As the Promise programs convene in New Haven, Connecticut in November 2014 for their annual conference, PromiseNet, almost 40 Promise-type programs are operating in 13 states providing place-based scholarships to potentially tens of thousands of public school students. The programs represent large urban centers such as Syracuse, New York and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and small towns such as El Dorado, Arkansas and Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Some, like the Detroit College Promise, provide one time scholarships ranging from $250- $1,000 while Kalamazoo Promise scholars can effectively earn a full-ride to a four-year private university, when the Promise dollars are combined with the university’s contribution.

Despite the number of programs, there is not a clear consensus about what a Promise program is. The programs do not share a common mission statement, organizational structure, or policy platform. They vary greatly as to eligibility criteria, the value of the scholarships granted, and where the scholarships may be used. Several have economic development as a clearly stated goal, while others do not. There are also dozens of other programs that operate similar to Promise programs but do not identify themselves as Promise-related. While there is no clear definition or model uniting the programs, the one thing that they all do have in common, is a place-based commitment to making college more attainable to public school students and a sense that this could be a stimulant to their respective local economies.

Despite the lack of uniformity, the programs have been well received and applauded as one strategy for addressing the challenges presented by the changes in the American workplace and the so-called “skills gap.” (See ASTD 2009 and ASTD 2012 for discussion of the skills gap). This is particularly true among those who consider college achievement a tool for economic development. And there is every indication that more Promise programs will be formed in the future. Several cities, including Hartford, Connecticut, Washington D.C., Newark, New Jersey, and Richmond, California have recently announced plans for Promise-type programs.

Since 2008, representatives from the various Promise programs, cities aspiring to a Promise program and other interested parties have convened annually, as PromiseNet, to discuss shared issues and challenges. PromiseNet, however, is not a formal umbrella network.

As representatives gathered for the 2014 PromiseNet conference, many wondered if it would make sense to reformulate the yearly convention into a more formal umbrella organization. There were many questions to consider: Were there unique characteristics and strengths of a Promise program and would these traits translate into a definitive brand? Was there a set of best practices and or objectives common to all Promise programs? What other benefits could a national network provide the local organizations?
Some noted that creating a formal network might increase the influence of Promise organizations. Would this be a way that Promise programs could ensure that their distinctive knowledge base and viewpoint was included and heard in the larger debates about academic achievement, college-attainment, and education as a force of economic development? What should be the role of PromiseNet as an agent for change on the local and national level, and how is this objective best achieved?

But there were others that noted that proliferation of Promise organizations had occurred without any type of national guidance and showed no signs of letting up. Why try to fix something that appeared not to be broken? Would an umbrella network facilitate the development of additional programs or could it become a constraint on expansion?

ABOUT THE PROMISE PROGRAMS

THE KALAMAZOO PROMISE: THE BIG BANG

In 2005 anonymous donors startled the nation by announcing that they would pay for every child who graduated from the Kalamazoo, Michigan, Public Schools to go to college, thus founding the Kalamazoo Promise, the first citywide place-based scholarship program in the United States. Place-based scholarships were not a new idea. Back in 1920 Bernard Daly, M.D., left a $600,000 endowment to create a scholarship fund for rural Lake County (Oregon) high school students to attend any of the state-run colleges. Almost 100 years later Lake County is one of the most educated in the state. (Hamilton 1989)³. Decades later, in 1981 philanthropist Eugene Lang made a similar promise to a group of Harlem sixth-graders and set up the "I Have a Dream" Foundation to spread this promise to more students. In 1987 when investment Banker George Weiss promised a class of Connecticut 7th graders that he would pay their tuition (See Say Yes to Education Syracuse below), he was following Lang’s lead.⁴ It wasn’t the first place-based scholarship, but Kalamazoo was the first program of its kind that made a citywide commitment and it caught the country’s attention.

By 2014, the Kalamazoo Promise program had paid out over $50 million in scholarship aid to 3,200 students, of which 700 had graduated from 2- and 4-year colleges and universities. During the same period the Kalamazoo Public School District had seen a reversal of its declining enrollment and a halt to an imbalance that was threatening to “tip” the racial composition of the schools due to the flight of white and middle-class families from the district. Overall population in the district has increased, as have housing prices. (LeGower and Walsh 2014) (Miller-Adams 2013) (Caplan-Bricker 2014). Recent changes effectively permit students to earn a full-ride to one of 15 four-year private colleges and universities, when the Promise dollars are combined with the university’s contribution.⁵

³ A video about the Daly Fund and its impact is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IwrEPvlhyU&feature=youtube_gdata_player.

⁴ See also Schwartaman 2011 which revisits the students, from some of Prince George’s County’s poorest neighborhoods, who were 5th graders at Seat Pleasant Elementary, in 1988 when Abe Pollin, then owner of the Washington Bullets and the Washington Capitals and Melvin Cohen, owner of District Photo, a successful film processing company, established a $325,000 fund to pay the students’ tuition to college.

⁵ The 15 private colleges and universities which sought out the Kalamazoo Promise have agreed to reduce tuition for Kalamazoo Promise scholars to an amount equivalent to the average in-state tuition for University of Michigan’s College of Literature, Science and the Arts, which is $13,978 for 2014-15. The colleges have agreed to waive or cover the difference between this amount, the maximum Promise award, and their standard tuition. (Mack 2014). Tuition for Kalamazoo College one of the private colleges, for the 2014-15 school year is $41,061 (http://www.kzoo.edu/admission/finaid/).
According to Janice Brown, former Superintendent of Kalamazoo Public School and Executive Director Emeritus of Kalamazoo Promise, the donors were local people, who saw their actions not just as educational philanthropy but also as an act of economic investment in their hometown to help reverse its economic decline. Brown cites tangential impacts rather than an active agenda as evidence of Promise’s economic impact.6 And it is well known that realtors and local businesses routinely publicize the Promise as part of their marketing efforts. However, since the Kalamazoo Public School District extends beyond the city to include suburban areas, there is some evidence that many of the benefits have been experienced in the suburban ring rather than in the city core. (LeGower and Walsh 2014).

**Duplication and Variations**

The publicity that the Kalamazoo Promise received spawned dozens of imitators. By 2014, there were almost 40 Promise-type programs operating in 13 states. See Table 1 for a list of Promise programs.7 However, Kalamazoo proved to be unique in a number of ways. First, it is funded by anonymous donors who have not revealed their identity in the ensuing nine years. Few cities can hope to find a single generous donor and other Promise programs have successfully pursued alternative funding strategies.

