

Mayor's Office of Community Wealth Building



COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING SUMMIT

Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School
Richmond, VA
June 25, 2015



Community Wealth Building Summit Program

8:30 am **REGISTRATION**

9:00 am **OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING**

Welcome: The Honorable Dwight C. Jones, Mayor, City of Richmond

Overview of Work and Accomplishments of the Mayor's Office of Community Wealth Building: Thad Williamson, Ph.D., Director, Mayor's Office of Community Wealth Building

Citizens Advisory Board Perspective: The Honorable Ellen Robertson, Councilwoman, Richmond City Council and Chair, Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board and Albert Walker, Co-Chair, Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board

10:00 am **SESSION ONE: FOCUS ON EDUCATION**

Panelists:

J. David Young, Executive Director, Friends Association for Children

Harold Fitrer, Ed.D., President and Chief Executive Officer, Communities In Schools of Richmond

Katie Whitehouse, Senior Associate, Early Childhood, National League of Cities (NLC)

Jennie O'Holleran, Deputy Secretary of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia

Moderator:

Risha Berry, Ph.D., Project Management Analyst, Mayor's Office of Community Wealth Building

11:00 am **SESSION TWO: FOCUS ON EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMIC SECURITY, AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT**

Panelists:

Matt McGee, President, Strickland Machine Company

TK Somanath, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority

John Moeser, Ph.D., Senior Fellow, Bonner Center for Civic Engagement, University of Richmond

Moderator: Evette Roots, Social Enterprise Specialist, Mayor's Office of Community Wealth Building

Community Wealth Building Summit Program

12:00 pm	LUNCH
1:00 pm	ACCEPTANCE OF MY BROTHER’S KEEPER CHALLENGE
1:50 pm	SESSION THREE: MY BROTHER’S KEEPER: ENGAGING YOUNG MEN OF COLOR IN RICHMOND <i>Panelists:</i> Art Burton, Founder, Kinfolks Community The Honorable Michelle Mosby, President, Richmond City Council Levar Stoney, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Commonwealth of Virginia <i>Moderator:</i> Damon Jiggetts, Executive Director, Peter Paul Development Center
3:00 pm	COMMUNITY ACTION: LAUNCHING RVA FUTURE Introduction of Mayor Jones: Thad Williamson, Ph.D., Director, Mayor’s Office of Community Wealth Building Overview of RVA Future and Charge to the Community: The Honorable Dwight C. Jones, Mayor, City of Richmond Acceptance of Charge: Don Coleman, Chairman, School Board, Richmond Public Schools Rev. Ben Campbell, Trustee, Richmond Public Schools Education Foundation Gary Rhodes, Ed.D., President, Reynolds Community College Closing comments for Community Action and Community Wealth Building Summit: The Honorable Dwight C. Jones, Mayor, City of Richmond

**Panelists subject to change*

What is Community Wealth Building?

Thad Williamson, Ph.D.

Richmond made history in 2014 when Mayor Dwight C. Jones established the nation's first-ever Office of Community Wealth Building to take up the charge of implementing a comprehensive poverty reduction plan for the City.

The term "Community Wealth Building" is both symbolic and substantive. Symbolically, it is intended to show we are taking a positive approach aimed at the uplift and empowerment of individuals and communities, building on assets, resources, and potential already present.

But what does "community wealth building" mean, in substantive terms?

It might help to take the three key words one at a time.



Community has a lot of different possible meanings; here we are concerned with just two. First, it is used to indicate that we care not just about a few but about everyone. In a just community, no one is left out or left behind. Second, it refers to particular places—neighborhoods, districts, even entire cities.

This is significant for our efforts because our goal is not just to build pathways out of poverty for a few individuals while leaving neighborhoods unchanged. Neighborhoods are the context that shapes life and life chances for families and children. We aspire to a Richmond in which people don't necessarily have to move to enjoy a better quality-of-life, but can choose (if they wish) to prosper in place while having access to quality education, public amenities, good housing, and mobility.

