now faces, the choices it must make, and the hope to which “we” can aspire.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THEORY OF ACTION

From existing research, best practices in the field, and my own personal and professional experience having worked in community organizing and youth development in the cities of New York, Newark, and Houston, I developed this theory of action for TandemED’s work in Pittsburgh: if we create a campaign for BMA and youth development in partnership with a broad coalition of stakeholders that support African-American communities by using a collective impact approach in which TandemED
temporarily supporting the effort as a backbone organization, *then* Pittsburgh will create a self-sustaining group of adults who are committed personally and financially to supporting a youth-led campaign in the city and that have the habits of mind around personal agency and responsibility to anchor an asset-based movement for social change through creating new narratives.

**STRATEGIC PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND RESULTS**

My strategies for building partnerships in the Pittsburgh community were aimed at developing a campaign for African American male achievement and sustaining support for that effort. The strategies reflected two primary courses of action. First, in developing a city-wide campaign for male achievement I focused on building legitimacy and social capital as a core feature of partnerships. To accomplish this task I established targeted partnerships among key community stakeholders who had shared interests in comparable organizational outcomes. To ensure the success of my efforts, it was imperative that I link organizations together who shared a common agenda/thread that would bring to light the value of creating partnerships among Pittsburgh’s education, non-profit, government, and business communities. I believed that the value of creating partnerships would become apparent as the organizations worked to foster shared outcomes and that they would develop close collaborative ties in their daily work that would help them build capacity that had in previous efforts been impeded by them having under-resourced staff and operating as siloed units. In essence, by working collaboratively to achieve the same goal, I expected that the organizations as partners had a much greater chance of meeting their goals.

Secondly, I needed to add capacity to TandemED in a city where my partner and I had no prior ties. Thus by creating targeted partnerships with select local organizations I
was able to establish timely and mutually beneficial relationships within the community
and organize a coalition of champions to drive the campaign and a shared collective
impact strategy. Specifically, I constructed a formal steering committee and coalition to
coop- develop and implement a collective impact strategy for Pittsburgh with TandemED
serving as the temporary backbone organization for the work. In doing so, I created a
multi-tier support system between TandemED and external organizations that increased
the legitimacy and support of our shared goals. To gain sustained support for TandemED,
I focused on creating and maintaining strategic relationships across industry lines. As a
starting point, I created a framework to map our assets and categorize who would be most
effective and influential in helping me build a common agenda and system to support the
campaign and staff the coalition. I developed a model to determine where leadership in
the community came from in a campaign that at its core stemmed from the collective
impact model and was led by youth and supported by adults.

In developing this model I wanted to harness the collective leadership and power
of communities by focusing on leadership and organizations that sat closest to the young
Black males in the community and work outwardly from there. I mapped on-the-ground
assets in Pittsburgh according to TandemED’s three levels of leadership. Specifically, I
defined an asset as a leader or organization that could aid me in: (1) assessing the city’s
youth and improving the quality and quantity of daily interpersonal interactions with
Black males and their communities; (2) contributing resources that added in the positive
messaging and imagery I aimed to support Pittsburgh youth in delivering through various
sources of media and technology; or, (3) developing the necessary formal supports for
youth to clearly understand their roles in their community, the communities’ investment
in them, and their own paths to success through mentorship and defining measurable life benchmarks along the way.

Understanding, Mapping, and Leveraging Leadership in Black Communities

The three levels of leadership referred to below were designed by TandemED as a taxonomical guide to aid organizations in defining communities and the necessary roles individuals and organizations and institutions are expected to play as they embark upon implementing the TandemED model in building shared strategies within communities. In Figure 2, I diagram the levels of leadership. The closer one moves to the center of the diagram the closer the daily interaction is with the youth of the community.

![Diagram of TandemED Three Levels of Leadership to Support Youth]

**Figure 2. TandemED Three Levels of Leadership to Support Youth**

**Primary Leadership:** I defined the primary leaders as the individuals, organizations, or institutions that were closest to the young black males I intended to work with. Primary leaders included youth’s principal caretakers such as parents, grandparents and immediate or extended family. I extended the primary category to
include individuals, organizations, and institutions that also had regular casual interactions with youth and had an immediate vested stake in the youth’s life. This category included church congregations, local barbers, gangs, neighbors, and mentors. The primary leaders were the driving force for change within the TandemED process and the group from which I formed the steering committee to support the youth in their development.

**Responsive Leadership:** I categorized responsive leaders as those who were responsible for responding and supporting the primary leaders’ goals and visions for the community. The responsive leaders group comprised those individuals, organizations, and institutions that sit within the community but were not primary caretakers of youth. This group included schools, national nonprofits, and organizations and elected officials and made up the larger coalition for my work.

**Servant Leadership:** The servant leaders were individuals, organizations, or institutions that sit outside of the community, but had mandated as part of their mission, whether it be personal or organizational, to aid youth and/or Black males from distressed communities in their development. This group was positioned to provide resources and added capacity to ensure quality implementation of the primary leaders’ vision. This group included local national organizations, businesses, and private foundations.

**Building Legitimacy to Form Partnerships**

As an outsider in Pittsburgh, I had to focus on building support among primary leaders first and meeting people where they were at socially, culturally, and psychologically and in places where they felt comfortable in their own element. Given that I had no established legitimacy in Pittsburgh when I first entered the communities
there, garnering the support of primary leaders was critical. I approached community leaders from a place that acknowledged their strengths and that leveraged the relationships with the primary leaders to build ones with servant and responsive leaders. Moreover, my credibility with primary leaders was enhanced by my funding stream from two prominent national foundations (the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Heinz Endowments), the Ed.L.D program at Harvard, and existing relationships with Pittsburgh Public Schools. Hence, I was able to identify leaders who moved freely between the primary, responsive and servant leadership categories, who could vouch for me in various social circles in Pittsburgh. It is important to note that although these individuals were members of larger organizations that sat on the outside of the community as I defined it, they were able to wear hats that other members of their organizations were not or would not have been able to wear within the communities I was aiming to serve. To continue building the foundation to do my work and form strategic partnerships and a collective impact strategy, I had to develop a system that defined communities but that also defined the types of partners that I wanted to anchor my work to and eventually transfer TandemED’s role as the temporary backbone organization to another unit that could sustain the movement when TandemED exited Pittsburgh.

This was my plan of action. First, I arranged and conducted over 50 meetings with leaders across the three levels of leadership to build trust, map assets, and set the foundation for implementing TandemED’s approach for building a campaign for BMA. Generally these meetings lasted between 1 to 1½ hours. Knowing that I needed to create a strong network on a fairly tight timeline, I made sure these meetings involved key stakeholders that could provide me with vital information on local resources necessary
for moving my work forward (e.g., time as volunteers, money, space). It was critically important in each meeting for me to introduce TandemED’s theory of change, outline the desired outcomes of the campaign, and show that I was earnestly invested in the Pittsburgh’s African American communities. This often entailed me telling my own personal story, what Marshall Ganz (2010) calls “the story of us, self, now.” By personalizing the interaction and highlighting my vested interest in the project, I was able to make significant headway in each meeting.

It is also important to note that I adjusted and refined TandemED’s pitch as I got deeper and deeper into the work. A key example of this was a shift in the language I used from “changing mindsets” —which at times felt contrived and ambiguous—to the more acceptable language of building a campaign that was youth lead and changed the narrative around how Black males and Black communities were “branded” (in the marketing sense of the word). It was also important that I acknowledged that there was good work going on in Pittsburgh and I was not there in the role of savior, but rather as an organizational leader that could build capacity and outline in each meeting what value there was in creating community partnerships. Overall, the goals in each initial strategic partnership meeting mirrored the following:

- Utilize meetings to identify promising practices within local networks in Pittsburgh.
- Identify who was doing work that aligned with TandemED’s mission, who was having an impact on youth in the community, and who were potential threats to the project’s efforts.
• Understand the political landscape among the local networks, existing coalitions, and placed-based efforts.

• Discern and comprehend where TandemED could have value by filling gaps in the city-wide infrastructure. I saw the TandemED model as a unique opportunity to build bridges among key stakeholders through the creation of a unified approach to building a campaign for black youth in Pittsburgh.

**Developing Steering Committees and a Coalition to Support the Work**

After garnering a better understanding of the Pittsburgh landscape and building legitimacy and support for a CI strategy through my meetings with individual and organizational leaders, the next step was to build a steering committee. It was essential to TandemED’s success that I aligned myself with external organizations that shared a common belief in the need for an approach to building a youth led campaign that was adult-supported and largely focused on changing the narrative for Black males in the city. In the first phase I built an understanding of the need to find organizations that had their own specific areas of expertise and were committed to combining resources to help the city’s youth. I also knew I needed to bring to the table a set of actors that were action-oriented and that had access to networks and social capital that could aid me in garnering resources for the campaign. This group would form the steering committee. These were anchor institutions that could sustain the work I set out to do beyond TandemED’s anticipated end date and who had significant legitimacy within the city. This group of stakeholders had the ability to move freely through all three levels of TandemED’s leadership model. I also knew I needed to shape a larger group that believed in me but that had a less formal relationship to me and whose involvement was more sporadic than
the steering committee. This group would form the coalition. I came up with the following criteria to evaluate who I would recruit to each group.

Table 3
*Evaluation Criteria for TandemED Recruitment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnership Distinction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Steering Committee</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Partner has clear expertise in specific area and their mission is directly aligned with TandemED’s goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Partners work touches multiple levels within the community (3 or more) and has consistent contact/engagement with multiple stakeholders within the black community (Parents, Families, Youth).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Partnership is at a sufficient scale and capacity to add resources to build campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Partner has formal evaluation process to measure goals and have room to create shared outcomes with TandemED and other partner organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Organizations Senior leadership are regularly involved in steering committee leadership meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Partner works strategically to develop comprehensive strategies with steering committee and sets goals collaboratively amongst each other, with a willingness to recruit their own networks into the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Partner representative is regularly present and active in Partnership Leadership Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Partner has formal communication and marketing strategy that can promote steering committees work to other key stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coalition</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Partners goals are predetermined with little ability to innovate input</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Partner does not serve multiple stakeholders or have access to larger networks in the Pittsburgh Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Partner is not a participant in Steering Committee Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Partner has a dedicated commitment to a formalized structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Partner does not or cannot strategically plan programs across a network</td>
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</table>

From my on-the-ground work and meetings I was able to clearly identify eight local and national partners to develop a formal strategic partnership with TandemED and form the steering committee. This group served as my home base and the core group for developing and implementing a CI strategy for the campaign in Pittsburgh. The eight organizations I selected had influence across each of the targeted industries—education, advocacy, corporate/business, nonprofits, private foundations, and faith based
organizations—that I felt were essential to have represented. I identified the final set of partners by utilizing the TandemED three levels of leadership, our partnership distinction guide, and lastly through a set of targeted questions. The answers to questions below had to be in the affirmative for the organization to join the steering committee:

- Can the partner identify with TandemED’s vision/mission to build a campaign for Black Male Achievement in their city?
- Will the partnership lead to increased access to youth and capacity to build the work?
- Could this partnership be sustainable, mutually beneficial and anchor the implementation of a CI strategy in the city past TandemED’s expected departure?
- Does this organization fit one of the key industries that need to be represented for the campaign to be successful?
- Is the organization a connector to capital (political, social, or financial)?
- Does this partner have a strong track record for positive change?
- Will this partner be able to uphold the brand integrity of the campaign?

**Meeting With The Steering Committee**

From September through November 2014 I planned three meetings with the newly formed steering committee. The first was an informal potluck that was focused on me introducing the TandemED model to what would become the steering committee, coalition members and other key stakeholders. The second meeting included eight organizations I had selected to serve on the committee.
Table 4

*Steering Committee Members Represent the Following Organizations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steering Committee Members Represent the Following Organizations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Office of Pittsburgh Mayor Peduto</td>
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<td>● Pittsburgh Public Schools</td>
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<td>● Greater Pittsburgh Coalition Against Violence</td>
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<td>● Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh</td>
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<td>● Parent Educational Advocate</td>
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<td>● Robert Morris College</td>
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<td>● NEED</td>
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<td>● Young Men and Women’s African Heritage Association</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

We started our first formal meetings in October with the intent of utilizing this meeting to set a tone for the work to come and also for partners to:

- Build a rapport among each other and establish mechanisms for working together, operational norms, such as regular meetings and clear indicators of progress.