Kalamazoo prides itself on its “universality.” It has no GPA requirements, income limitations, or any consideration of a student’s attendance or disciplinary record. One New York Times article called it “the most inclusive, most generous scholarship program in America.” 8 (Fishman 2012). Even students whose performance is mediocre can receive funding if they are accepted into a college. But this “everybody in” approach also produced lackluster persistence rates. Many students, especially those from low-income backgrounds and those who were the first in their families to attend college, were unfamiliar with and less prepared for college.9

Many of the newer Promise organizations exhibit variances from the original Kalamazoo model. Some programs require a minimum GPA, community service, and good attendance, or a combination of all three. Denver’s program is focused on low-income students and has a needs test. The programs vary widely in the amount of funding provided to students. Annual awards range from a one-time award of $250 to $1,000 from the Detroit College Promise to a possible high benefit of $40,000 (over four years) at such programs as Pittsburgh and New Haven. Although a few Promise programs permit students to use the funds at private schools or out-of-state, most are

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6 Impacts identified by Brown include: that local real estate agents and companies all cite the Kalamazoo Promise as a recruiting tool, that a significant number of Promise recipients choose to attend local colleges retaining economic dollars in the city, and the jobs resulting from the three schools that the district has built since Promise was announced to accommodate a 25% increase in student population.

7 There is no definitive listing of Promise programs. For other collective listings see Miller-Adams 2013 and Gonzalez 2014.


9 Review of its website (www.kalamazoopromise.com) reveals that the Kalamazoo Promise appears and operates largely as a traditional scholarship program. It does not provide some of the student support services that later-established Promise programs came to see as essential to success. However, to address the issue of less than stellar persistence and college-graduation rates among its Promise scholars, in 2011 The Learning Network of Greater Kalamazoo, was formed “to shift the local conversation from “How do I earn the Kalamazoo Promise?” to “How do we assure that the kids in all of the [10 school] districts in [Greater Kalamazoo ] County are ready for school, reading on time, graduating from high school, and ready to pursue some kind of post-secondary degree?” (http://www.thelearningnetwork.org/AboutUs/OurNews/TheLearningNetworkandTheKalamazooPromise/tabid/388/Default.aspx). Additionally, Western Michigan University, where a third of Kalamazoo Promise recipients enroll, recently received a $ 3.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to increase graduation rates among these students.
limited to in-state public two- and four-year colleges and universities. Some are exclusive to just one local community college. Several programs have primary economic development missions, while others do not.

Table 1
The Promise Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kalamazoo Promise (MI)</td>
<td>Arkadelphia Promise (AR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy Scholars (Battle Creek, MI)</td>
<td>Baldwin Promise (MI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great River Promise (Phillips County, AR)</td>
<td>New Haven Promise (CT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Bound (Hammond, IN)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Denver Scholarship Foundation (CO)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Garrett County Scholarship Program (MD)</td>
<td>Beacon of Hope (Lynchburg, VA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria Promise (IL)</td>
<td>Benton Harbor Promise (MI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh Promise (PA)</td>
<td>Montgomery County Promise (Dayton, OH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise for the Future (Pinal, AZ)</td>
<td>Pontiac Promise Zone (MI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ventura College Promise (CA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2007                      | 2011                        |
| Bay Commitment (Bay City, MI) | Beacon of Hope (Lynchburg, VA) |
| El Dorado Promise (AR)       | Hazel Park Promise (MI)      |
| Hopkinsville Rotary Scholars (KY) | La Crosse Promise (WI)    |
| Northport Promise (MI)       | Lansing Promise (MI)         |
| Pensacola Pledge Scholars (FL) |                             |

2008                      | 2013                        |
| Detroit College Promise (MI) | The Detroit Scholarship Fund (MI) |
| Rockford Promise (IL.)      | Grand Rapids Challenge Scholars (MI) |
| 2009                      |                             |
| PACE Promise (San Marcos, CA) | Norwood Promise (OH)        |
| San Francisco Promise (CA)  | Saginaw Promise (MI)        |
| Syracuse Say Yes to Education (NY) |                             |

2010                      | 2014                        |
|                           |                             |
|                           |                             |
|                           |                             |
|                           |                             |
|                           |                             |

Although there is not a consensus of what a Promise program is, Michelle Miller-Adams of the Upjohn Institute who has studied the Kalamazoo Promise and the Promise Movement extensively has crafted a working definition, which had previously been adopted for PromiseNet conferences—

“Promise communities are those that seek to transform themselves by making a long-term investment in education through place-based scholarships. While these programs vary in their structure, they all seek to expand access to and success in higher education, deepen the college-going culture in K-12 systems, and support local economic development.”

Gabriella Gonzalez of the Rand Corporation who has produced key research on the Pittsburgh and New Haven Promise programs offers a different description—
“… a place-based initiative to propel economic development by combining two tactics. It uses financial incentives to motivate students to go on to higher education and to return to the city. And it’s also a form of economic stimulus to motivate new families to move into the city and send their children to the public schools.”

Gonzalez stated that there definitely was value in the Promise name; it stimulates excitement. She emphasized that variation among the programs was almost inevitable because the design of the program depends greatly on the sponsoring city’s goals and resources. However, from her perspective, programs with wide variations (as currently exist) could be accommodated under a common Promise brand.

Haley Glover, Strategy Director of the Lumina Foundation, also views the variety as a plus. “It’s a good opportunity to study the different programs and see what works,” she stated. Lumina Foundation has supported several Promise programs as one strategy to achieve its Goal 2025, which proposes that by the year 2025, the rate of higher education attainment among Americans will be 60%. Lumina has also funded efforts to have researchers studying Promise programs be more coordinated in their efforts. (See Promise Research Consortium below.)

Other Promise executives provided slightly different descriptions. Most, but not all, agreed that scholarships alone were not enough. There was a collective sense that money had to be coupled with something else—access and preparedness support, school reform or an economic development agenda—to come within the Promise rubric.

The various ways that Promise programs are organized and some of their unique features are highlighted in the several capsule descriptions below. Detailed information regarding any particular Promise program can be found on the individual program’s website shown on Appendix A.