What is Community Wealth Building? *(con't)*

Thad Williamson, Ph.D.



WEALTH

In economic terms, wealth means accumulated savings. Access to wealth opens a lot of doors in our society—to college, to the opportunity to buy a home, the opportunity to start a business or invest in one. It also provides a buffer in economic downturns. But many Americans have few, zero, or even negative net assets—meaning that any misstep or stroke of misfortune can catapult one into poverty. Building wealth is what ultimately, in economic terms, will allow families and households to escape poverty not just for a few months or years but in a lasting way.

But there is more to wealth than just money: we are concerned with the development of all forms of capital in a community—physical capital (built assets), human capital (talents and abilities), social capital (connections and support structures), as well as financial capital (individual savings, business ownership, investment capital). A thriving community has each of these forms of capital in abundance.



BUILDING

Building—this isn't just included to make for a nice turn of phrase. Rather the word that indicates that the changes and improvements we seek are a process—and always will be a process. Even if we could wave a magic wand and achieve our boldest aspirations overnight—sadly, we cannot—we would still need to work at continuing the process of community wealth

What is Community Wealth Building? *(con't)*

Thad Williamson, Ph.D.

building for the next generation. Since we don't have a magic wand, what we have in front of us as a community is a process that require a lot of hard work, patience, and perspiration.

This does not mean we need to wait forever for important, tangible progress, which may come in both small and big steps. It does mean that building community wealth in our low-income neighborhoods and across the city is going to take time, resources, and the contributions of the entire community.



The program of the Mayor's Office of Community Wealth Building rests on several key propositions:

- We must tackle the multiple barriers to prosperity simultaneously. No single area— education, employment, housing— offers a standalone magic bullet. Consequently, our method for getting things done must be intensively collaborative.
- Given limited resources, we should focus investments on those areas likely to have the most positive impact, and wherever possible, assure that City investments leverage funding and support from other sources.
- We need to think about both the micro-level and the macro-level pictures simultaneously. For instance, at the micro-level we need to understand what it takes to support individual households from our most challenged neighborhoods in moving from poverty to economic stability. We then need to build the capacity over time, to support households at sufficient scale, to begin moving the macro-level picture.
- We have no choice but to think big and aim high. Ranking in the bottom 2% of the nation's counties in

What is Community Wealth Building? *(con't)*

Thad Williamson, Ph.D.

terms of upward mobility for poor children is not something that can be meaningfully changed by a few additional programs. It requires more fundamental changes in the systemic processes that are producing that outcome.

What does fundamental change look like? In Richmond's case there are three approaches that must be taken, all at the same time. First, bringing more resources, investment and opportunities to places where our low-income residents live. Second, tearing down barriers that isolate our highest-poverty neighborhoods from the rest of the city and region. Third, transforming our densest concentrations of poverty into vibrant, mixed-use and mixed-income neighborhoods, in a way that empowers rather than displaces people.

Just as we cannot focus on housing, education, and employment separately, we cannot focus on only one change strategy to the exclusion of the others and hope to make significant progress.



In the first year of implementation, we have already taken significant steps to advance this multipronged agenda:

Substantial collaborations with Richmond Public Schools and with strong community partners have been built to tackle the impact of poverty on educational outcomes, focusing on three key areas: early childhood education, out-of-school-time, and access to college and career opportunities.

What is Community Wealth Building? (con't)

Thad Williamson, Ph.D.

EDUCATION

Our collaborative approach to building a stronger, more effective **early childhood** system has attracted national recognition.

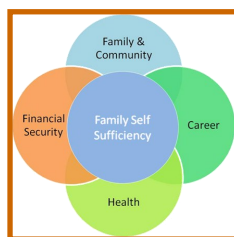
A major new public-private initiative aimed at providing high quality out-of-school time programming and academic support to adolescents, **NextUp**, launched at Henderson Middle School in 2014-15 and will expand to Boushall Middle School next year.