- Clearly state their own individual organizations’ interest in the work and the value they hoped they would gain towards advancing their own individual missions. I used these statements to form the basis for the strategic plan.

- Create opportunities to reflect, celebrate success, and address challenges in a safe space; as well as have a forum to test strategies, processes, methods, and channels for providing feedback, discussing ideas, and challenging assumptions in the development of the campaign.
Although each organization had done substantial work in the city for several years, not all of them had a deep understanding of the work, mission, or vision that other respective organizations had. I believed each organization needed to acknowledge what their goals were and how they were mutually compatible with others organizations. I also believed it was important that I highlight the positive returns that in taking a collective impact approach would have on their organization. In addition, I was clear that in order to reach these goals, it would require the cooperation of all parties involved and a demonstrated commitment to working together to tie their successes to the success of others at the table through the development of shared outcomes (See Strategic plan, Appendix A). More, specifically I opened the conversation with the statement:

“We are all doing good work and have been doing it for a while, I want to take this time for us to hear about each other’s work, and how that work can tie into the goals we are setting collectively as a group.” (Burton, October 6, 2014)

I then asked them to answer the opened ended question, “This effort would be successful for me and my organization if what occurred?” Having had individual conversation with each organization I knew the synergies in the room but I wanted each organization to see the power in the room for themselves and begin to connect the dots to and for each other. Lastly, I provided the opportunity for them to reflect on the process through a plus delta exercise, where individuals state what worked well for them and what needed to improve. The group agreed the process was strong, and that their main concern was around sustainability of the effort given their other commitments. We agreed to work to build on the process and craft a schedule and strategy that considered sustainability as one of the key elements to prove success.
One of the key reasons I selected this group was because they were people of action who had exhibited a track record of impact through their on-the-ground work. To keep this group engaged it was of critical importance that I made sure that there was no wasted motion in our meeting and that all activities or conversations were geared towards an actionable on-the-ground step. I had individuals answer three questions. The first was for them to collectively identify what the existing assets in Pittsburgh were. They determined that Pittsburgh:

1. Had a strong and caring Black community, that when unified could make significant change for the city’s Black youth;
2. Had a strong historical narrative, deep generational ties, and a strong sense of pride within its Black communities;
3. When organized and activated, Pittsburgh's Black youth could lead and sustain a movement for aggressive and sustainable change; and
4. Had a Black community that was asset- and resource-rich (educationally, socially, familial, politically, and financially).

I used these answers to loosely guide us into our second question: What is the best way to leverage these assets and shape our strategy? They determined that as a group we needed to:

1. Engage, educate, and empower youth, families, and residents to build and implement a collective action that is:
   - Sustainable and works with both a sense of urgency and healing
   - Interdependent—that is, the Black Community as village rather than independents
• Multi-Generational (spans across adults and youth)
• Inclusive of the diversity that comprises Pittsburgh's Black communities (male, female, faith traditions, youth, elderly, married, single)

2. Organize youth to design and deliver a city campaign that articulates the desired change, owning and defining the narrative of their identity, purpose, and community; and

3. Build a coalition of responsive leaders, at all levels, to secure and allocate resources to support Black youth in implementing the city campaign.

Lastly, I directed them to articulate what our major initiatives should be based on their assets and the characteristics they hoped to see. The steering committee developed the following three major initiatives and timelines (Also see Slide 10 in Appendix A).

Table 5

*TandemED Steering Committee—Strategies for Major Initiatives*
Between the October and November meetings, I solicited feedback from each steering committee member and held individual conversations with each to ensure that they felt their voice was heard. Then during our third meeting in November we had two key goals: (1) to ratify a final version of the strategic plan, and (2) to plan next steps in bringing in coalition members to support our plan. I determined that a coalition member would be an ally of the work who was not as involved as our regular steering committee but who could recruit resources towards the development of the campaign. I also felt the need to add two additional members to the steering committee. These two new members had extensive reach in the two designated areas of the city and were key to the success of my placed-based strategy.

I spent the beginning of our November meeting with people, ratifying the strategy, and putting dates to the work plan I previously referenced in the analysis section and that we had agreed upon (see below).

*Figure 3. TandemED Strategic Planning Flowchart*
Next, I set up two rapid-fire activities that were focused on brainstorming and building consensus on what the next action steps would be towards the recruitment of hard resources. I broke the larger group up into three groups based on our three major initiatives determined at the last meeting. I made strategic decisions to place individuals in groups where they had expertise. Over the course of a two-hour meeting I gave each small group five minutes to be generative about next steps that needed to be taken during the process. Each group was given a tailored worksheet to help guide their process (Appendix B). At the end of the first round of the session each subgroup presented their ideas and took feedback from the larger group. I felt this was key to the integrity of the process that every member had the opportunity to offer feedback on every section of the strategy. Lastly I sent groups off to develop a finalized strategy that included key members that they would recruit to build the coalition. Each team then presented their finalized plan. We agreed from there to assemble the final strategy and put it into action.

**ANALYSIS: REVISITING THE THEORY OF ACTION**

In analyzing my work in Pittsburgh, I started by revisiting Mark Moore’s (2012) strategic triangle and integrating the five mandatory conditions for collective impact (Preskill et al 2014) to articulate the project’s impact and identify areas of improvement (See Figure 4). Brian’s involvement in TandemED was certainly part of this analysis as we worked on integrated aspects of this project in tandem although we each had distinct duties concerning the overall project. Yet, in some instances our work was seamless as you, expect from any team that worked together successfully. So I will include Brian in the discussion as appropriate.
Overall, Brian and I felt very strongly in our theory of action which was that if we created a campaign for Black male achievement and youth development in the city of Pittsburgh in partnership with a broad coalition of stakeholders that supported African-American communities using the collective impact approach, with TandemED temporarily serving as a backbone organization, then Pittsburgh could create a self-sustaining group of adults who were committed personally and financially to supporting a youth-led campaign in the city and that have the habits of mind around personal agency and responsibility, to eventually anchor an asset-based movement for social change. The important question that remains is how did that theory play out in practice? To answer this question, I will return to Moore’s Strategic Triangle and consider how we did with respect to issues of public value, organizational capacity, and legitimacy and support.
Creating Public Value Through Mutually Reinforcing Activities

When Brian and I first arrived in Pittsburgh we knew that we had to make a compelling argument for the work we hoped to engage in, as we anticipated our fight being an uphill battle to build legitimacy and capacity to bring our vision to fruition. More specifically, we were two outsiders from Harvard with no home office, no financial resources (at least early on in the work) and weak local networks. If we had not been able to compose a clear public value proposition and differentiate ourselves from charlatans who likely frequented helping networks in Pittsburgh, then we might have been run out of town within the first two weeks of being there!

We decided quickly that our theory of action had to be focused on building relationships through the formation of a collective impact strategy so we could create the needed capacity and a network of leaders and institutions with the habits of mind to anchor an asset-based movement for social change. We went to the people that were closest to the issue/opportunity, or, as we defined them, the Primary Leaders. To form a collective impact strategy you have to have a common agenda, and we felt that the primary leaders were the right starting place because in most cases they shared a set of common experiences that made it easy for them to see the need for change. They knew their kids were being underserved in the school district, they knew there were clear disparities between their communities and more affluent communities sometimes just down the street, they knew that Black boys in particular were treated different by police than their White counterparts, and most importantly they understood that there was a narrative about the Black community that often only highlighted the negative part of the story. We not only believed this had to be the group to lead the movement but, the group
that we needed to clearly align ourselves with. You only get one chance at a first impression and in a big city like Pittsburgh with small town networks and politics. Word spreads quickly about who you are and what you are about.

Relative to my specific role in this project, my job was to create a steering committee to anchor the campaign and perform the mutually reinforcing activities needed to sustain a CI strategy and a social movement. While my work was successful on some fronts, there was significant room for improvement in the approach I took. I hold firm to the belief that this work will need to be refined in order to hold, grow, and sustain a social movement that reframes the narrative for black boys and youth. For example, there needs to be a diverse set of actors that have clear ties to the community, access to needed resources identified by the community, and a willingness to reorient their organizational or individual practices to be responsive to the communities they are aiming to serve. Moreover, it is imperative that all actors have “skin in the game” and that there be positional power at the table to implement and sustain the work. Nonetheless, I have seen initial success with the implementation of the collective impact strategy. The eight organizations that I enlisted to build the CI strategy have held true to their work plan and have reported (through built-in self-assessment and process checks at the end of each planning session and workshop) that the process (1) is unique; (2) is what is needed in the current community reform conversation; and (3) requires a shift in mindsets relative to the ways they had traditionally done work in the community. To date the steering committee has held five campaign planning session that have worked with 35 young black males and youth from Pittsburgh’s North and Eastside and they have plans of expanding the work. As you will note in the proceeding pages, the work of developing a
CI strategy is intensive, but from a qualitative observational standpoint, I have seen several new patterns emerge among the committee.

More specifically, I am beginning to see a dramatic shift in the language and interaction of the steering committee and individuals associated with the campaign. The shift has come in the use of “we,” signifying that the group has begun to build trust and has shouldered the weight of the work as a unit although they have differentiated tasks. In addition, conversations have shifted from a deficit-based narrative to one that is rooted in the assets of the community. And, with the building of the unified vision and its implementation, I have also begun to see a shift in power and leadership from being adult-centered to adult-supported and youth-centered. This can be noted in the way decisions were made about the ultimate campaign. For example, there was an inquiry stance taken between the committee and the campaign participants and all decisions directly related to content and implementation were deferred to youth, in which adults then rallied to help to recruit resources directed by youth leaders. In yet another example, leadership of meetings gradually shifted from the steering committee to campaign participants in which participants directed and drove the agenda. This point is particularly gratifying, since youth agency is a key feature that differentiates the TandemED model from others in the field.

In order for our overall work to take hold and have public value, Brian and I felt that leadership had to come from those closest to the issue and not from those outside of the community who were simply mapping programs onto African-American children and their families in ways that were not relevant. With the steering committee the focus has moved to one that is internal instead of one that looks for the “Calvary to come” from
some external source to save the day. This has been evident in where the steering committee seeks to recruit resources to support the campaign, as individuals are almost all residents of the communities the campaign is looking to serve and are all people of color. Although I am sure the campaign will recruit allies that sit outside the community, it was critically important for the first phase of the work to be driven by African-Americans from the community who had common experiences, worked collectively, and were empowered to support a common vision.

**Building Legitimacy Through a Common Agenda, Consistent Communication, and Shared Measurement**

It was crucial for us to build a network as well as map our assets and potential threats when we arrived in the City. To that end we held over 50 meetings with influential leaders that included community members, elected officials, philanthropic institutions, local business owners, parent advocates and young people that had ties to Pittsburgh North and Eastside. There were several lessons I learned very early in doing so: (1) TandemED’s messaging and communication had to be consistent from stakeholder to stakeholder; (2) Brian and I had to show that we were personally invested; (3) We had to be compelling in our public value proposition; and (4) we had to be prepared for opposition.

Although Brian and I were indeed well-intentioned, in the first meetings with the community our pitch about the value we hoped to create was weak. We had worked together at Harvard for the past two years, a year and a half of that which was spent on developing what would eventually become TandemED. In those two years we developed our own internal language and set of tendencies. We quickly realized at these meetings
that what made sense in our two-person shorthand did not necessarily translate seamlessly to our new environment. For example, one of our early meetings was held with the Pittsburgh Public Schools Superintendent Linda Lane and her senior cabinet. The meeting was to discuss what our role with the district would be and how we would collaborate. Having had an Ed.L.D resident last year, the superintendent’s assumption was that we would play the role of an employee, and, more specifically, that our role would be to help them to work with two of their high schools on the North and Eastside, consulting with them on the district’s “We Promise” initiative. We Promise is an initiative centered on increasing graduation rates and postsecondary school opportunities for the district’s Black male students. There was a clear confusion in the room that we were ill-prepared to deal with. TandemED was not an initiative of the district. In fact, Brian and I believed that while the district needed to be a partner, our work had to take place outside the walls of the school and, in order for us to be successful in the community; we could not be perceived as agents of the district or any other local organization. After several tense moments during the meeting, the discussion concluded with the district agreeing to serve as a distant partner. From our experience we determined we needed to refine the way we pitched our value proposition, the words we used, and the strategy we were using to build the CI strategy along with who we saw as leaders of the work. If we did not, we would lose legitimacy simply for failure to articulate and communicate our vision effectively.