PITTSBURGH PROMISE: PLANTING A WIDE FOUNDATION

According to Saleem Ghubril, Executive Director, the Pittsburgh Promise was instituted as a “spoonful of sugar” following a period of “backbreaking and hard work” reforming the public schools as part of the rust-belt city’s efforts to reimagine itself after the loss of over half its population. Closing schools and a new teachers’ contract that provided for increased development but also the greater ability to terminate underperforming teachers was not popular. The Promise was seen as a bright spot that could pull the community together. The funding strategy undertaken by Pittsburgh reflects this objective.

The city’s largest employer, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, provided $10 million in seed money and pledged an additional $90 million as a challenge grant; it would donate an additional $1 for every $1.50 that Promise raised. And the community support has been wide, ranging from major corporations and foundations that give leadership gifts, to the 3,800 individuals who have collectively given $2 million, to the thousands who participate in the 13-mile Walk for One Promise walk. Ghubril says that he is aiming for a base of 20,000 to 30,000 individuals—“For long-term sustainability we need the funding base to be broad and wide.” As of June 2014, the organization had raised $160 million of its $250 million goal.

Further information about the Lumina Foundation and its Goal 2025 can be found at http://www.luminafoundation.org/goal_2025.html.

There is no definitive listing of Promise programs. See footnote 4.

Pittsburgh Promise’s broad base of support includes 38 foundations and 102 corporations, some of which donated at least $1 million to fund a “named” scholarship. In the fund’s first year, qualifying students were able to receive up to $5,000 a year (for up to 4 years) for college. In 2011 that amount was increased to $10,000 a year. (Niederberger 2011).
Citywide enrollments have stabilized rather than continuing to decline and graduation rates have crept up from 63% to 71%. The Promise has funded 11,000 scholars but academic results are mixed. Persistence rates among scholars are trending equal to national Student Clearinghouse data, but Ghubril is not yet celebrating. Certain schools are proving more resistant to change and he has yet to achieve his 90% goal of college attainment. But he also reached back to his donor corporations to interview his graduating Promise Scholars with positive results; 800 have secured jobs in the Pittsburgh area.

**NEW HAVEN PROMISE: SETTING THE BAR A LITTLE HIGHER**

From its inception, New Haven Promise (NHP) sought to engage potential Promise Scholars and their families early on to ensure that they didn’t miss the opportunity due to a lack of awareness of the program. This strategy was essential because New Haven has some of the most rigorous eligibility requirements of any Promise program. Students in New Haven have to (i) meet a minimum 4-year residency requirement (similar to other programs), (ii) achieve a 3.0 GPA in high school, (iii) maintain a 90% attendance record, and (iv) complete 90 hours of community service. Students satisfying these criteria can use their scholarship at any Connecticut public or private college or university, including co-founder Yale University. Once in college, they must maintain a 2.0 GPA to retain the scholarship, similar to other programs. Through the Class of 2014, NHP has funded more than 550 scholars in 18 Connecticut colleges and universities. Ninety-nine percent of 2014 Promise-eligible scholars enrolled in college in the fall after their graduation from high school.

Patricia Melton, who has been NHP Executive Director since 2012 supports New Haven’s criteria—“The vast majority of our scholars are from low income backgrounds or are the first in their families to go to college. I think that our results show that when you raise the bar, students can rise to meet it.” NHP has a refreshed brand identity—“To, Through and Back” evidence of the board’s commitment to a wrap-around approach designed for educational success and economic stimulus for New Haven. NHP funds the work of College Summit, a college access non-profit, in each high school throughout the city. Also, NHP assists students with financial aid workshops, community service opportunities, and mentoring.

In a recent development, Promise Ambassadors collectivize scholars at four schools and employ peer support to create community and to fuel persistence among the Promise Scholars. The program has also adopted a second-chance initiative—“Pathway to Promise”—whereby students who narrowly miss the scholarship (with GPAs between 2.5 and 2.99) can earn a one-time award of $1,000 and become eligible for a full Promise scholarship based on their first year college GPA.

**SAY YES TO EDUCATION SYRACUSE: A DIFFERENT KIND OF PROMISE**

The Say Yes movement, which now incorporates 6 chapters, began in 1987 when Investment Banker George Weiss promised to pay the college-tuitions for 112 seventh graders at Belmont Elementary School in one of Philadelphia’s poorest neighborhoods.14 From its beginning, Say Yes followed a model of providing comprehensive supports to students such as: extended day/year programming, mentoring, tutoring, and social work services.

The model spread to five other chapters in Cambridge15, Hartford, NYC Harlem, Syracuse, and Buffalo. In each case, until 2008, Say Yes maintained its high-impact limited numbers approach, but gradually engaged younger scholars.

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13 The motto stands for--To College, Through College and Back to a career in New Haven.

14 According to one report, Weiss was directly inspired by Eugene Lang, a philanthropist who made a similar promise to Harlem sixth-graders in 1981 and then set up the "I Have a Dream" Foundation to spread this promise to more students. (Callahan 2009).

15 All students in Cambridge have graduated and the chapter is now considered an alumni chapter.
students (in 2000 a group of 50 kindergartners was added in Philadelphia) and eventually their families with educational assistance, health and other social services.

Say Yes has developed a broad coalition of over 60 public and private colleges and universities in 15 states and the District of Columbia, which offer full-tuition scholarships to Say Yes Scholars. Additionally, in Syracuse and Buffalo, Promise scholars are eligible, regardless of family income, for up to 100 percent of the tuition needed to attend any public two- or four-year college or university in New York State to which they are accepted.

Beginning in 2008 in Syracuse, NY (population 144,000), Say Yes instituted its first citywide program with the support of Syracuse University and the city, impacting 20,000 K-12 students at 33 schools. Students and their families can access a comprehensive roster of sustained academic, social, emotional, health, and family supports. Beginning in 2011 a similar city-wide program was initiated in Buffalo, NY.

**Denver Scholarship Foundation: Targeting the Neediest With What They Need Most**

Unlike other Promise cities, Denver experienced a 14.4% growth in population between 2005 and 2010, which is one reason why its Promise program is more targeted than most. In collaboration with the Denver Public Schools, public and private partner colleges and universities, and a broad range of community nonprofit organizations, the Denver Scholarship Foundation (DSF) has since 2006, operated a services-intensive program targeting low income students and those who are the first in their families to attend college. The program was originally more open. However, the founders, Tim and Bernadette Marquez, and the Foundation board soon decided to be more strategic and to employ the funds to put in place a comprehensive program to support Denver Public School students in completing high school and obtaining a college degree. It was determined to use the scholarship as leverage and to target low-income students. By implementing a GPA requirement to incent the students to perform in a manner that would promote later college success.

