



Community Development Leadership Summit

Session Details

Embracing an Economy of Abundance

Sheldon Johnson, Managing Director, A Church for All People

What if we believed in an economy of abundance rather than one of scarcity? What if we focused on assets and opportunities instead of needs and deficits? This session will help participants identify the assets of their community, congregation, and/or organization and use those assets to transform their neighborhoods. Participants will learn the principles of asset-based community development (ABCD) with a particular focus on applying those principles to faith-based settings. This session employs real-life examples from projects and programs that have started or expanded with the help of ABCD. Participants will be guided through a dynamic and interactive activity that results in the creation of fresh avenues for action that are readily implementable at home.

Community Is Not Just Where You Live, But How You Live

Tommy Reuff, Executive Director, Happen, Inc.

Happen, Inc. executive director Tommy Rueff will describe the origins of Happen, Inc. and how Happen's many outreach programs all return to the theme of community being defined as how one lives with other people. From introductory art activities for families to teen entrepreneurship, gardening, and making your own root beer, every Happen activity is a way to bring people together and offers a simple message that the answer to every problem can be found through collective, community-based creativity.

Heart Matters: Actions that Transform Neighborhoods

Joe Erpenbeck, ABCD Institute

This will be an interactive session looking at the common threads in the stories shared throughout the day's summit. We will explore several questions. What is possible when we have a passionate "why"? What are the virtues we desire in community? What is needed to build communities that invite and include everyone? What are we willing to risk?



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Organizing the Un-organizable: Love, Respect, and Trust

Ann Livingston, Community Organizer

Ann Livingston is a creative, energetic, and focused community organizer who has made significant contributions to improving access to health care for people who use illegal drugs at the local, regional, and national levels in Canada. After co-founding the Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users (VANDU), she was employed as VANDU's executive program director for 10 years. She encouraged people who use drugs, who are criminalized and labeled mentally ill, to form citizen associations and insist that they design and implement harm reduction programs. Ann will share how her experiences can be put to use building inclusive communities.

Start With What You Have: ABCD in Government

Matthew Green, Councillor, City of Hamilton, Ontario

Matthew's commitment to ABCD practices while in office has made a meaningful difference for residents. Matthew's support of community activists in providing political advocacy opposing police carding and racial profiling had a direct impact on provincial policy resulting in more stringent regulations on how local police interact with our community. He is a strong advocate for affordable housing. He will share his perspectives and experiences in this interactive session.

The ART of Community Building

Antonio Adams, Bill Ross, and Keith Banner; Thunder-Sky, Inc.

Thunder-Sky, Inc. is a non-profit art gallery focusing on unconventional art, people, and ideas in Cincinnati. This presentation will focus on how Thunder-Sky has inspired a community of people to come together to create and celebrate the contributions and talents of all people. Presenters will also explain how they've built a community around Thunder-Sky, Inc.'s bimonthly art exhibits (featuring a wide variety of local, regional and national artists), art-making workshops, and other events and activities at the Thunder-Sky, Inc. space.