As our meetings continued we begin to rely heavily on our own personal narratives as a means to introduce the campaign. Leading with the “story of self, us, now” format before we formally introduced the work, we were able to break down barriers and
paint a clearer picture of why we were in Pittsburgh and what we hoped to accomplish. This approach particularly resonated with kids and parents. During one of our early meetings with roughly twelve students at the home of a Northside parent who would eventually join the steering committee, we held a two-hour meeting over pizza in which topics ranged from our journeys to Harvard to engaging in healthy relationships with the opposite sex. One student commented with tears in her eyes that “she was thankful that two Black men from Harvard would take the time to tell them that they could do the same thing and Harvard was a place for a person like her” (Anonymous student, personal communication, October 18, 2014). Through our own stories we modeled what we wanted the community to do in owning their own narratives and cut through some of the preconceived notions and stereotypes associated with Harvard and or other brands we might have been associated with.

It is important to note that this strategy did not work with everyone. For instance, while meeting with a Pittsburgh Public School Board member who was strongly opposed to the superintendent and her administration, we were put on the hot seat in a political battle that was not associated with the work we were trying to implement. This was a true leadership moment as the Pittsburgh Public Schools had just agreed to give us $20,000 to fund portions of our work in the city. The barrage of questions started with “Who funds you? Why Pittsburgh? So if you are not working with schools why are we giving you district money?” The questions were continually fired at us and aimed at discrediting our efforts simply based on our affiliation with the superintendent. From this experience we learned that, despite our efforts, there would be some detractors focused not on the quality of the work we would bring to the table but on insider political alliances and
feuds. Although this was our first experience of this sort, it would not be the last. As we began to understand the landscape of the city, we started to shape criteria for who we would partner with and who would be capable of helping to build a common agenda. We developed the questions below to help us to build a rationale for deciding who should be around the table.

Table 6

*Questions for Potential Partners*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions for Potential Partners - (Was utilized internally only)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Can the partner identify with TandemED’s vision/mission to build a campaign for Black Male Achievement in their city?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Will the partnership lead to increased access to youth and capacity to build the work?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Could this partnership be sustainable, mutually beneficial and anchor the implementation of a CI strategy in the city past TandemED’s expected departure?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Does this organization fit one of the key industries that need to be represented for the campaign to be successful?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Is the organization a connector to capital (political, social, or Financial)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Does this partner have a strong track record for positive change?</td>
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<td>- Will this partner be able to uphold the brand integrity of the campaign?</td>
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To this point I have clearly outlined how we worked with the steering committee over time to build a CI strategy. As we concluded the first portion of our entry in Pittsburgh we selected eight organizations that had substantial influence in the City. This group was composed of individuals who had a common understanding of the problem/opportunity and were willing to work with urgency towards developing a joint approach to solving it. Over the course of three months this group would convene four times as a whole and several times individually with me and Brian all in efforts to build a CI strategy. The development of the strategy was an incredible learning experience. With
each session the group grew closer and closer. This was evident as the group self-reported at the end of the sessions. For example, in one instance there was a dispute between committee members about how the campaign message would be displayed to the public. One group member openly, but respectfully challenged another about deliverables they had agreed too but had not yet completed. Eventually, the tone and tenor of the conversation got heated and another group member interjected saying:

“Remember why we are doing this. This is for the kids, and is one of the biggest things to happen to our city since I can’t remember. This movement can be game changing for our kids and a historic moment for our city.” (Steering Committee Member, personal communication February 27, 2015)

With these words, the conversation changed course and the three men then called their significant others and said “it was going to be a long night”. The men subsequently went to a working dinner that lasted until after midnight and resulted in them retooling their plan in ways that made it much better than it was before. This exchange showed me that: 1) committee members were willing to hold each other accountable; 2) they were building a deep respect for each other to enable them to deliver and receive critical feedback; and 3) their mission to improve the lives of children took precedence over small differences of opinions among adults. I believe the group was able to forge and deepen their relationships as a result of the structure and norms they put in place. In the end, there was deep respect among members for the work they did outside the campaign, and the platform they had as committee members to co-create an action allowed them to build stronger bonds. The steering committee was able to effectively assemble a strategy to implement the campaign and develop a work plan to achieve their agreed upon goals.
Shared measurement, as defined Hanley-Brown and colleagues (2012), is the act by which organizations agree to collect data and measure results consistently among each other to ensure efforts remain aligned and that they hold each other accountable. In our pilot we were able to bring the steering committee together with the assigned task of defining a measurement system in the form of a self-efficacy survey to be administered to campaign participants after the launch of the program. The committee also agreed to track their own work plan towards implementation of various campaign elements as another measure of success (See Appendix A). While I do think the committee created strong measures for us in a pilot phase, I would have liked to have seen deeper integration and use of the measures in the steering committee’s home organizations, which I believe would have been more representative of a true CI strategy format. While the group agreed to measure several specific issues including students’ self-efficacy and pre and post perceptions of their identities after seeing the campaign materials, I believe in order to bring about true systems change there needed to be some adoption of TandemED’s approaches for evaluating how organizations measure and shared their outcomes and integrate campaign work into existing programs and organizational cultures.

In my estimation, this circumstance was a result of the individuals that we selected to represent their respective organizations and communities. More specifically, the majority of our steering committee was made up of mid-level managers, parents, and or small business organizations/nonprofits. The dynamics created by the membership highlights an area of growth for us, a point I will cover in greater detail in the next section. Nonetheless, in order to create change within the community and in specific
institutions looking to support the community, there needs to be individuals with positional power or who strongly champion their representative at the collective impact table. While we had support of organizations, the theme that emerged was that the campaign was a side program/partnership with promise that could help but not do too much harm if it failed. This position by organizations, coupled with the lack of positional power at the table, resulted in a shared measurement system that has considerable room for growth and lacks the ability in its current state to help marshal sustainable institutional change within community serving organizations. This was another key learning experience that led me to be mindful of the fact that when developing a CI strategy, there must be buy-in from the organizations involved to the point where they are willing to commit resources and senior level authority to shift or reorient their home practice to reflect the agreed upon deliverables and methods of measurement of those objectives as agreed upon by the collective.

**Building Organizational Capacity through Backbone Support From TandemED**

We needed to employ a collective impact strategy to build capacity, ensure stability/fidelity of building a community led movement, and support growth of a campaign in the city of Pittsburgh. We felt this would give us the best opportunity to build the necessary infrastructure to dedicate and move resources, address issues and leverage opportunities in the Black community with the right people at the table. As we deepened our relationships within the community, we quickly learned that the CI strategy needed a temporary backbone organization that could serve as a “home” and be the conduit through which the other organizations communicated with and to each other. That backboned ended up being TandemED.
**TandemEd as a Backbone.** In their 2012 article *Understanding the Value of Backbone Organizations in Collective Impact*, Turner, Merchant, Kania, and Martin highlighted the six core functions a backbone organization plays in the development and implementation of a collective impact strategy. In analyzing our work, we evaluated ourselves against these functions, some of which I have already discussed and others that we are still working to establish. For the purpose of this capstone and as it relates to my strategic project, I will highlight the first function of a backbone organization:, setting a vision and strategy for the work.

Table 7

*Six Core Functions of a Backbone Organization*

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<th>Six Core Functions of a Backbone Organization</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Guide vision and strategy</td>
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<td>2. Support aligned activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Establish shared measurement practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Build public will</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Advance policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Mobilize funding</td>
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Turner, Merchant, Kania, and Martin 2012

When we entered Pittsburgh we originally anticipated working with organizations to help to build and anchor the campaign, and that one of those organizations would emerge and serve as the backbone institution to house the work. As we moved forward we quickly realized we had miscalculated (1) the time this initiative would take to scale, and (2) the shifts in our partners’ cultures that needed to take place to fully implement a CI strategy. While I do not think we underestimated the numerous adaptive challenges
associated with the campaign, I think we grafted ambitious timelines on moving an organization from the steering committee into a permanent backbone role. Internally we designed timelines based on our residency end date and the philanthropic support we had received from foundations. Our ambitious timelines and expectations of partners put us in a role where we had to serve as the temporary backbone organization for the campaign and support the steering committee in leading their visioning and strategy process.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR SITE**

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way - in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.” (Charles Dickens, 1859, p. 1)

Rated by Forbes as one of America’s most livable cities, Pittsburgh is truly the tale of two cities. The “steel town” with its rich history great sports teams and growing economy, is also a tragically segregated city with clear lines and barriers drawn between its Black and White communities. TandemED’s efforts were targeted on engaging the African-American community to reclaim, and in some cases rewrite, a narrative that was truly representative of the community- as-a-whole. In order to do that, we crafted a compelling value proposition targeted at engaging multiple stakeholders in the creation of
a campaign for Black men and youth to tell their stories. We attempted to flip traditional models of reform that often focused on leadership outside of the community to bring change by putting the community leaders closest to the kids in the driver’s seat, leading the charge and building resources and capacity around them to bring their vision for their community to fruition. And lastly we focused on utilizing a collective impact model to bring everything together in a way that would be sustainable. Our work has resulted in a youth led campaign that will reach 380,000 Pittsburgh residents over the next few months, leading to a city-wide kickoff in August that will build on and expand the work to other neighborhoods in the city.

Aside from the actual campaign, I think a portion of our impact rests in the networks we were able to help create and the new bonds that have been forged among organizations and individuals driving change for black youth and males in the city. The new networks or existing networks that were strengthened as a result of our work will lead to long-term sustainable change on multiple fronts for Pittsburgh’s most at-risk communities.

Although the city is full of opportunities, there is a next step in our work towards action that translates to access. What I have found is that a compelling message (value proposition) will get people’s attention, but it is not enough. It is hard to ignore or at least acknowledge the noticeable gaps in education and social mobility between the African-American community and their more affluent white counterparts; in fact I think few leaders across sectors would disagree with the facts publically for fear of some type of political retribution. A compelling argument must be met with resources, capacity, and legitimacy housed in the political will to make programs into systemic policy. More
specifically, there needs to be a constituency willing to contribute their time and their finances, and who are self-reflective enough to change the way they operate in their personal and professional lives to consider what is the greater good for the community. This constituency must also be willing to develop their own internal assets and support a common vision for how those assets should be utilized. Lastly, the constituency must change the authorizing environment in which it operates by utilizing the political process to support and elect community champions that can change well-performing programs to sustainable policies.

The collective impact strategy and campaign we helped to craft is both strong and fragile at the same time. The campaign will bring awareness to the masses and hope to the kids who see it and it has provided invaluable leadership experience for the youth that help crafted it. While it can be the catalyst for action, it cannot be the final destination. Steering committee members will have to work with their senior leadership teams to anchor the work within their respective organizations and deepen their efforts in creating shared measurements and a broader set of collective actions and deliverables. Time is of the essence in this effort as there is currently momentum and a few substantial early wins. One of the great insights we gained in Pittsburgh was an appreciation for how timing matters, As an organization, we are currently exploring funding opportunities jointly with the community to help establish a permanent backbone organization headed by a leader with deep credibility and a track record of success with the community. Despite our success with the community and our current efforts to further build the work, we believe the window for change is time sensitive and will close if a permanent backbone
organization is not established with substantial funding to support a full-time staff and continue to coordinate the effort.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR SELF**

“Leadership is not a magnetic personality—that can just as well be a glib tongue. It is not "making friends and influencing people”—that is flattery. Leadership is lifting a person's vision to higher sights, the raising of a person's performance to a higher standard, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations.” (Peter F. Drucker, 1993)

My work bringing TandemED’s to Pittsburgh this year stands as one of my most substantial leadership experiences and one of my greatest personal learning journeys. The ups and downs of co-founding an organization and literally wearing every hat along the way has been a great teacher and given me a humble confidence. More specifically, I am confident that I can handle the most adaptive challenges, but also humbled by the fact that in order to lead I know I must continue to learn to be a servant and must never become complacent and or take for granted the power and potential that rest within the communities I aim to serve.