Students were provided assistance. College advisors in Future Centers in 12 of the city’s high schools work with students to help them plan for college. Workshops include not only how to negotiate the admissions and financial aid process, but also exploring college fit, major selection, and the logistics of orientation and campus housing. The Future Centers and their advisors have also succeeded in winning over the school counselor staff despite some early territorialism, and are regularly included in meetings and viewed as a valuable resource.

Rana Tarkenton, Deputy Executive Director characterizes the services component as “absolutely critical.” “The work that the advisors do with the students empowers them for their future, it teaches them to advocate for themselves so that they are ready for success.” But it is an expensive model and four Future Centers were recently shuttered due to lack of funding.

Students are provided need-based DSF Scholarships up to $17,000 over 5 years for attendance at Colorado two- and four-year colleges and technical schools, which provide additional funding. Partner institutions also provide a dedicated DSF liaison to connect with the students and provide additional services such as mentoring, special seminars and tutoring to support persistence. Four thousand students have received $21 million in DSF scholarships, 800 of whom have graduated from college and the Denver Public Schools boasts a 30% increase in college enrollment among its targeted population. And impressively, it also reports 79% persistence among low-income, ethnic minority students.

**El Dorado: Big Hope for a Small City**

El Dorado is a small city of 18,000 in southern Arkansas, a state that ranked 49th in the percentage of adults that hold college degrees; for years it suffered a declining economy and the loss of jobs. In 2007, however, the resident Murphy Oil Corporation stepped up do something about it. It funded the El Dorado Promise with a $50 million 16 Philanthropists Tim and Bernadette Marquez provided a $50 million pledge in the form of a challenge grant to the schools and the city to make access to higher education possible.
commitment closely modelling the program after the Kalamazoo Promise. The program provides scholarships to cover tuition and mandatory fees to graduates of El Dorado High School (2014 enrollment of approximately 1,300) who meet a minimum 4-year residency requirement. Executive Director, Sylvia Thompson, says that the program design, i.e., minimum criteria, is important because it permits the Promise to reach the most students. “Universality keeps the door open to all students.”

At the time the program was established data showed that almost half of El Dorado’s student’s attended college outside of the state. As a result, unlike most Promise programs, El Dorado’s Promise scholarship may be used at any accredited two- or four-year, public or private educational institution in the U.S. The maximum amount payable per year for up to five years is the highest annual resident tuition at an Arkansas public university, which in 2013-14 was $7,595.

Thompson is a one-person organization who is a public school employee and has an office in the high school. Yet, with these limited resources, El Dorado Promise reports that ninety percent of the 2013 Promise-eligible class enrolled in college, a 20% increase from 2007. (Thompson does receive administrative support from Murphy Oil.) Sixty-two percent of El Dorado Promise scholars have also completed a second year of college, but Thompson still has concerns regarding persistence — “We want college graduates.” She is focusing on ways to address this issue by providing more support to the scholars once they are enrolled in college. In 2013 the Promise program announced that it was removing its residency requirement enabling students who live outside the city and attend El Dorado Public Schools through a choice program to be eligible for the scholarship. The city has also reported other positive effects such as a stabilized public school population when neighboring towns continued to decline.

IS PROMISE A MOVEMENT? SHOULD IT BE?

**PromiseNet: The Gathering**

Since 2008 the collective Promise programs have convened annually, as PromiseNet, to discuss shared issues and challenges. PromiseNet, however, is not a formal umbrella network. The gathering was also a response to the many hours that Kalamazoo and other Promise executives spent responding to telephone calls and emails from persons wanting to replicate the program. The gathering was seen as a better way to communicate knowledge of the program to interested parties and has been successful in attracting representatives from cities aspiring to establish Promise programs. As other Promise programs, developed, PromiseNet also became a forum for peer networking and sharing best practices. The conferences have historically been insular and inward focusing (similar to working meetings) rather than outward-facing policy setting events. See Appendix B for examples of past PromiseNet agendas.  

Attendance has been in the 100-200 range and several past attendees commented that they were valuable networking opportunities.

Today PromiseNet still has no organizing document or bylaws, nor any governing board. The convening process remains informal and “ad hoc.” Whichever Promise program wishes to host the conference steps forward and assumes the duty to organize it, usually with the support of a multi-city committee. The host city is responsible for raising funds locally to pay for the event. Without a dedicated staff or available funding the project can challenge local resources. It may not be an optimal model. Rana Tarkenton recounts that when Denver hosted, it ended up having to hire a consultant to do most of the work even though other Promise cities had also contributed to the process. She noted that other national organizations usually have standing conference planning committees that operate from a multi-year horizon. “You get more consistency,” Tarkenton opines.

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But the question arises whether the PromiseNet and the Promise Movement should be more. Are there benefits to be gained from a more formal or standing organization? Could such an organization establish a web-based toolkit of how to start a Promise program relieving some of the burden from individual programs? Could it maintain a repository of the variances and innovations that the programs have adopted for more efficient sharing of best practices? Would an umbrella network help to give the Promise Movement (if indeed it can be said to be a movement) an identity and a voice? Could a formal infrastructure bring collective benefits to the whole that each program may not be able to access on its own?

**Promise Research Consortium**

Another possible benefit some have cited to support creating a coordinating network was the ability of such an organization to collect data across all the Promise programs. This would allow the analysis of the impact of various Promise models and of the collective impact of the programs. A recent grant from the Lumina Foundation will permit the convening of the Promise Research consortium and a coordinated research agenda. The Consortium also intends to develop a website where research regarding Promise Programs is collectively made available.

**Are Opportunities Being Missed?**

Promise executives have various opinions about whether a more formal umbrella organization is needed or timely. Saleem Ghubril of Pittsburgh agreed that such might be a positive development but cautioned that the design of each program had to be highly localized. Janice Brown of Kalamazoo thought that having an umbrella structure of some type might help with developing a “tool kit” or “roadmap” to developing a Promise program, something that had been discussed previously but never implemented.