In 2015-16, the innovative **RVA Future** program will launch as the critical first step of a long-term effort to increase the number of RPS graduates going on to college or career training opportunities through the provision of both financial and non-financial support.

EMPLOYMENT AND JOB CREATION

The City's **Center for Workforce Innovation** expanded operations in Fiscal Year 2015, and continued its mission of connecting residents to employment opportunities and providing a variety of training programs to participants. In addition, CWI launched the **BLISS** (Building Lives of Independence and Self-Sufficiency) program this spring to provide holistic wrap-around support services to families seeking to escape poverty by transitioning to full-time quality employment.



The City has launched an innovative **Social Enterprise** initiative aimed at developing a strong sector of local firms committed to hiring residents in poverty into living-wage jobs. The initiative, a collaboration between the Office of Community Wealth Building, Minority Business Development, and Economic and Community

What is Community Wealth Building? *(con't)*

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Development, will draw on multiple policy tools, including finding ways to leverage the buying power of local anchor institutions to support emerging social enterprises.



The **Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit** project (GRTC Pulse) represents a major investment in a modernized public transportation infrastructure for the City. This project is the first step towards developing a genuinely regional transportation system that connects the region's residents together and opens up access to job opportunities for residents without reliable access to a private vehicle.

TRANSPORTATION



In conjunction with the Richmond City Health District and collaboration with the Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority, the **Good Neighbor Initiative** has been launched to connect RRHA residents to opportunities and provide education and assistance on lease compliance issues.

Housing Advocates in each major public housing community serve as peer educators and community resources, in collaboration with the existing program of community health workers operating in RRHA. In addition, the Office of Community Wealth Building is collaborating with RRHA, service providers, and residents in the development of a strong "people plan" as a constituent part of the East End transformation process, to proactively meet residents' needs.

HOUSING

What is Community Wealth Building? (con't)

Thad Williamson, Ph.D.



STAFF

Last but not least, the Office of Community Wealth Building has assembled a strong staff — a team of highly committed professionals prepared to carry this ambitious work forward, while continuing to build collaborative relationships across the public sector and in the community that can help sustain this vital agenda over the long term. Of particular importance is the **Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board**, formally created by City Council in December, which assures an ongoing active citizen voice in the process, especially for residents of higher poverty neighborhoods.

While we are pleased with the progress these initiatives have made in year one, we recognize that much more work needs to be done to bring these emerging initiatives to full fruition and make sustained community impact. Building a strong capacity within city government to implement a multifaceted poverty reduction and community wealth building agenda is a critical step in laying the foundation for lasting change. But achieving systemic change will also require the support, encouragement, ideas, and contributions of the entire community.

“Richmond is poised for greatness — if we all commit ourselves to the work required to become truly one city, a city of opportunity for all.”

-Honorable Dwight C. Jones, Mayor, City of Richmond

Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board

On December 8, 2014 Richmond City Council approved an ordinance to formally establish the **Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board**. This legislation formalizes the role of the Citizens Advisory Board and empowers it to continue to make policy recommendations and issue independent evaluations of the city's ongoing anti-poverty initiatives.

**Honorable Ellen Robertson, Chair
Councilwoman, 6th District, Richmond City Council**

Albert Walker, Co-Chair

Heidi W. Abbott

Pauline Hymes

Chanel Bea

Penny J. McPherson

Kamala Benjamin

Reverend Bo Milner

Domingo Caratachea Torres

Patrice Shelton

Lillie A. Estes

**Reverend Dwayne E.
Whitehead**

Dr. Elsie Harper-Anderson

Special Thanks

To our collaborative partners, stakeholders and community!

Stay in Touch

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If you would like to live tweet during this event, please use the hashtag
#CWBSummitRVA.

Cover photo courtesy of the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site