In the reform conversation there is often and impetuous urge by well-intentioned leaders to attempt to take the agency and power away from the community they serve and develop solutions and answers to “fix” the inequalities and challenges of those they serve. This is a tragic error; while a given leader might have some initial success, their efforts will not be sustainable. No community, rich or poor, Black or White, has expertise in everything, but what they all have is assets and there must be a shift in practice towards reform organizations being institutionally responsive and truly view the people and
communities they serve as equal and qualified leaders. To value the opinions and help to empower those you serve while still working with a sense of urgency to is the ultimate practice in patience.

I feel extremely fortunate to have shared this experience with Brian, as he served as an on-the-ground leadership coach who had the ability to regularly make me reflect on my own practice and leadership in a way that has made me better both personally and professionally. Specifically, Brian has shown me through his own leadership how to organize ambiguous challenges into manageable situations, to think more deeply about my own communication style, and to reflect on and be conscious of the fact that how a message that I may deliver to a room of 50 may be heard 50 different ways.

More than ever, I believe there is no such thing as a born leader but rather that leadership is a learned art form that can be mastered by practitioners through diligence and experience. My experience in Pittsburgh has also confirmed my beliefs that as a leader I must be capable of managing the complexities associated with nurturing relationships, pushing individuals to explore their learning edge, and aiding others in their development of self-efficacy/agency. This experience has further reinforced for me that to be effective as a leader I have to depend on my teams and partners to build capacity to have a true sustainable impact. For example, in TandemED’s case, our work depended on the ability of Brian and me to communicate effectively and construct a common vision and direction. Another example would be the steering committee’s ability to add the capacity that was critical to the campaign development. This ranged from creative scheduling of caravan to get multiple kids to specific locations to who would lead
specific projects. Without the steering committee, TandemED’s “two man band” would not have had an impact.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR SECTOR**

As we entered Pittsburgh we had to balance the complexities of a multilayered environment without having all the information to plan a course of action, pursue opportunities, or know what tradeoffs to make. However, what we confirmed in our work is that the challenges and opportunities facing African-American communities are complex and adaptive. What was also clear to us, and is important for leaders in the sector to know and understand, is that socio-economic and racial diversity as a context for developing people and programs create distinct circumstances and power differentials these communities. More specifically, low-income African-Americans residing in areas like Pittsburgh’s North and Eastside are likely to have distinct needs and experiences from individuals from more affluent backgrounds, given the differences in the racial and socioeconomic contexts. As such, these needs and varied experiences have created a gap of opportunity within social systems that can only be addressed through collective reform efforts and innovative leaders who have a keen understanding of these communities. These leaders must be dedicated to engaging, educating, and empowering individuals with the tools necessary to ultimately become successful and socially mobile citizens and leaders in their respective communities, keeping the effects of racial and socioeconomic inequality in mind.

Another key learning for the sector and organizations looking to do this work is that strategy must lead to action. As leaders in the sector, it can be tempting to put forth a compelling argument such as “black kids are underserved in numerous ways and we need to come together across sector to right this wrong.” When you present that argument to
community members, politicians, business and nonprofit leaders, it is not only hard to
dispute; it is politically unwise to challenge. This can be deceptive in that just because
you as a leader have a compelling mission and are able to articulate it, acknowledgment
of a problem does not necessarily translate to collective action, the capacity and will to
solve it, or the knowledge and will to leverage the opportunities. Brian and I worked to
reframe a new theory that was largely based on the changing of mental models. We
believed that shifting the community’s mindsets about agency and existing assets was
necessary to build a sustainable and impactful movement for change.

Jeff Edmondson, Managing Director of Strive Together, notes that a mental shift is
required of organizations engaging in collective impact models to be successful:

“We find that people often come to tables convened in the name of collective
impact with the wrong mental model. They may think they are coming to an advisory
board where they can weigh in and provide some guidance. Or a nonprofit board where
they provide guidance to an executive director. Or maybe even a taskforce where they
will make recommendations and help implement some solutions. None of these will work
for us to move the dial at scale. This work can’t be deputized to an individual. And it
can’t even depend on us working in perfect concert around a powerful set of actions.
Sustainable impact depends on the willingness of each and every individual and each and
every organization to think differently about what they do every day. And most
importantly, each must be open to changing what they do to make sure they are aligned
with agreed upon outcomes, using data on what works for kids to guide their actions.”
(Edmondson, 2015, p. 2) Edmondson’s thoughts were reflected in our TandemED work.
If organizations want to create meaningful impact they have to be willing to change the
way they go about their business, which often requires them to take a very critical look at their daily operating practices, their core values, how they measure their results, and who they engage as leaders. They also must be willing to realign those practices with their partners for the collective good of the goals they are trying to meet. Additionally, organizations must be willing to work across fields, be willing to share credit, and most importantly be responsive to the communities they serve.

Another key learning for TandemED that the sector can pull from comes from one of our missteps, in which we chose to focus solely on what we referred to as *primary leaders* first. Again, consider Figure 2:

![Diagram of TandemED Three Levels of Leadership to Support Youth]

*Figure 2. TandemED Three Levels of Leadership to Support Youth*

While we initially thought the model looked like this, in actuality the model should have been closer to a flatter structure that ensured equal voices across the board and that honored and respected the power already resting within the community, most notably among local parents and role models. Although the community needed to be at the head of the work, I believe that perhaps there should have been a conscious effort to expand
the community to include actors at all tiers of leadership. If they all felt like part of the community, it would have been harder to turn a blind eye to the communities’ challenges, to close doors on its opportunities, and not to jointly celebrate its successes.

![Equation for Sustainable & Impactful Change](image)

*Figure 5. Equation for Sustainable & Impactful Change*

The sector has to understand that, like the multilayered problems the community faces, there has to be a multilayered solution and the capacity to build that solution comes in very different forms and must be balanced and cultivated simultaneously. If not, any effort has very little chance of compiling the resources, political will, and on-the-ground leadership necessary to support a movement and systems level change.

**CONCLUSION**

In this narrative of my capstone I have shared with you a very small component of a much bigger project that TandemED launched in Pittsburgh to create a campaign in support of Black Male Achievement. While the specific tasks I reported here centered around the creation of the steering committee, which was one of my many primary tasks, as a reader you also were made privy to the theories I considered around race and social capital that were more related to the outcomes Brian and I eventually hoped to accomplish. Our overall goal was to help Black boys and men rewrite their own narratives and develop brands that would lead them and the community to developing stronger social capital that would eventually lead to the African American communities
as a whole building stronger human capital represented, in part, by heightened Black Male Achievement.

As noted in the previous section, I learned more from this process than I could have ever imagined. I learned how to write proposals and secure foundation funding for my work. I see that as a major accomplishment. I learned about the importance of theory and strategies and that they have to be in your head long before the project you are conceiving begins if it is to be successful. And, I learned about teamwork and hard work, and that that is exactly what it is going to take to help African-American boys and men rewrite and claim their narrative.

When this narrative of the small slice of the voluminous efforts Brian and I engaged in to be agents of change in the development of youth in Pittsburgh eventually sees the light of day, I hope that those who read it learn from our triumphs and mistakes in systematically applying collective impact strategies to change the narratives of disenfranchised populations. I see from this work that using theoretical perspectives and strategies to help adopt mindsets and behaviors that are forward moving is critical. But on-the-ground elbow grease and personal humility and respect for others assets are also essential.
REFERENCES


Converse, S. (1993). Shared mental models in expert team decision making. *Individual and*
group decision making: Current issues, 221.


http://www.wholecommunities.org/pdf/Public%20Story%20Worksheet07Ganz.pdf


http://blackboysreport.org/urgency-of-now.pdf


Appendix A

Slide 1

Slide 2

Special Thanks to:
Dr. Michael Quigley, J.E. Gamble, Maria Searcy, Jason Rivers, Norlex Belma, Ryan Scott, Sharnay Hearn, Dontae Robinson, Errika Fearby Jones, Jonnet Solomon
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• Coalition Strategy p. 12-16
• Communication Strategy p. 17-20
• Additional Strategy Details p. 21-32*

* Some Details to be determined after assessing initial implementation of strategic plan

TandemED in Pittsburgh

Mission
TandemED unites Black communities around leading the educational development of youth, strengthening youth to become purpose-filled, motivated, and self-directed adults.

Vision
TandemED envisions vibrant and thriving Black communities with a unified narrative about their rich history, present opportunity, and sustainability into the future.

Pittsburgh Campaign for Black Youth Advancement
TandemED organizes Black youth, with the support of like-minded people and organizations, to design and lead positive identity leadership campaigns about themselves and their communities.
**TandemED Theory of Action**

**IF**

we

(1) work with communities to further build a mindset that enables them to recognize the value of their collective assets, and

(2) build a unified youth development strategy to mitigate challenges and instill in them the shared values of the community

**Then**

youth will advance with

(1) strong frameworks of achievement, role models, sense of self, support systems, and values to engage their community, and

(2) necessary motivation to be successful and matriculate into adults who invest in a strong self, family, community, and the decimation of generational challenges

---

**Opportunities For Change in Pittsburgh**

- Pittsburgh has a strong and caring Black community, that when unified can make significant change for the city’s Black youth

- Pittsburgh has a strong historical narrative, deep generational ties, and a strong sense of pride within its Black communities

- When organized and activated, Pittsburgh’s Black youth can lead and sustain a movement for aggressive and sustainable change

- Pittsburgh’s Black community is asset- and resource- rich (educational, social, familial, political, financial, etc....)
Key Levers To Maximizing Opportunities

- Engage, Educate, and Empower youth, families, and residents to build and implement a collective action that is
  - Sustainable and Works with both a sense of Urgency and Healing
  - Interdependent on the Black Community as the Village
  - Multi-Generational (spans across adults and youth)
  - Inclusive of the diversity that comprises Pittsburgh’s Black communities (male, female, faith traditions, youth, elderly, married, single, etc…)

- Organize youth to design and deliver a City Campaign that articulates the desired change, owning and defining the narrative of their identity, purpose, and community

- Build a coalition of responsive leaders, at all levels, to secure and allocate resources to support Black youth in implementing the City Campaign

What strategy will we use to accomplish the goal?

Coalition Campaign Support
Immediate Goals

- Select and train two core group of Black youth (BMLDI & As One United) to create and lead a community campaign, while simultaneously developing their leadership capacity to garner support and resources from various community stakeholders.
- Build infrastructure to work with and include additional youth across the city in developing and participating in the campaign (e.g., Black PPS CAS and We-Promise participants, etc...)
- Form steering committee and broader coalition to build capacity and resources to support and sustain a youth movement across Pittsburgh’s Black communities.
- Secure additional resources (space, campaign funds, content experts) to support youth efforts and leadership.