Other Promise leaders and Promise-knowledgeable persons noted that without an umbrella structure it was difficult to discern just what a “Promise” program is. Each program decides for itself whether to fall under the Promise rubric, regardless of whether it uses Promise in its name. Dozens of programs across the country pursue similar objectives and are place-based but do not call themselves Promise or even identify with the movement. Do they represent a lost opportunity for knowledge sharing, innovation and collective growth?

The current range of identified Promise-type programs is wide and very few similarities can be identified beyond (1) being place-based and (2) having some agenda for coordinated educational and community improvement. But without a strong identity has the opportunity to seed additional Promise-type programs been stifled? And is that optimal when the country is seeking effective means to engage the low-income/first generation college going populations that the Promise model has had some success in engaging? Is there a risk that the Promise “brand” will be diluted and diffused rather than strengthened by being more inclusive of program variations?\(^{18}\)

However, other Promise leaders pointed out that a model that can replicate organically through locales seeking it out is a strong model. They questioned whether focussing the definition might narrow it and have a chilling effect. What would be the impact on programs that exhibited greater variation? Would they have to modify their model or risk being excluded from the collective? Would the collective even be able to reach a conclusion of what a defining “brand” should be given the wide variances? Is there a way forward that cast a wide net rather than a narrow one?

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\(^{18}\) There already exists a risk of confusing the Promise programs with President Obama’s “Promise Zones Initiative” (announced in 2013), in which communities pursue socio-economic development by partnering with local business and community leaders to make investments that reward hard work and expand opportunity. There are also “Promise Neighborhoods,” resulting from a U.S. Department of Education program established in 2010 to improve educational outcomes for students in distressed urban and rural neighborhoods. Additionally, Michigan has a state-based Promise Zone initiative, which overlaps with several of the Promise programs providing scholarships.
THE PROS AND CONS OF AN UMBRELLA NETWORK

Observers have noted that umbrella networks and well-managed collectives can provide value by creating continuity, shepherding a nascent group through to maturity, connecting geographically disparate affiliates, minding history and standard setting. Umbrella networks may also facilitate funding opportunities on a scale not achievable by individual programs, including funding that might assist network development. Lastly, an umbrella network can provide a unified identity for the group’s programs and create a brand and voice for the collective.

However, umbrella networks have to be funded. How would this happen and how would the local Promise programs ensure that they were getting value for their investment? Even in a decentralized rotating structure such as that utilized by the G20, which is discussed below, there are costs that the current President and host country have to absorb. Would Promise programs be able to absorb such expenses or would such a structure only divert valuable funding and human capital from the local needs? And how would local programs ensure that their opinions are considered in helping to shape the network? A network that portended to dictate terms might be more of a hindrance than a benefit. Creativity and efficiency might be stifled if local programs were forced to jump through hoops to gain accreditation or to ignore local conditions just to insure compliance with national standards.

WHAT FORM WOULD AN UMBRELLA NETWORK TAKE?

Successful networks utilize many different forms depending on their resources and needs. Presented below are three different network structures that might be useful for the Promise programs to consider adopting as presented or in a modified form. These network structures offer an opportunity for the Promise programs to explore what form greater collaboration might take and how it might be implemented. Each model can be adopted whole or modified to better meet the Promise programs’ needs.

Gateway to College: The Benefits of Standardization

At the heart of Gateway to College is a model that started as a small pilot program at an Oregon Community College. The idea was to recapture high school students who had dropped out of school and not only bring them back to earn their diplomas, but to also put them on the path to earning college degrees. It worked and ten years later Gateway to College has taken this idea and scaled it into a budding national organization successfully impacting thousands of students with a winning formula.

“Portland Community College created the Gateway to College program in 2000 to help reconnect high school dropouts with their education. Through the program, students complete their high school diploma requirements at community and technical colleges while simultaneously earning college credits toward an associate’s degree or certificate. Young people who had little chance of graduating from high school are achieving post-secondary success.

Gateway to College’s innovative approach captured the attention of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which initially funded the replication of Gateway to College as part of its Early College High School Initiative. Since 2003, Gateway to College has evolved from a single-site program into a national network of 43 colleges in 23 states partnering with more than 125 school districts.” (www.gatewaytocollege.org)

The growth of the organization required each new program to meet certain criteria as required by the funder. Nick Mathern, Associate Vice President, Policy and Partnership Development easily recites the five key elements that were required for a program to be called Gateway, as shown on Figure 1.
According to Mathern, there is value in a standardized model. “If you are going to use my name, than I want to know that you are doing the same thing.” Yet Mathern is just as quick to admit that there are some variances among the programs to accommodate state and local laws, and also in the operational programs to meet local needs.

And now that the organization is in a slower phase of growth, Gateway is focusing on firming up its set of standards, common mission statement and objectives. It is also looking to refine assessment tools so that it insures that the umbrella organization is providing valuable guidance and oversight to its member programs. Conformity is maintained through formal agreements between the umbrella organization and GTC programs.

“The value of the network is to amplify what the locals do.” Matheson insists. He has received feedback from affiliates that having an umbrella organization helps with credibility for acceptance of some practices—its harder to resist elements that can be said to be proven in 23 states—and with the inevitable political pressure—local programs within a state can come together to speak as a collective voice, more credibility and visibility.

A series of practices ensures that the umbrella is always receiving input from the local organizations and that it stays on track:

- Bi-annual peer learning conferences focusing on job types and topical areas.
- Director’ meetings
- Technical assistance while in start-up for first three years.
- Network wide data collection and analysis and program evaluation.

Although Promise’s origins are characteristically different from GTC, even a limited umbrella organization might be able to deliver some of the same benefits to the various programs. A central organization could coordinate the development of a centralized mission statement and key defining elements for the network and assist new programs in developing so as to satisfy them. (Existing programs could be grandfathered.) The central organization would be in a good position to identify issues and concerns being dealt with by several programs which may not be communicating with each other and coordinate a process for reaching a solution.
Even though GTC has a standardized model for its flagship program, this has not stopped it from innovating. It has modified its program to reach high school students before they drop out and also is working with organizations to incorporate GTC elements such as cherry-picked student support models into their own programs. Matheson sees this flexibility as maximizing the organization’s reach and that such extensions only add to the group’s overall credibility. He could easily see working with Promise-type programs in this manner and is already doing so with the Power of You\textsuperscript{19}, a program that enables admitted high school graduates from certain high schools to attend Minneapolis Community and Technical College or St. Paul College tuition-free. GTC is using its expertise to help the program develop its student support programs.

