

ACES FOR THE EIGHTH

2023 Tracks & Breakout Sessions



Chip and a Chair: STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT

Cardinal Hall A

10:00 *A Global Muncie – Current Opportunities and Preparations for Tomorrow* **Phil Boltz**

Historically, measures and perspectives of Muncie's global connection were focused on the physical mobility of people and products and the inbound investment of capital into our region. Looking forward: global connectivity, cultural competency, and the shifting links between the "where-s" of our lives will increasingly impact our shared community. This session is a focused presentation and discussion of current opportunities we have within Professional, Educational, and Social domains.

Components of this presentation include:

- Frameworks and "views" of Muncie's historic global linkages
- Population diversity is an important, but isolated approach to considering globalization
- Professional and vocational globalization is different in 2023 than in 2003 or 1983.
- How schools and educational organizations can prepare learners for a Global Muncie
- Sustainable Community-first global opportunities and strategies for Muncie and ECI

The session discussion will engage a collective brainstorm and SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis of global connections and futures for Muncie.

11:00 *Civic Education, One Neighborhood at a Time* **Stacey Ingram**

Citizen interactions with government most frequently occur at the local level. Yet many citizens lack knowledge of the levels and often-overlapping responsibilities of local government offices. In this session, members of the League of Women Voters of Muncie-Delaware County will address that gap by presenting ways to engage residents in the civic education that will empower them to work together for the benefit of themselves, their neighbors, and their neighborhood. Local government, elected by the people for the people, should be serving individuals and the community. Presenters will discuss what elected (and appointed) officials do for neighborhoods, how residents can keep them accountable, the importance of voting for local officials, and how to include the entire community in researching, supporting, and voting for a responsive local government. The program will include information about the voter registration process, how neighborhoods can encourage involvement in public affairs, and how young people can be educated to participate in procedures of government.

Three examples from Muncie neighborhoods (Whitely, Blaine, Riverside-Normal) will demonstrate the concrete role that residents and elected officials play in making public policy that impacts the lives of all community members.

1:00 *Who You Gonna Call?* **Jeff Robinson, City** **William Hughes, County** **Sue Errington, State**

How to effectively advocate for your interests and concerns to elected officials.



10:00 A Full House of “Great IDEAs” in Muncie

Youth and Family Services from Muncie Public Library, Sidney Barkdull, Shanna Hurd, Gabby Sandefer

Do the Blue without the Blue Bags, Jason Donati

Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Jennifer Lee

Mobile Van Distribution, Sunni Matters

Shoot for the Moon, Muncie! Solar Eclipse Partnership, Dayna Thompson

Experience fast-paced presentations on five exciting community programs that impact our city's neighborhoods. This is information you can take directly back to your residents to help inform them on how to access important community resources.

11:00 *Land Banking, Abandoned Property and Public Safety*

Nate Howard, Dr. John West

Staff and board members from the Muncie Land Bank will describe on the progress of the land bank in acquiring and repurposing abandoned property. They will discuss opportunities for community members to get involved in fighting blight in their neighborhood. Finally, the presentation will pay special attention to the role that land banking can play in securing unsafe abandoned properties and reducing police and fire costs for the city.

1:00 *Re-centering Our Thinking about Place and Community*

JP Hall

Muncie, which has seen a steady decline in population over the last 50 years, needs to be thinking upstream about where we are going. Upstream thinking narrows in on causes, as opposed to solely focusing on solving symptoms. In our case, population numbers will likely continue to decrease, or at best stabilize, and we need a new paradigm in addressing our current and future challenges. One option is to re-center thinking and counter the bifurcated models we have relied on for so long. At the neighborhood/community level – and geographically – by focusing on further densifying city center (our heart), we send a message and strengthen our core. By re-centering city center as the optimal place to double down on, it will take us out of north/south, campus/downtown, type of thinking. Downtown is neutral territory – and our population and thinking – needs to match our current and future footprint. The more out of alignment we are with where we are, the more challenges we will face. By identifying, promoting, and investing in existing community and infrastructural assets, we hyper focus limited financial resources, and create sustainable and environmentally friendly future development. We have all of the money, talent, and available leadership we need right here in Muncie to make this place the best place it could be. As we wade downstream, we must re-center our thinking, in order to deal with the challenges that are coming from up river.



10:00 *Guiding and Encouraging Resident-driven Advocacy*
Jena Ashby

This session will include the story of how residents involved in the 8twelve Coalition have been involved in advocacy efforts. We will encourage you to think of different ways to get resident involvement in your area and leave with a plan!

11:00 *Beyond Meetings: Tips and Tools for Better Community Outreach*
Brian Blackford

Engaging community members is more important, and more challenging, than ever. Simply hosting a town hall or settling for insights from the usual suspects is no longer sufficient. During this interactive session, participants review why community engagement matters and consider creative ways to make it more practical, productive, and meaningful.