Pittsburgh Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Initiatives</th>
<th>Pittsburgh Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build Youth-Led Campaign Base with BMLDI and As One United</td>
<td>• Facilitate Bi-Monthly Leadership/Campaign development, planning, and implementation sessions (80-130 youth, twice a month)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Eventual growth to other youth groups)</td>
<td>• Produce one collective campaign, along with a marketing plan and strategy for implementation growth and sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build Steering Committee and Coalition to support Campaign for Black Youth Advancement</td>
<td>• Build Black Youth Advancement Campaign Coalition – Collect verbal or written MOU’s with 5-10 organizations able to provide resources and capacity for campaign initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Build communication plan that outlines and disseminates youth efforts, as well as provides a road map for replication, improvement, and sustainability</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify sustainability measures utilizing steering committees’ shared outcomes agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement Black Youth Advancement Campaign</td>
<td>• Implement and launch formal Campaign targeted on Pittsburgh’s North and Eastside (smaller efforts in no less than two other neighborhoods)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Deliver campaign designed by the community through a variety of communication venues, including those in media, technology, and community interactions both formal and non-formal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TandemED Pittsburgh Plan: Strategies and Timelines

• Bi-Monthly Leadership/Campaign Development, planning and implementation sessions 9/2014 - 3/2014
• Produce one collective campaign and marketing plan and strategy for implementation growth and sustainability 3/2014

• Build Black Youth Advancement Campaign Coalition 11/2014
• Identify assets and resources to support youth 12/2014
• Identify sustainability measures utilizing steering committee shared outcomes agenda 12/2014
• Build Communication plan that outlines and disseminates youth efforts as well as provides a road map for replication, improvement, and sustainability 1/2015

Implement Campaign
• Implement and launch formal Campaign targeted on Pittsburgh’s North and Eastside (smaller efforts in no less than two other neighborhoods) 3/2015 - 4/2015
• Deliver campaign designed by the community through a variety of communication venues, including those in media, technology, and community interactions both formal and non-formal. 4/2015 - TBD

Steering Committee Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Build Youth-Led Campaign Base with BMLDI and As One United</th>
<th>Build Steering Committee and Coalition</th>
<th>Implement Black Youth Advancement Campaign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core Youth Engagement:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key Infrastructures to build partnerships:</strong> City of PGH, PPS, Churches, Community Centers, Nonprofits</td>
<td><strong>Launch Festival:</strong> Develop Theme, Budget, and committee (marketing, sponsors, operations, tech, finances)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Identify multiple youth organizations, churches and schools 2) Engage, build report and set expectations and culture 3) Utilize nontraditional engagement</td>
<td><strong>Communication and Sustainability:</strong> Creation of evaluation plan, social media, assign staff member to innovate, implement and monitor progress towards goals.</td>
<td><strong>Strategy:</strong> Develop Process and identify key resources (Assess &amp; People)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training Sessions:</strong> keys to success 1) meeting space, 2) two way communication and follow through 3) food 4) transportation</td>
<td><strong>Innovate:</strong> Identify target audience, campaign subject matter, medium for delivery and target audiences</td>
<td><strong>Needs, logistics and innovation:</strong> Activities. Food, prizes/gifts, Safety, entertainment (Show Class/Talent Shows, sports, Ted-Talks, lectures, music, poetry), vendors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action:</strong> 1) Pull Students from existing contact list, lists serve/emails and through liaisons in schools 2) Conduct Youth sign up (offer transportation and food), 3) Contact CCAC, Kaufmann, Hazlett, Schools 4) Leverage sponsorships 5) Build professional accountability amongst steering committee and coalitions (Responsible J.E., Brandi, and Norlex)</td>
<td><strong>Actions:</strong> 1) Create one pager 2) schedule meetings with mayors office, Erica Jones, and local churches 3) build monitoring device</td>
<td><strong>Action:</strong> Identify Venues (Theatre, Universities, CCAC, Organizations, Schools) and explore/secure needs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How will the coalition be utilized to support Pittsburgh youth?
Coalition Campaign Support

Keys to Campaign Success

- **Revenue Generation for Sustainability**
  - Secure gifts from three anchor funders
  - Diversify donor base by securing at least ten gifts in $1,000 - $25,000 range

- **Campaign Vitality**: Execute all aspects of TandemED campaign model with excellence
  - Add measurable value to each partner organization (What Can We do for You)
  - Build a robust local network of community leaders and key stakeholders who are making a difference for Pittsburgh Youth and can influence the decisions that are made across the City
  - Identify a combination of anchor institutions and organizations to sustain and champion the work

- **Thought Leadership**: Strengthen TandemED standing among key stakeholders in Pittsburgh to establish and sustain campaign
  - Attend or Co-sponsor at least 10 significant, high-visibility community-focused events; participate in at least 6 events with prominent local leaders and/or funders; play a role (e.g., featured speaker or panelist) in at least 9 significant community events
  - Sponsor an event that features TandemED as a thought leader on the critical role of engaging, educating, and empowering Black communities to lead the development of their youth, the barriers preventing community involvement, key issues faced in education and community development, and potential solutions. 50% of major funders send at least one representative; at least 2 new major donor prospects send a representative; at least 3 corporate leaders attend; at least 50 total attendees.

- **Steering Committee and Coalition Team Effectiveness**: Build a high-functioning support team
  - All members have attainable deliverables and milestones
  - All members believe that their work-life balance as it relates to the campaign is sustainable
  - All members feel that TandemED has created an environment that encourages each individual and their organization to voice their ideas, identify areas for improvement or innovation, and offer constructive feedback to support the development and implementation of the campaign
**Strategic Tools and Assets Needed from Coalition**

- Information and Education
- Welcoming and non-threatening environments to house Campaign Activities
- Strength-based programs to support
- Community Organizing
- Leadership Development
- Media Presence
- Parent/Community Mentors
- Persistent Evaluations
- Cultural integration/incorporation
- Collaboration with existing Community Organizations
- Financial Resources

**Coalitions Value-Added: Where Can You Help Create?**

- Organizing and Community Building
  - Building Collective Power
  - Encouragement and support
  - Mentoring
  - Communicating a Shared identity
  - Leveraged strengths
  - Closing gaps in culture and power between Pittsburgh Black communities
- Authentic Dialogue Resulting in Action
  - Genuine change rooted in community experience
  - Voice is heard and amplified
  - Deeper understanding of problems
  - Cultural respect
  - Tangible actions
  - New narrative
- Environments for Success
  - Experience of being truly valued and respected
  - Sense of belonging
  - Positive emotional climate
  - Welcoming and non-threatening
  - Celebration of life
  - Healing culture
- Leadership Development
  - Access to solutions
  - Focus on strengths and assets
  - Individual growth leading to achievement and success
  - Capacity to participate and lead
  - Choice and opportunity
### Template for Coalition Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Bucket of Work</th>
<th>Key Strategies</th>
<th>Key Infrastructure, Resources, and Actions</th>
<th>Who Will Own It from Coalition</th>
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<tbody>
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### Coalition Communication Plan

to support Pittsburgh Black Youth

Coalition Campaign Support
Campaign Field Direction in Pittsburgh and Key Statements

- This campaign will develop and communicate a Black youth-led message to the City of Pittsburgh. This message should be representative of participating Black Youth’s vision for their community. Once a campaign theme is developed, the challenge and opportunity for communities will be to adopt and stay on message. Message will be the driving force to the Campaign for Black Youth Advancement success.

- Mobilizing youth and community members to market and incorporate messaging into their daily lives will be the key to sustainability and growth.

- Strategic efforts will be targeted and placed on the North & Eastside of the city. Getting youth, families, and residents motivated about the campaign will be a vital part of this effort.

- The field plan will work off of developing a campaign base of supports. The Black Youth Advancement Campaign Coalition will build a base of members to resource and support youth efforts.

- The campaign plan developed by Black youth should be the basis from which most of the decisions and promotion of the campaign stem, with support from the adults and community-based anchor institutions.

- This Black Youth Advancement Campaign Coalition will guide the logistical support and resource allocation of the campaign. Obstacles and roadblocks will arise during the campaign. Current events, policy development, and community developments may slightly alter the campaign course, but any plan should incorporate enough minor flexibility to react to any changes in the Pittsburgh landscape.

- This Campaign takes enormous amounts of time and effort by all parties involved but can be launched and have a game changing impact on Pittsburgh’s Black youth.

Coalition Support Communication Plan

As we begin our journey to support youth, it is critical that we ensure timely and effective communication with supporters, media, both locally and nationally. Our communication will be based around the messaging points outlined by youth and their campaign messaging.

Objectives.

Use a variety of communication tools to distribute information regarding Campaign for Black Youth Advancement

- Coordinate media releases and other communication methods to disseminate the Campaign for Black Youth Advancement messages and other timely information.

- Create support for Campaign for Black Youth Advancement through earned media and other sources.

- Measure the results of the communications strategy execution and revise accordingly.
Coalition Communication Vehicles

Communication cannot be limited to any one method or vehicle. It exists in many forms and must follow guidelines and an appropriate level of formality to ensure knowledge and information transfer. In the following sections, each communication plan item will suggest the preferred vehicle and timing of the communication. Some will utilize various vehicles and are considered ongoing in status. The organization of information is just as important as the method by which it is delivered, thus all will be addressed at some level. The following is a list of vehicles that will be found within the final communication plan. This list is not exhaustive and will grow throughout the life of the campaign.

- **Press Releases and Op-Eds**: Press releases and Op-Eds will message around campaign updates, positions on key issues, events, and endorsements.
- **Media Advisory**: Media Advisories will be issued to alert the media of campaign events such as kick-off, campaign headquarters opening, press conferences, and activities.
- **E-Newsletters**: All newsletters will include a campaign update, calendar of events/activities of the upcoming weeks, volunteer opportunities, fundraising and social media tabs.
- **Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc.)**: Use of Facebook advertisements will be used to increase the number of followers in the Pittsburgh market. Further, we recommend purchasing Facebook advertisements to support the Campaign for Black Youth Advancement fundraising efforts. Facebook will also allow us to quickly update supporters and recruit volunteers. Twitter, Instagram, and other vehicles will also be used to spread the word and support the campaign.
- **Billboards**: To increase presence in the North & Eastside of Pittsburgh, we recommend purchasing billboards to spread messaging in targeted areas.
+ How it works.

Phase 1 – **CO-ORGANIZE** and unite community leadership, renew mindsets of efficacy, draw on internal assets.

Phase 2 – **CO-FACILITATE** the community’s self-design of campaign content that drives youth development.

Phase 3 – **CO-DELIVER** and implement the youth development content through innovative approaches.

Phase 4 – **CO-ALIGN** policy, resources, and community responsiveness.

+ Guiding Questions for Youth

- What are your key outcomes from the campaign and your theory of change for your community? Through this campaign I will change the Pittsburgh Community in the following ways (IF I do this, Then This will change)

- What is educational achievement and what does lifelong learning look like to you both individually and collectively? How will you incorporate or build into your work a platform for learning and educational achievement?

- Who will you seek expertise and resources from? Who will be your strategic partners? Who will be your mentors in the work? Who can help bring your vision to fruition?

- What is your strategy for communicating and branding your message?

- What differentiates your effort from other current or past efforts? What makes your efforts similar? What is your elevator pitch for your efforts?

- What does engaging and empowering diverse group of stakeholders amongst black community look like, and feel like? How will you engage and organize your parents and families? How will you make this real, and relevant across generational gaps?

- What does sustainability of your vision look like? What does growth look like?

- What is your time frame? How will you work with a sense of urgency that leads to actionable results?
Organize

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities &amp; Description</th>
<th>What happens</th>
<th>Measurements &amp; Milestones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Organizing:</td>
<td>Target population: Black residents, primarily those who are youth, parents, and fellow community members of those on Pittsburgh’s North &amp; East Sides</td>
<td>Youth and Coalition members target of: 50 house meetings; 900 conversations with residents; and 1,000 contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community organizing</td>
<td>1. Youth and Coalition Members will host house meetings, one-on-one conversations, street conversations, and small convenings with residents to recruit them to be a part of the campaign launch and implementation.</td>
<td>1 City plan for marketing is produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activities are geared</td>
<td>2. Market messaging (printable media, online, word-of-mouth, radio, social media, etc.) in order to get people both intrigued and excited about the campaign idea and approach, and to complement the on-the-ground organizing efforts (above #1) to enlist residents to participate in the campaign launch and implementation.</td>
<td>Target: 100 campaign narratives submitted to steering committee and posted through social media, particularly Twitter.</td>
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<td>toward gaining a critical</td>
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<td>mass of Pittsburgh Black</td>
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<td>residents to participate</td>
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<td>in the design and delivery</td>
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<tr>
<td>processes</td>
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</table>

1 Youth Organizer

Mobilizes 10 Community Members
TandemED Triangle of Advocacy & Support

TandemED will work with parents, communities and Black Community Allies to build a triangle of support and advocacy that embraces and uplifts our youth leadership, vision, voice and development. Targeted sections of the youth campaign will be designed by youth to organize parents and community members with the goals of:

- Providing parents and community members with an opportunity to bring together their collective voice, experiences, and guidance
- Stimulate public dialogue, especially concerning lifelong learning and education
- Develop whole community models with leaders ready to advocate for youth development across generations and with one voice and a shared vision
- Build responsive leaders to help to aid and sustain engagement with the community
- Deepen the individual and community understanding and commitment to a new narrative

Facilitate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities &amp; Description</th>
<th>What happens</th>
<th>Measurements &amp; Milestones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate Collective Visioning and Agenda Creation: Part I: Process and creation of a vision for youth developmental milestones, communal and academic experiences, and life outcomes.</td>
<td>Target population: Youth that will develop a vision for what they want to experience, and achieve: 1. Gather youth in communal locations, with a particular focus on utilizing the space capacity of church locations. Community organizing tactics (above) will be utilized to ensure youth know where to be present, along with understanding how to participate in campaign development 2. Facilitate participants through this process in person and online using established protocols and activities appropriate for the campaign development and communication</td>
<td>TBD 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide 29

Inquiry & Campaign for Black Youth Advancement

- **Define**
  - Your community of focus and determine what you hope to learn

- **Discovery**
  - Conversations about the best of what is and what gives life

- **Delivery/Destiny**
  - Implementing and sustaining the vision

- **Design**
  - Campaign Designed
  - By Pittsburgh Black Youth through Appreciative Inquiry
  - Creating a structure for making the vision a reality

- **Dream**
  - Creating a collective vision of what the community would look like at its best

Slide 30

Evaluation, Assessment, and Accountability (Indicators)

- Pre-diagnostic survey → Exit Survey
- TBD 2015
Pittsburgh Coalition Partners

- Robert Morris University
- Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh (BMLDI)
- As One United Youth Group
- Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Young Men and Women’s African Heritage Association – Pittsburgh
- Heinz Endowments
- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Harvard Law School Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice
- Additional TBD
Appendix B

Steering Committee Meeting

@Young Men and Women’s African Heritage Association

Wednesday, December 17, 2014

3:00 – 4:30pm (90 min)

Agenda

I. Check-In / Connections (How are you? What’s happening?) (5 min)

II. Review Overarching Theory of Action - “In and Out” (3 min)

   (Mindset Shift ➔ Asset-Based Internal Action ➔ Unified External Action)

III. Review Norms, Discussion, and Voting Method (2 min)

   (FIST/means “I’m for it!!” ---- THREE/FOUR means “Not for it, I’ll share why” --- FIVE means “I block!!”)