\textbf{Teach For All}

\textit{Teach For All: Designing a Global Network}

While it is global in nature, Teach For All (TFALL)\textsuperscript{20} at its core has various similarities with the Promise Movement that may make its coordinating network structure a useful one for the Promise Movement to consider. First, like Promise, TFALL partners vary widely in size, key demographics, and financial resources. Also an educational organization, TFALL has also had to navigate the differences in local regulation of, and culture regarding, education in the various countries in which its partners operate. Additionally, similar to that of Promise, TFALL’s growth has followed a responsive, bottom-up approach where interested entrepreneurs who want to establish a TFALL program contact the organization and solicit its support.

TFALL was modeled after Teach for America (TFA), the brainchild of Wendy Kopp, who in 1989, had first outlined a plan to attack educational inequality in the United States by recruiting top college graduates to teach in poorly performing schools for two years in her senior thesis at Princeton. Kopp’s plan succeeded beyond expectations. Within a decade, a spot in the TFA corps had become one of the most sought-after positions for bright college graduates from the nation’s top universities. In its two decades of operation, Teach for America had placed over 30,000 teachers in underperforming schools around the country and built an alumni group that influenced the nation’s educational policy. Kopp had been celebrated as being in the vanguard of young social entrepreneurship.\textsuperscript{21}

The TFA concept was first implemented outside the United States in 2002, by Brett Wigdortz, a former McKinsey consultant, who founded Teach First (TF) in the United Kingdom. TF had the strong support of the British

\textsuperscript{19} The Power of YOU is an example of a place-based scholarship organization that might be captured by an umbrella Promise network. It covers the cost of tuition and fees for two years or up to 72 credits at Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) or Saint Paul College through state and federal grants and private scholarships for students graduating from designated local high schools. For more information see \url{http://www.minneapolis.edu/Admissions/Power-of-YOU}.

\textsuperscript{20} For a more detailed consideration of Teach For All, see YSOM case study, \textit{Teach For All: Designing a Global Network}, available at \url{http://nexus.som.yale.edu/design-tfall}.

\textsuperscript{21} The idea of “social entrepreneurship” gained popularity in the 1980s as people such as Bill Gates at Microsoft and Steve Jobs at Apple had established businesses that quickly went from start-ups to enterprises that changed an entire industry. People in the social sector envied this success and argued that individuals in the social sector should also utilize business principles, found start-up enterprises, establish strong organizations and bring their ideas to scale. They challenged staid notions of charity and nonprofits that were founded on good intentions rather than on measurable impact and social change. And just as for-profit entrepreneurship emphasized the importance of the founder of the business, social entrepreneurship embraced the importance of the social entrepreneur, whose vision and perseverance were seen as a young organization’s central resource in attracting followers and resources.
government and by 2011 was one of England’s largest employers of the country’s best college graduates, having placed over 2,500 teachers in schools across England.

With the success of their respective organizations, Kopp and Wigdortz became spokespersons for educational reform and magnets for social entrepreneurs from around the globe that wanted to adapt the model to their own countries. Kopp and Wigdortz were able to secure funding for building a global network and announced the formation of TFALL at the Clinton Global Summit in 2007.

Organizational Structure

From its beginning TFALL was designed to be an umbrella organization that fostered and supported a network, giving each national partner autonomy to order its own affairs, rather than a dominant central that planted copy-cat affiliates across the globe. To this end, TFALL was formed as a standalone nonprofit corporation that operated in a coordinating role led by Wendy Kopp, CEO, who reported to the Board, of which she was also a member. TFALL developed a structure that combined direct in-country support of partners with a team of specialists that captured and spread knowledge to partners across the network. Figure 2 shows the TFALL organizational structure.

After consideration of a two-tier structure, that would have made TFA and TF legacy members with a senior status, TFALL decided on a flat structure with all members having the same vote. The TFALL leadership believed that the vetting process would be satisfied by having applicants agree to the TFALL strategic framework and enter into a Partnership Agreement.22

22 The agreement was a legally binding contract that required the potential partner to have met the following qualifications:

- A full-time CEO had to be employed and engaged in running the enterprise;
- The organization had to be incorporated so that Teach For All could legally work with them;
- 10% of the first-year budget had to have been met;
- A business plan that had to be aligned with the strategic framework.
In response to growing interest from partner organizations to be more involved in governance of the network, in 2011, TFALL formed the Network Advisory Committee consisting of CEOs from eight network partners who would provide guidance on key strategy questions to the central organization.

Developing Partners and the Network

By November 2011, when it convened its annual conference in Mumbai India just four years after its founding, TFALL’s network consisted of 23 national partner organizations. The network’s members came from all over the globe and represented an eclectic group of countries. (TFALL leadership decided to limit affiliation to one organization per country.) From tiny Estonia with a population of 1.3 million and near universal literacy to India with over 900 times more people and only 75% literacy. From China, with single-party authoritarian rule, to England, with hundreds of years of a multi-party democracy. The one thing uniting the network was a commitment to building an organization similar to TFA in their respective countries. It planned to grow to 40 partners by 2015. The organization had expanded into three regions: Europe, the Middle East, and Asia and were able to capitalize on regional growth in each area.

TFALL did not target countries for membership, but rather responded to local entrepreneurs who expressed interest in developing an organization. This “responsive” growth strategy made it difficult to predict the way the network would grow, however, the formation of regional clusters and a pipeline of entrepreneurs meant that it was easier to forecast growth. In support of this model of growth, TFALL provided two key elements: (1) a strategic framework for success and (2) Partner Engagement Directors, dedicated on-the-ground, employees to assist countries for up to two years in the start-up and beginning phases.

During the start-up phase, network partner organizations were expected to find funding and hire staff. Depending on the country, the process could take as little as a few months and in other countries it could take over a year. Only after an organization was set up, funded, and ready to recruit its first cohort of volunteers would it be accepted as a member. TFALL expected member organizations to commit to roughly the same program as set forth in the strategic framework. Partners were free to use or not use the TFALL logo and name as they determined what best suited their needs, branding and marketing their organizations in ways that were appropriate in their context.

Strategic Framework

From the beginning, TFALL was to be a coordinating organization, giving each national partner organization autonomy to order its own affairs rather than have the central organization dictate what partner organizations would look like. TFALL produced a strategic framework consisting of: the TFALL “theory of the problem” and “theory of change,” a set of “unifying principles” and a set of “core values.” to guide the organization and partners. The framework ensured that certain key features that defined the TFA model would be duplicated in all TFA partners, but also allowed ample room for the local adaptations required for the differing legal, cultural, and economic terrain that each country presented.