1:00 *Community Organizing with People Who Don't Attend Meetings*
Dr Michelle Glowacki-Dudka, Ramo Lordeni

This session will be an interactive, hands-on presentation with attendees using discussion and practical learning tasks to improve leadership and engaging community citizens. Community engagement and capacity building begins with people and their skills that promotes a lifelong learning culture. By building on what people already do, community leaders can improve neighborhoods through organizing and supporting public events that celebrate learning. By mobilizing people, buy-in and program success are increased as community leaders and citizens collaborate for meaningful participatory strategies for multilateral partnerships that promotes learning.

Session attendees will learn of a few practical exercises to encourage and enable the residents to actively participate in the community's public life. Leaders will learn how to support learning in families and communities through establishing community-based learning spaces by actively listening to the people.

The session will model a "Circle of Voices" activity to help guide attendees' discussions in the community based on three prompts:

What three things do you do well enough that you could teach them to someone else?

What three things would you like to learn that you don't already know?

Who is going to go with you along the way?



10:00 *Community Engaged Immersive Learning and Finding the Right Partner*

Stacey Alexander, Kara Duquette, Jackie Grutsch-McKinney

This presentation will highlight the conference theme of Intentional Development and Education (IDEA) for Association members. Participants will learn about community-engaged immersive learning with Ball State University, previous immersive learning projects, and some steps to finding the right immersive learning partner. Participants will be given the opportunity to discuss the needs in their specific neighborhoods and associations. They will also be asked to share their expectations for being partners in an immersive learning project. A community can be strengthened by empowering its members to actively engage in building a shared vision for the community (Bernie et al., 2019). Both community and university partners want to tap into each other's knowledge bases to promote a strong economy and improve K-12 schools and pre-K initiatives, community health and safety, and community strength to continue improvements for citizens and quality of life (Holland, 2001). The presenter(s) will share elements for creating an intentional partnership. Participants will also be given a partnership questionnaire or "needs assessment" to be completed and returned to the Office of Immersive Learning. This information will be shared with immersive learning faculty facilitators in service of making initial contact towards potential community-engaged immersive learning partnerships in the future.

11:00 *How Does Our Community Feel About Harm Reduction?*

Jean Marie Place and BSU undergraduate students

Harm reduction is a series of strategies designed to 'meet people where they are at' and reduce negative consequences associated with drug use. Examples of harm reduction strategies for substance use disorder include safe syringe programs that can reduce the spread of Hepatitis C or HIV infection due to sharing of used needles, or distribution of Narcan/Naloxone which can prevent a fatal overdose death. These strategies, while highly effective, are often stigmatized. A group of Ball Students in an immersive learning class (HSC 301) sought to understand people's attitudes, knowledge, and level of support for harm reduction strategies in Muncie, Indiana. This session will highlight both qualitative and quantitative data, obtained from a community-wide survey and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders with healthcare providers, elected officials, and law enforcement officers, to provide a clearer picture on our community's understanding of and support for harm reduction to address substance use disorder.

1:00 *Muncie's New Hope in a Tiny House Village Project*

Sarah Keogh

Struggles of homelessness are a prevalent concern in Indiana, with an estimated 150-200 people considered "unsheltered" in Delaware County alone. To help combat this issue, a Ball State immersive-learning course partnered with the City of Muncie's Office of Community Development to plan the Tiny House Village Project. The project enabled students work with various community members to study the interrelated elements of ecological design, landscape architecture, social justice, and community development to propose a design that considers both the environment and people in need of secure housing.

The project, funded by a federal grant, is not designed to have long-term residences, but rather function as transitional housing. Over the summer and fall semesters of 2022, students worked in multidisciplinary teams to develop designs for the tiny houses, the community building, and the site itself. These teams met with city officials; community members who run existing social service programs in Muncie; Ball State professors and support staff from a number of project-affiliated departments; and Ball State graduate students studying homelessness in the U.S. We will share our experiences working through this project, highlighting our best moments and the lessons we learned along the way.



COWBOYS

1:00 *Critical Thinking is Critical; Overcoming Blind Spots with Solutions-based Storytelling in Middletown*

Moderator: Aimee Robertson West

Discussants: J.R. Jamison-Pippin, Yvonne Thompson, Dr. John West

Are we living up to our potential as a community? How do we measure our success?

Muncie has had its fair share of community trauma in a short amount of time, and the most recent among them is a drastic reduction in local, independent reporting with the permanent loss of our local newspaper's editor. Muncie is approaching news desert status.

So, who's keeping tabs on the community? How do we measure objective success?

At the 4-way intersection where community, leadership, local reporting, and public relations meet, who has the right of way?

Despite a comprehensive community plan and strong public relations efforts to promote Muncie's talent and assets, there's a disconnect between our assets and performance outputs and outcome metrics:

Muncie's overall declining GDP (Gross Domestic Product) (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis), Delaware County 5-year long highest child poverty ranking (U.S. Census Bureau) and Delaware County's quality of life ranking of 87th, health outcomes ranking of 86th of Indiana's 92 counties, and overall inequality markers remain stagnant, locally.

This roundtable discussion will:

- Center unaddressed outcome metrics
- Allow practitioners and researchers on the frontlines dealing with real data, real problems, and real people to weigh in on our blind spots
- Work to identify overlooked assets hiding in plain sight
- Demonstrate and inform on how to support local solutions-based storytelling and reporting

MUSIC LOUNGE