IV. Review Campaign Action Plan and Resources (See Action Plan Attachment) (30 min)

   Discussion: Does this action plan help us to move efficiently through designing and executing the campaign? How do we best utilize the education and achievement based financial resources available for the campaign? What modifications or changes need to be made now? (See Action Plan + Appendix F)

V. Make Key Decisions (40 min)

   a. Youth Leadership Sessions (sub-Appendix A)

      i. Confirm dates (in meeting)

      ii. Confirm numbers of participants (in meeting)

---

1 Appendix B, Steering Committee Meeting, contains seven of its own appendices. In order to avoid confusion within this Capstone document, I have titled these specific additions as “sub-Appendices A–G.”
iii. Determine whether we do youth prizes (in meeting)
iv. Finalize participants and teams (outside meeting – Brandi, Norlex)
v. Determine additional location and transportation (outside meeting – Brandi, Norlex)

b. Youth Leaders Collaborative Formation (sub-Appendix B)
i. Collect youth leader and group nominations (in meeting)
ii. Follow up on planning (outside meeting - Jason, JE)

c. Broad Coalition Gathering Meeting (sub-Appendix C)
i. Determine date for coalition gathering (in meeting)
ii. Follow up on planning (outside meeting – Maria, Ryan, Sharnay)

d. Steering Committee Individual Recruiting (sub-Appendix D)
i. Determine three people you will reach out to coalesce around the work (outside meeting - All)

e. Campaign Delivery (sub-Appendix E)
i. Draft timing, content, and repetition of community forums* (inside meeting)
   *pending earlier discussion
ii. Review campaign design resources and delivery methods (outside meeting – Jonnet, Michael)

f. Additional Components Needed
i. Evaluation Support w/ Delancy (recommendation: Michael)
ii. Social Media Publicity Support (recommendation: Sharnay)
iii. Documentation of Process Support (recommendation: JE)
iv. Key Assistant Ambassadors to Interested Org/Institution Types (recommendation: Each)
   1. Maria – Parents
   2. Norlex - Businesses / Entertainment
   3. Michael – Colleges/ Universities
   4. Dontae – Youth
   5. Ryan – Youth Groups
   6. Brandi – Faith Based Institutions
   7. JE – Non Profits
   8. Jason – Schools
   9. Sharnay – Government
   10. Jonnet – Cultural and Advocacy Groups

VI. Send Off – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
   (10 min)
Campaign Action Plan

Dec. 2014 – April 2015

**Campaign Action Plan Objective:** The objective of this action plan is to spark and coordinate a citywide campaign targeting our Black community ages 12 – 26 that (1) rewrites the negative narrative about our youth and community and (2) lays the foundation for internal and external collective visioning action to maximize our community assets.

**Campaign Theory of Action:** Our theory of action is *If* we create a campaign to positively affect the mindset of our community to recognize our assets, *Then* our community will be poised to create and implement a collective vision and action plan that (1) deploys internal community assets and (2) gains public resources and responsiveness to the action plan.

**Action Overview and Timeline:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign</th>
<th>Key Activities</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campaign Design</td>
<td>• Youth Campaign Leadership Sessions (6)</td>
<td>Dec ’14 – Feb ’15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expanded Youth Leaders Collaborative</td>
<td>Jan ’15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalition Building</td>
<td>• Steering Committee Individual Recruiting</td>
<td>Dec’14 – Feb ’15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Broad Coalition Gathering Event</td>
<td>Feb’15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign Delivery</td>
<td>• Campaign Delivery</td>
<td>March’15 – Apr’15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activities Descriptions:**

**Youth Leadership Sessions** *(Brandi, Norlex)*

**Objective:** The objectives of the Youth Campaign Leadership Sessions are as follows:

1. To present the problem of a negative narrative of the African-American community found in marketing and media and used to exploit youth and communities.
2. To prepare youth with the skills to combat this negative narrative through the use of branding, marketing, and community organizing skills toward their own design of a citywide positive narrative campaign.

Attached (sub-Appendix A)

- Program Description
- Follow-Up To Do List
Expanded Youth Leaders Collaborative

**Objective:** To collaborate with the youth leaders, organizations, and participants who are most closely aligned with the branding/marketing/campaign idea to support campaign delivery.

**Attached:** (sub-Appendix B)
- Planning To-Do List

Steering Committee Individual Recruiting

**Objective:** To utilize our steering committee networks and relationships to gain the commitment of individuals and organizations to provide resources to support the delivery of the youth campaign (e.g., infrastructure, resources, love encouragement)

**Attached (sub-Appendix C)**
- Steering committee names and initial contacts organizer
- Sample email to invite initial contacts to support
- Draft one-page document for recruitment of larger coalition of support

Broad Coalition Gathering Meeting

**Objective:** To bring together leaders and actors from around the city to join or further engage in the work of providing resources, infrastructure, love, and encouragement for the execution of the campaign (i.e., charitable individuals, peers/parents/families, faith-based institutions, public schools, government, non-profit organizations, colleges/universities, entertainers, businesses)

**Attached (sub-Appendix D)**
- Planning To-Do List

Campaign Delivery (Design/Venues TBD)

**Objective:** To deliver the youth and community designed campaign in the city using baseline marketing strategies as well as innovative and creative venues determined by the youth and community

**Attached:** (sub-Appendix F)
- Sample campaign delivery budget

---

**Campaign Resources Needed (Baseline):**

| Design (TBD – consult by) | Delivery (consult by Delancy Bennett, Ph.D.) |
| Delancy Bennett | • Television Advertisement  
| | • Local Radio Advertisement  
| | • Billboard Advertisement Space  
| | • Billboard Advertisement Design  
| | • Local Transportation Advertisement (i.e., Bus Wraps)  
| | • Local Magazine  
| | • Social Media Marketing (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)  
| | • Press Releases  
| | • Celebrity Spokesperson  
| | • Documentary  

**Available Resources:**

**Pittsburgh Public Schools (August 2014) - Amount: $20,000**

Summary: Slated for learning new approach to parent and family involvement in a way that intersects with learning outcomes for youth, and targets Northside)

“... These relationships will be key in assisting the District in our efforts with the Whole Child Whole Community Plan: Partner with the Community in a New Way. This pilot effort will allow the District to gain new insights on engagement strategies to reach parents that have not responded to traditional methods. The primary goal of TandemED’s work will be to strengthen relationships and to unite communities through education thus increasing academic achievement and having ALL our students graduate Promise Ready... These funds will only be used to support TandemED’s engagement activities (meeting locations, meals, materials, etc.).” (PPS Board Resolution August 2014)

**Heinz Foundation (November 2014) - Amount: $125,000**

Summary: Slated for youth organizing and campaign that focuses on the intersection with learning outcomes for youth, and targets East Liberty, Homewood, and Northside)

“For funds to support a campaign centered on creating asset based pathways for black male achievement in the city of Pittsburgh, with a special focus on Pittsburgh’s Northside, Homewood, and East Liberty Communities” (The Heinz Endowments Grant Agreement November 2014)
### Budget Projections:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Heinz Foundation – Current Projected Budget: $125K</strong></th>
<th><strong>Staffing Lead Support Areas:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Campaign Design and Delivery: $47K</td>
<td>• Project Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Miscellaneous Administration: $13K</td>
<td>• Campaign Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Instructor Travel &amp; Lodging</td>
<td>• Strategic Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Poise Foundation Grant Management Fee</td>
<td>• Business / Finances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Event Liability Insurance</td>
<td>• Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>TandemED Project Staffing: $65K</strong>*</td>
<td>• Instruction, Marketing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **PPS Current Projected $20K Budget: Needs to Be Determined** | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
**Sub-Appendix A**

**Youth Campaign Leadership Sessions**

**Objective:** The objective of the Youth Campaign Leadership Sessions is as follows:

1) To present the problem of a negative narrative of the African-American community found in marketing and media and used to exploit youth and communities.

2) To prepare youth with the skills to combat this negative narrative through the use of branding, marketing, and community organizing skills toward their own design of a city-wide positive narrative campaign.

**Program Design:** 35 youth participants from across the city, selected by existing city-wide youth development leaders, immerse in a 3-month 7-session training and research period, whereby they

1) develop the skills and techniques of branding and marketing from one of the foremost national experts in the field

2) utilize the developed skills to both survey their peers and community and design a city-wide campaign

**Program Logistics:** The following outlines the date, time, and location for key training sessions. Youth participants must be present for each of these sessions. Food served. Materials provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 15, 2014 (Pilot)</td>
<td>1:15-3:30</td>
<td>Robert Morris College Downtown Campus 339 Sixth Avenue 7th Floor Conference Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 13, 2014</td>
<td>1:15-3:30</td>
<td>Robert Morris College Downtown Campus (address above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 10, 2014</td>
<td>1:15-3:30</td>
<td>Robert Morris College Downtown Campus (address above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 24, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 7, 2014</td>
<td>1:15-3:30</td>
<td>Robert Morris College Downtown Campus (address above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 24, 2014</td>
<td>1:15-3:30</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 14, 2014</td>
<td>1:15-3:30</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sub-Appendix B

Expanded Youth Leaders Collaborative

**Objective:** To collaborate with the youth leaders, organizations, and participants who are most closely aligned with the branding/marketing/campaign idea to support campaign delivery.

**Planning To-Do List**

a. Initial meeting
   i. Identify youth leaders to invite
   ii. Invite youth leaders to attend at the date established in steering committee meeting
   iii. Plan agenda for meeting (including Jason preparing an introductory presentation to this collaborative group using the content from institutional racism to set the problem and why the campaign approach is a solution)

b. Interfacing w Youth Leadership Session
   i. During or after meeting, invite their youth participants to attend and collaborate with the youth campaign leadership session scheduled for Feb. 21\textsuperscript{st} at location TBD
Sub-Appendix C

Broad Coalition Gathering Meeting

Planning To Do List

- Determine location and cost for coalition gathering given the date and time established by the steering committee
- Help publicize event and work with individual team members to inform the people/organizations
- Plan agenda
  - Steering committee open event together
  - Open with publicize three groups already making strides in this domain (JasiriX, Emay (sp?), JE)
  - Break out groups to better understand campaign and how they can support – resource assessment sheets available
  - Show commitments made already on a screen to give folks examples of how they can support
  - Have youth leadership participants be present to share about what they have learned and done in training
  - Include way for people to donate or offer resources to support the execution of the designed campaign
- Review resource list
**Sub-Appendix D**

**Steering Committee Individual Recruiting**

**Objective:** To utilize our steering committee networks and relationships to gain the commitment of individuals and organizations to provide resources to support the delivery of the youth campaign (e.g., infrastructure, resources, love encouragement)

**Initial Individual Outreach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maria</th>
<th>Jason</th>
<th>Brandi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ryan</th>
<th>JE</th>
<th>Norlex</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>3.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daunte</th>
<th>Sharnay</th>
<th>Michael</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jonnet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Email

Hello ______,

(Any personal notes here)

Over the past two months, I have had the opportunity to get to know two African-American men who are doctoral students at Harvard – Brian Barnes and Dorian Burton – with backgrounds in education and community organizing, who are now here in Pittsburgh to join the great work that we are doing here with our youth! They have an idea to help our young people lead their own city campaign to tell a positive story about themselves and their communities. These young men are committed to supporting youth in Pittsburgh to make this happen and I have been helping them to think through the approach as a member of the steering committee for what is called TandemED (www.tandemed.org). On __________________, we will bring a few more people together to also consider the idea and ways that they might also support. I shared with them that I especially want to make sure that you are there and that I would reach out to you! Can you be there? --- It will take place at _________________________________. Please let me know as soon as you can so that we can plan to have your important presence there.