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23 TFALL’s leadership believed that the importance of the international brand was in the credibility it brought to local efforts. Local partners could leverage this credibility to help them grow as an organization, could point to network affiliation as a source of strength and proven reliability. Consistent with the local directive inherent in its model TFALL developed a brand that did not "overpower or undermine or compete" with its local partners—a simple typographical representation of the words "Teach For All" rather than a flashy logo.

24 The set of strategic criteria that served as the framework for success were developed over a number of years by the TFALL leadership and staff and with much input from the original seven counties that expressed interest in developing TFALL programs (the Initial Cohort).
**Theory of the Problem & Theory of Change**

The TFALL Theory of the Problem and Theory of Change, as illustrated by Figure 3, sets out the big picture problem and approach that is at the foundation of TFALL. Adherence to the Theory of Change ensures that all partners are on the same page from the beginning and headed in the right direction.

**Figure 3**
Teach For All’s Theory of Change

### Unifying Principles

At the very outset of designing TFALL, the senior leadership identified eight unifying principles – five programmatic and three organizational – as the only pre-requisites for joining the TFALL network, and decided that any organization embracing the unifying principles should be a partner in the network. Organizations were then free to work beyond the unifying principles as they saw fit for their own contexts. As TFALL grew and it took on more partners, questions persisted as to the extent to which different kinds of adaptations to the model were acceptable. Two factors greatly influenced TFALL’s considerations. First as a relatively young organization, TFALL had a built-in bias to be inclusive of all organizations pursuing its shared mission and theory of change and operating in alignment with the unifying principles. Secondly, even the Initial Cohort displayed a great deal of fluidity, innovation and variation in design. For example, countries in which noncertified teachers were difficult to place changed their policies to allow teachers to be placed. In countries with a dominant funder, other donors had stepped up and diversified the funding base and the governance of the organization. Ultimately it was determined to be as inclusive as possible. See YSOM case study *Teach For All: Designing a Global Network* available at [http://nexus.som.yale.edu/design-tfall/?q=node/93](http://nexus.som.yale.edu/design-tfall/?q=node/93) for more discussion of the variances among TFALL partners.

The five **Programmatic Unifying Principles** were defined as:

- **Recruiting and selecting** as many as possible of the country’s most promising future leaders of all academic disciplines and career interests who demonstrate the core competencies to positively impact student achievement and become long-term leaders able to effect systemic change
- **Training and developing** participants so they build the skills, mindsets, and knowledge needed to maximize impact on student achievement
- **Placing** participants as teachers for two years in regular beginning teaching positions in areas of educational need, with clear accountability for their classrooms

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• **Accelerating** the leadership of alumni by fostering the network between them and creating clear and compelling paths to leadership for expanding educational opportunity
• **Driving** measurable impact in the short run on student achievement and long term on the development of leaders who will help ensure educational opportunity for all.

The three **Organizational Unifying Principles** were defined as:

• A local **social enterprise** that adapts the model thoughtfully to the national context, innovates and increases impact over time, and possesses the mission-driven leadership and organizational capacity necessary to achieve ambitious goals despite constraints
• **Independence** from the control of government and other external entities, with an autonomous Board, a diversified funding base, and the freedom to make operational decisions, challenge traditional paradigms, and sustain the model in the face of political changes
• **Partnerships with the public and private sectors** that provide the teaching placements, funding, and supportive policy environment necessary to achieve scale and sustain impact over time, while increasing accountability for results.

**The Group Of Twenty (G20)**

A Brookings Institute Report has called the Group of Twenty (G20) “the primary forum for financial diplomacy” (Jones, et. al.) and President Obama hailed it as the “premier forum for global economic coordination.” (Obama 2010). As such, it might seem an unlikely source for Promise to look to for organizational guidance. However, if one forgets for a moment that the members of the G20 are some of the world’s largest countries, the skeletal structure—a nonbinding minimalist rotating Presidency—could well be one that Promise might find efficacious. Such a structure could be implemented with minimum preparation (a Memorandum of Understanding might be all that is required) and represents a level of bureaucracy that is lightweight and suited to loosely knitting together disparate parties for a limited purpose. Even if not the best choice for a permanent Promise network, the G20 structure could be useful as an interim step.

The G20’s origins date back to 1999 when seven of the world’s top finance ministers and central bank governors gathered together to address the Asian financial crisis. In 2008, in the midst of the most recent financial crisis, the group was expanded and the first G20 Leaders Summit was held. The G20 eventually eclipsed the G7, and has evolved to broaden its mission from crisis management to facilitating collective economic cooperation and decision-making, largely through standard setting.

The G20’s membership is limited to governments and central banking authorities from 20 of the world’s economies, 19 countries and the European Union26. “It is unique in bringing together the established and emerging powers as peers” (The Stanley Foundation). The membership represents some of the largest economies as well as emerging countries from all parts of the world. Collectively, the G-20 represents 85% of the gross world product and 80% of the world’s trade and 2/3 of the world’s population.

26 The members of the G20 are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union. The number remains fixed at 20, to ensure effectiveness and continuity, and at any time, the member countries may not represent the largest economies in the world. (G20 2014).
Although often mentioned in the same vein as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Financial Stability BRD (FSB) with which it works closely, the G20 is characteristically different from these entities, which are based in treaties, meaning that they have formal budgeted organizing bodies and that legally-enforceable obligations exist between the participating countries. The G20 is a very different animal. “[I]n terms of ‘control,’ or institutionalized decision making rules, G20 agreements are made on a broad-based, informal consensus, lacking a clearly codified mechanism of decision-making rules. Without a charter, votes, or legally binding decisions, members interact as equals and the outcomes of summit meetings are announced in the form of “communiqué.” (Choe, 7). While there have been criticisms of this informality, it does allow for flexibility and political expediency.

The G20 has no permanent secretary or formal organizing entity, no budget, and participation is purely voluntary. In 2010, however, the G20 adopted a limited organizing structure designed to further its effectiveness and continuity—a rotating presidency—while avoiding a full-blown bureaucracy. In so doing, it rejected proposals for a more permanent Secretariat and staff.