Thank you ___________!
The TandemED Community Initiative Pittsburgh seeks to spark and serve as a coordinator of a youth-led and community supported campaign to reverse the negative narratives that impact our Black community. We believe that the primary spark for action arrives when the hearts and minds of our people are attended to in such as way that we realize even more strongly our great strength, intelligence, and assets.

In order to execute this campaign, we have begun with identifying 25 youth across the City of Pittsburgh, nominated by youth leaders and organizations, to undergo campaign training. These youth are first exposed to understanding the destructive narratives that pervade our Black community and the significant impact that it has had on our ability to unite. After understanding and wrestling with this problem, they are exposed to one of the nation’s foremost marketing and branding experts, Delancy Bennett, Ph.D., professor at Clemson University, for skill development.

The youth’s ultimate task is to collectively design a campaign, while consulting and surveying their peers and community, to spark a counter-narrative that further uplifts our Black community. They will deliver the campaign using baseline marketing and campaign approaches (e.g., television advertisement, local radio advertisement, billboard advertisement space, local magazine, social media - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, press releases, celebrity spokespersons, documentaries). In addition to these baseline approaches, these youth along with their peers, will create and employ innovative delivery methods that will speak directly and creatively to their youth and community. The ultimate goal of their action will be lay another bedrock of foundation for internal and external collective visioning action to maximize our Black community assets.

Does this approach speak to you? Do you believe in the power of mindset shifts and narrative changes? Do you believe that this is fundamentally important if we ever seek to find unity in action within our Black community? If so, we want to invite you to join this initiative through offering your time, infrastructure, resources, love, and encouragement to these youth and their peers to design and execute this campaign.

We invite you to come out to learn more on exactly how you or your organization/institutions can be supportive of this effort. Our next coalition gathering will take place in February 2015 at location to be determined. Thank you for your interest and commitment and we look forward to campaigning with you and uplifting our community!
## Campaign Delivery

### Sample Budget 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Campaign</th>
<th>$37,236.77</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television Advertisement</td>
<td>$12,796.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Radio Advertisement</td>
<td>$9,823.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>Billboard Advertisement Space</td>
<td>$4,506.34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Billboard Advertisement Design</td>
<td>$1,087.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Transportation Advertisement (e.g. Bus Wraps)</td>
<td>$2,922.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Magazine</td>
<td>$750.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media Marketing (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)</td>
<td>$350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press Releases</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrity Spokesperson</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
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### Sample Budget II:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Campaign</th>
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<tr>
<td>Billboard Ad space</td>
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<td>Billboard Ad design</td>
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<td>Facebook, Twitter, Instagram</td>
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<td>Press Releases</td>
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<td>Radio Ads</td>
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<td>Documentary</td>
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<td>Newspaper</td>
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<td>Local Magazine</td>
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<td>Movie Theater Preview</td>
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<td>Bus Wraps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Celebrity Spokesperson</td>
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<td>Flyers</td>
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<td>Posters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
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</table>
# Sub-Appendix F

## Approach w Education Theme Leading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase I: Campaign</th>
<th>Key Activities</th>
<th>Dec ’14 – April ’15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign Design</strong></td>
<td>• Youth Campaign Leadership Sessions (6)</td>
<td>Dec ’14 – Feb ’15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expanded Youth Leaders Collaborative</td>
<td>Jan ’15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coalition Building</strong></td>
<td>• Steering Committee Individual Recruiting</td>
<td>Dec’14 – Feb ’15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Broad Coalition Gathering Event</td>
<td>Feb’15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign Delivery</strong></td>
<td>• Campaign Delivery</td>
<td>Feb ’15 – Apr’15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Youth and Community Town Halls (Education)**

**Part I: Youth and Community Town Hall Presentation/ Speaker / Youth TED Talk (Education Theme)**

**Presentations:** *(Celebrating Our Intelligence! Rejecting Negative Narratives about Us!)*

**Listening:** *(What is Our Purpose for Learning? What are Our Standards of Excellence in Learning? What Are Our Aspirations for Life Long Learning?)*

**NOTE!** – See attached Original TandemED Overview to See Overall Vision (Attached Separately)

**Objective:** To initiate conversations within the Black community that focus on our own visions for excellence, beyond those defined by institutions that we may not currently have direct leadership or control, in key areas that lay the foundation for strong community (i.e., education*, faith, finances, health, policing) *corresponds with existing funding

**To Do List:** (Maria, Michael, Jason, Sharnay, Dontae)

• Begin intentional work with Delancy instructor to introduce education theme into some of the marketing design
content

- Begin to create parental support systems around helping to support the youth overarching design with emphasis on educational components
- Begin planning for date, location, and publicity for February sessions to each take place in Eastside and Northside
- Create calendar and publicity venues through June

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase II: Community Internal Action</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>March – Aug 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Visioning</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Action Planning</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deployment of Internal Assets</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase III: Community External Action</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Sep – Dec. ‘15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negotiation for Public Resources and Responsiveness</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sub-Appendix G

Expanded Version Theory of Action

Overarching Strategy: The overarching strategy for our Black community development is best characterized as an “IN and OUT” strategy. The “IN” strategy entails a campaign to strengthen our own community mindsets and to utilize our own internal resources to address our own goals and vision. The “OUT” strategy entails unified negotiation and action to secure the resources in the public arena that advance our communal goals and vision. The focus of this action plan focuses on the “IN” portion of this overarching strategy.

The “IN and OUT” strategy is analogous to the in-and-out dribble used in the sport of basketball, where the player on offense utilizes a two-part move to get around the defender. First, the player dribbles in and to the left causing the defender to focus his eyes on the private move, before next dribbling out and to the right, causing the defender to focus his feet and action on responding to this open move. A more thorough description follows:

The "in and out" dribble is a good fake move to help you get around a defender and take it to the hoop. With this move, you make one bounce in front of you as if you were going to crossover, but instead of picking the ball up with your other hand, you just roll your dribbling hand over the top of the ball, and bring it sharply back and go hard around the defender. For example, if you are dribbling right-handed, make one dribble to the left in front of you and "dip" and put your weight on your left foot. To the defender, this looks like you will crossover and go left. Instead, roll your right hand over the top of the ball and bring it back quickly to the right, push off the left foot, and go hard around the right side of your opponent.

(Source: http://www.coachesclipboard.net/Dribbling.html)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Broad Actions</th>
<th>Key Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| IN – Phase I  | If we can positively affect the mindset of our community to reverse the internalized racism and recognize assets, and | City-wide campaign exposing internal assets                         | • Youth Campaign Leadership Sessions  
• Coalition building for infrastructure and resources  
• Campaign Delivery  
• Community Town Halls “Our Own” |
| IN – Phase II | If we create opportunities for our community to cast a collective vision for development while recognizing internal assets And If we can create visible actions that show how internal community assets can be rallied and deployed to improve community defined issues | Community visioning gatherings recognizing internal assets  
Collective Action Planning emerging from campaign  
Utilizing internal community resources only to tackle components of the action plan | |
| Out – Phase III | Then our communities will have a collective action plan, healthy minds, and unity to effectively intersect with the broader community to negotiate for resources that have positive and sustainable intergenerational effects on our community, | Collective negotiation as and with various actors --- public, governmental, political, police, school systems, businesses, etc. | |
| In and Out (Continual) | And Ultimately our communities will be self-sustaining and sufficient and hold negotiation power to enhance the sustaining over generations. | | |
**TandemED Steering Committee Meeting Agenda: 11/7/2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prayer, Welcome, and Introduction</td>
<td>6:00 – 6:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Update:</td>
<td>6:15 – 6:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy Breakout Sessions: First Round</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Build Youth-Led Campaign Base with BMLDI and As One United:</td>
<td>6:25 – 6:40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Build Steering Committee and Coalition to support Campaign for Black Youth Advancement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Implement Black Youth Advancement Campaign:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Round Report Back</strong></td>
<td>6:40 – 7:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy Breakout Sessions: Second Round</strong></td>
<td>7:00 – 7:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Round Report Back</strong></td>
<td>7:30 – 7:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plus Delta</strong></td>
<td>7:50 – 7:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Next Steps and Closing</strong></td>
<td>7:55 – 8:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sub Committee Members: Build Youth-Led Campaign Base with BMLDI and As One United**

1. J.E. Gamble
2. Norlex Belma
3. Brandi Taylor

**Sub Committee Members: Build Steering Committee and Coalition to support Campaign for Black Youth Advancement**

1. Maria Searcy
2. Ryan Scott
3. Sharnay Hearn

**Sub Committee Members: Implement Black Youth Advancement Campaign:**

1. Jonnet Solomon
2. Jason Rivers
3. Michael Quigley
4. Will Thompkins
5. Dontae Robinson
# Action Worksheet

**Major initiative:**

- Build Youth-Led Campaign Base with BMLDI and As One United (Eventual growth to other youth groups)

**Pittsburgh Strategy:**

- Youth Training Sessions: Facilitate Bi-Monthly Leadership/Campaign development, planning, and implementation sessions
- Core Youth Engagement & Campaign Production: Ensure core youth groups are consistently engaged to produce one collective campaign, along with a marketing plan and strategy for implementation growth and sustainability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Bucket of Work</th>
<th>Key Infrastructure, Resources, and Actions</th>
<th>Key Strategies</th>
<th>Who will secure resources from the Coalition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training Session Logistics:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Core Youth Engagement:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovate:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovate:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Action Worksheet**

**Major initiative:**

- Build Steering Committee and Coalition to support Campaign for Black Youth Advancement

**Pittsburgh Strategy:**

- Coalition Building: Build Black Youth Advancement Campaign Coalition – Collect verbal or written MOU’s with 5-10 organizations able to provide resources and capacity for campaign initiative
- Communications Plan: Build communication plan that outlines and disseminates youth efforts, as well as provides a road map for replication, improvement, and sustainability
- Sustainability plan: Identify sustainability measures utilizing steering committees’ shared outcomes agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Bucket of Work</th>
<th>Key Infrastructure, Resources, and Actions</th>
<th>Key Strategies</th>
<th>Who Will Own It from the Steering Committee or Coalition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coalition Building</td>
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<td>Communications &amp; Sustainability Plan:</td>
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# Action Worksheet

**Major initiative:**

- Implement Black Youth Advancement Campaign

**Pittsburgh Strategy:**

- Campaign Launch: Implement and launch formal Campaign targeted on Pittsburgh's North and Eastside (smaller efforts in no less than two other neighborhoods)
- Campaign Delivery: Deliver campaign designed by the community through a variety of communication venues, including those in media, technology, and community interactions both formal and non-formal.

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<tr>
<th>Key Bucket of Work</th>
<th>Key Infrastructure, Resources, and Actions</th>
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<td>Campaign Delivery:</td>
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<td><strong>Introductions</strong></td>
<td>10:00 – 10:10</td>
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<td><strong>Setting Group Operating Norms</strong></td>
<td>10:10 – 10:20</td>
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<td><strong>Leadership Development:</strong></td>
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<td>Developing an organizational path - Mission, Vision and Values</td>
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<td><strong>Strategy Session:</strong></td>
<td>10:40 – 11:10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Getting to the root of a problem through using the Five Why’s Protocol</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection &amp; Free Space</strong></td>
<td>11:10 – 11:25</td>
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<td><strong>Assessing Meeting and Planning for improvement:</strong></td>
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<td>Using Plus and Delta</td>
<td>11:25 – 11:30</td>
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Appendix C

TandemED Strategic Project Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Purpose of Memorandum of Understanding

The Strategic Project Memo of Understanding (MOU) is designed to create shared understanding of, and commitment to, the following:

1. The change project that will serve as a foundation for the resident’s Capstone;
2. The resident’s role in designing and/or executing the project;
3. The resident’s leadership responsibilities in designing and/or executing the project;
4. With whom the resident will work on the project.

The MOU is also intended to promote conversations about confidentiality regarding the collection and use of data specific to the organization and its affiliates.

Overview and Project Description

TandemED is an organization with a mission to unite African-American communities around leading the education and development of youth, strengthening them to become purpose-filled, motivated, and self-directed adults. TandemED, in partnership with the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Pittsburgh Public Schools, and the local Pittsburgh community, has selected to endeavor toward this mission in the City of Pittsburgh during the 2014-2015 school year. Additionally, TandemED will expand the national scope of the project and mission through utilizing the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School as an incubator for the growth and expansion efforts.

This residency year (2014-2015) will serve as a pilot and planning year, where the TandemED team will both focus on setting up the national infrastructure and piloting a small-scale TandemED community campaign in Pittsburgh. At the end of the pilot and residency year, TandemED will reflect upon the work and learning to improve upon its approach for rollout in additional cities. The following document will outline the organization's current scope of work, both nationally and locally, as well as highlight key outcomes and measures for evaluation of success.

National - TandemED’s national work will be focused on the following activities:

1. Organizational Growth and Expansion: including, but not limited to fundraising, fiscal monitoring, resource allocation and development, partnership growth, personnel management and growth, and identification and planning for expansion into new cities.
2. Continuing and Sparking Dialogue: exploring a national campaign dedicated to disrupting the assumptions and current deficit-based narrative of African-American
communities through building relationships with select non-profits, advocacy organizations, state and local governments, media outlets, and faith based institutions. **Local** - TandemED’s local work will be focused on the following activity:

1. Campaign Development and Community Building: working with a coalition of local actors from select Pittsburgh neighborhood(s) to build a youth-led and adult-supported campaign that focuses on identity, purpose, and purposes for learning and engaging educational institutions. An additional special focus on this campaign will target the subpopulation of Black males.

**Activities and Measures for Success**

TandemED will evaluate success in terms of youth and community outcomes over various stages of implementation. For this first year, we will measure success by the level of implementation of our project plan, as well as through initial qualitative data that we collect from participants.

TandemED local (Pittsburgh) activities to accomplish the project goals outlined above are as follows:

1. Organizing youth, families, and residents to design a youth campaign for youth development.
2. Forming a coalition of organizations (including the Pittsburgh Public Schools) and adults to provide resources and supports to youth, families, and residents in designing and executing such campaign.
3. Partnering with media and other companies and institutions to transmit the content of the designed campaign in the neighborhood contexts.
4. Evaluating the experience of participants and participants in such a campaign, with a special emphasis on the implications for identity formation, purpose-building, and motivation for youth to excel in learning and appropriating learning institutions including schools in meaningful ways.

TandemED national activities to accomplish the project goals outlined above are as follows:

1. Accessing venues (e.g., media, conferences, presentations) to publicly challenge a perceived deficit narrative associated with African-American communities.
2. Networking and establishing relationships with key organizations and partners focused specifically on the topic of Black Male Achievement and Men and Boys of Color.
3. Cultivating relationships with 3-5 additional cities in order to grow and expand the local initiative into additional locations.
4. Administering to the operations, development, and staffing of TandemED, with particular attention to the execution of the local project and national growth and expansion efforts into 2015-2016.
TandemED will measure **local and national** success using interviews, surveys, and documentation that focus on the following areas:

1. Level of implementation of pre-determined activities (local and national)
2. Experience and feelings of local participants (youth, families, residents, organizations) in the following areas associated with initiating a youth-led campaign for development:
   a. adopted mindset of authority and agency
   b. recognition of community assets
   c. engagement in youth development visioning
   d. feelings of self-confidence and purpose

**Differentiated Roles and Responsibilities (Brian Barnes and Dorian Burton)**

TandemED’s organizational structure is designed to provide the most effective management of the company’s operations, and will evolve as the organization moves from pilot program/planning to expansion efforts. The organizational structure will initially consist of an executive management team working on both the national and local levels to carry out the TandemED process in the designated pilot city. As TandemED progresses into a full-scale rollout, it will employ additional team members to execute our on-the-ground operations. Finally, to ensure successful expansion of TandemED into other cities, additional team members will be employed to execute the organization’s growth plans.

Key staff for the 2014-2015 include Co-Founders Brian Barnes and Dorian Burton. The roles and responsibilities for each, along with learning goals, are outlined for each. These will also be utilized as the roles reflected upon in the residency project and capstone writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brian C.B. Barnes (Co-Founder)</th>
<th>Dorian Burton (Co-Founder)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description: (Brian)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Description: (Dorian)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian’s role nationally is to function as both the chief executive for growth and expansion of the organization and co-designer of theory and concepts to undergird TandemED. Brian’s role in the local context is to co-lead the work of building relationships and a coalition in select Pittsburgh neighborhood(s) toward the development of an African-American campaign for youth development.</td>
<td>Dorian’s role nationally is to function as the chief strategy and development officer for the growth and expansion of the organization and co-designer of theory and concepts to undergird TandemED. Dorian’s role in the local context is to co-lead the work of building relationships and a coalition in select Pittsburgh neighborhood(s) toward the development of an African-American campaign for youth development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Responsibilities: (Brian)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key Responsibilities: (Dorian)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Leading executive components of the work, including administration, staffing, overseeing theoretical design</td>
<td>1. Leading strategic components of the work, including external relationship-building, expansion and development</td>
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</table>
for concepts, national networking and spreading of TandemED concepts, and reaching additional local markets for growth and expansion with specific focus on educational (K-12) and faith based institutions.

2. Ensuring proper messaging and tracking of evaluation of local work.
3. Co-leading a coalition of actors in Pittsburgh to construct a youth-led community campaign for positive youth development.

Key Learning Questions (Brian)
1. What is the organization and function of TandemED at scale, both locally and nationally?
2. How do I (we) create a network of communities focused on implanting TandemED concepts and project recommendations?
3. What are the differentiated roles for 1) youth and 2) community and faith-based institutions play in supporting a youth-led campaign for development?
4. How do I (we) convey the root of the problem to external organizations in a way that makes them rethink or reposition their strategy to become responsive to communities?

Key Learning Questions (Dorian)
1. How do I (we) develop and maintain self-identity, self-efficacy, and agency within young Black males?
2. How can communities and external actors develop coherent strategies centered on Black Male Achievement?
3. How do I (we) develop a positions a dominate asset-based narrative that is owned and championed by youth family and residents of any given African-American communities?
4. How do I (we) address adaptive leadership challenges associated in coalition building and altering mindsets in the African-American community?

Key Shared Questions (Brian and Dorian)
1. How do we effectively enter into a community?
2. How do we work with multiple stakeholders to support and partner in our work?
3. What process and tools do we use to get a community to create a youth led and adult supported campaign?
4. How do we effectively deliver messaging that utilizes young people as the owners and leaders of content?
5. How do we expand in a way that ensures that the achieved change in previous phases of our work are sustainable?
Appendix D

Highlights and Progress To-Date

In May 2013, Brian Barnes and Dorian Burton (Ed.L.D. Candidates ‘15) envisioned flipping the paradigm of “community engagement” to “community leadership,” and formed TandemED as a practical approach of implementing this theoretical shift. Their model views communities as the visionaries and drivers of youth education. This report provides an overview of their progress thus far in implementing TandemED.

Mission

TandemED unites Black communities around leading the educational development of youth, strengthening youth to become purpose-filled, motivated, and self-directed adults.

Vision

TandemED envisions vibrant and thriving Black communities with a unified narrative about their rich history, present opportunity, and sustainability into the future.

TandemED’s Three Strands of Service

1. Community Leadership Initiative
2. Consulting for Institutional Responsiveness
3. Policy and Advocacy: Redefining the Role of Communities and Schools in Youth Development

Key Funders and Contributors

- Heinz Endowments
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Pittsburgh Public Schools Board of Education
- Harvard Graduate School of Education Ed.L.D.
- Harvard Law School - Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice
- Harvard University Innovation Lab

1. Community Leadership Initiative

The TandemED Community Initiative sparks youth-led and community-supported campaign that counters the negative images and narratives about the identity of Black youth. This campaign accentuates a positive identity and youth-customized messages. The delivery of the campaign takes place within the focus neighborhood, utilizing the various venues and strategies available for media and marketing.

Steering Committee Members Represent the Following Organizations

- Office of Pittsburgh Mayor Peduto
- Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Greater Pittsburgh Coalition Against Violence
- Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh
- Parent Educational Advocate
- Robert Morris College
- NEED
- Young Men and Women’s African Heritage Association
Current Work Update: TandemED Community Initiative Pilot – Pittsburgh, PA

- **Youth Leadership Training:** Organizing and leading the youth leadership training for campaign design and delivery
  - Established partnership with two primary groups to gain participants for Youth Leadership Training
    - Black Male Leadership Development Institute (BMLDI), a joint program of the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh and Robert Morris College
    - African American Male Mentoring Initiative (AAMMI), a program of NEED
  - Holding bi-monthly Saturday youth leadership training sessions with 35 youth from Greater Pittsburgh
  - Instruction aided by marketing and branding expert professor Delancy Bennett, Ph.D, of Clemson University School of Business

- **Coalition building:** Working in collaboration with youth to build relationships and recruit the necessary resources, support, infrastructure, to execute the campaign within the neighborhood / city.
  - Identified a Steering Committee representing key community leaders

- **Campaign delivery:** Utilizing pre-existing baseline resources and materials to include customized messages and content to aid in the delivery of the campaign through multiple mediums (e.g., billboards, fliers, apps, TV ads).

- **Next Steps**
  - Hiring a City Director and building capacity in Pittsburgh
  - Delivering youth-created campaign in spring 2015
  - Secure contract(s) by February 2015 with school districts, foundations, or local government in select cities to implement or consult in their implementation of the Tandem Community initiative
    - Visiting Detroit and the Skillman Foundation in December to consider opportunities there

2. Consulting for Institutional Responsiveness

The work and the results of establishing a new narrative about Black youth requires responsiveness from organizations and groups outside of the community. Here TandemED sees an opportunity—to consult with institutions, such as school districts, non-profit organizations, and policy groups, on becoming “community responsive.”

- **Consulting Engagements**
  - TNTP, Sept. 2014 – Barnes presented at the organization’s national conference on “Courageous Leadership through Community Responsiveness: An Alternative Approach.”

- **Next Steps:**
  - Secure contract(s) with school institutions on various levels by February 2014 to consult in community engagement and organizing related to youth educational development
    - In preliminary negotiation with TNTP for contract to consult in community engagement
In preliminary conversation with New Schools Venture Fund to consult in community organizing

3. Policy & Advocacy: Redefining Role of Communities & Schools in Youth Development

TandemED also advocates for resources and policies that create a path for community leadership and school partnerships to have a profound impact on youth outcomes.

- Completed:
  - National Association of Black Journalists, Aug 2014 – Burton and Barnes met with key civil rights leaders
  - Congressional Black Caucus, Sept 2014 – Dorian Burton participated on a panel about city development
  - HGSE Critical Conversations & Bold Ideas, Sept. 2014 – Burton introduced speaker Geoffrey Canada
  - Thrival Innovation and Music Festival, Aug 2014 – Burton and Barnes pitched TandemED, Ted-talk style

- Next Steps:
  - Secure speaking engagements and partnerships throughout Spring 2014 to promote advocacy and policy
    - Invitation pending for visit to New Orleans – Dorian Burton

Growth and Expansion Plan

- Implement Community Leadership Initiative in 3-5 additional cities over three years
- Raise $500,000 for each city during the launch year through foundation grants and consulting income
- Expand Consulting and Advocacy work nationally

Contact

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Dorian Burton at dob133@mail.harvard.edu

Online at www.tandemed.org