The new structure has a Presidency (also at times called Chairmanship), which is rotates each year from among participating countries. The President is appointed annually according to a system that is designed to ensure a regional balance over time. To facilitate this selection, each country is grouped into four regional tracts and each year one country from each tract assumes chairmanship. The Promise programs could adopt a similar rotation system, perhaps also grouping programs by regions.

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Source: Carin 2010

To ensure continuity, the previous President and the President-elect serve as a troika, or sort of an executive committee to assist the current year President and host country, whose primary mission is to plan the annual Leaders’ Summit. The host country provides staff to support the Summit, develops the program, and funding the event. Close cooperation and communication among the troika ensure continuity between years.

The 2014 Summit is to be hosted by this year’s Chairman Australia and held in Brisbane. The other members of the troika are Russia (2013 host) and Turkey (2015 host). The host President can invite two countries that are not G20 members to the Summit. Also, representatives from organizations that the G20 works closely with, including the IMF and FSB are regularly included as are representatives from non-member counties.27 The host country also coordinates a series of five engagement groups that the G20 has developed to add the voice of non-governmental groups to the Leaders’ discussions at the Summit.28 Australia has further committed to developing a website that

27 Each year the invited guests include: Spain (a permanent invitee); the Chair of Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN); two African countries (the chair of the African Union and a representative of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)) and up to two countries invited by the presidency, usually from its own region. (G20 2014).

28 These five groups are the Business 20 (B20) for the private sector, Civil 20 (C20) for civil society, Labour 20 (L20) for labour organisations, Think 20 (T20) for thought leaders and Youth 20 (Y20) for young people. (G20 2014).
not only which serve as a resource for the 2014 Summit but which would also be easy for future hosts to customize and serve as a repository of historical materials that future hosts could update and pass on.

While the G20 structure has not gone without criticism, it has proven an effective structure for maintaining continuity and for engagement. When Australia’s Foreign Minister Julie Bishop suggested that Russia not be permitted to attend the 2014 Summit because of its role in Crimea, G20 members pushed back and ultimately Bishop had to admit—”[In the] case of the G20, Australia is the host but we don’t have the right to rescind invitations that have been sent. That would have to be a consensus view within the G20 and there isn’t that consensus.” (Sexton-McGrath 2014).

**A Final Consideration**

Several Promise leaders expressed that they didn’t want a central organization that would “dictate” what form the local programs had to assume or force programs to “fit a narrow model”. Oppressive bureaucracy in any form was to be avoided. Yet, there was also significant sentiment that more formality might make the Promise model (with all its innovations) more accessible to aspiring cities and facilitate the sharing of best practices on an ongoing basis by existing programs, not just at the annual conference. Other persons indicated that the network was “already going down the road” towards greater connectivity, but much hesitation was expressed about where that road might lead. While none of the three network structures presented herein may seem an obvious, or perfect, choice for PromiseNet, considered scrutiny and thoughtful deliberation might well result in a design based predominately on one, or borrowing from all three, that would address PromiseNet’s current needs and future aspirations.

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<td><a href="http://www.grfoundation.org/challengescholars">http://www.grfoundation.org/challengescholars</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hartford Promise (CT)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.achievehartford.org/upload/files/Hartford%20Promise%20FAQ.pdf">http://www.achievehartford.org/upload/files/Hartford%20Promise%20FAQ.pdf</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Norwood Promise (OH)</td>
<td><a href="http://norwoodpromise.com/">http://norwoodpromise.com/</a></td>
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<td><strong>2014</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tennessee Promise (Statewide)</td>
<td><a href="http://tennesseepromise.gov/about.shtml">http://tennesseepromise.gov/about.shtml</a></td>
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</table>

**Getting Started Strand: Assessing Your Community's “Promise Potential”**

For those who are in the early stages of considering or developing a Promise program, the "Getting Started" strand of three sessions offers the opportunity to connect with people at a similar stage while acquiring the tools to move your community forward.

- What is the critical need your community hopes to address with its Promise program?
- Who are the key stakeholders who should be involved, and what is the best way for creating a leadership group?
- What are some effective strategies for moving your community forward through the planning period to the launch of your program?

**Facilitated by:**

- **Janice Brown**, Executive Director of the Kalamazoo Promise
- **Chuck Wilbur**, Senior Policy Consultant, Public Policy Associates

**Tours**

**The Greening of Pittsburgh**

In the late 1860s, as hundreds of factories belched thick black smoke over Pittsburgh, author James Parton dubbed it “hell with the lid off” (Parton 1868). Today Pittsburgh is regularly awarded accolades as the Best Place to Live in the US. The city has made remarkable strides to clean its rivers, air and land. Now a leader in green buildings, Pittsburgh has shown that building green can reduce energy demand, curb global warming emissions, save consumers money on utility bills, and stimulate a green economy. Join Mike Schiller, CEO of the Green Building Alliance, and explore downtown Pittsburgh by boat, traveling all three rivers (Allegheny, Monongahela, Ohio) while discussing green building, clean rivers, Pittsburgh history and all things “sustainable.”

**Museums of National Distinction**

The Pittsburgh Children's Museum, ranked in the top 10 of children's museums in the United States, the Pittsburgh Children's museum is an award-winning facility with innovative programs designed to inspire joy, creativity and curiosity. The Andy Warhol Museum is the largest single-artist museum in the country, where visitors get to view the bold, quirky, and sometimes humorous work of Pittsburgh-native Andy Warhol.

**A New Way of Thinking About and Doing 6th through 12th Education**

Pittsburgh Public Schools – new Science & Technology Academy. In 2006, the Pittsburgh Public Schools embarked on an ambitious agenda to dramatically improve the performance of students, teachers, and staff to enable every student to achieve at high levels through high school and beyond. As part of this reform agenda, PPS developed the Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy, a unique pre-college education environment that attracts a diverse mix of students who possess interest in and inclination toward the sciences and mathematics. Its student body is racially, ethnically, and economically diverse, and its faculty includes former and current professors from Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh.

**Pittsburgh's New Economy –**

Learn how the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), Education and the Technology Industry have transformed the local economy. Pittsburgh has transformed an economy built on manufacturing, finance and energy by adding new industries in medicine, research and leading technologies and investing in a high quality of life. Join regional expert, Bill Flanagan, Executive Vice President, Allegheny Conference on Community Development for this discussion.
Thursday, October 20  Morning Sessions

**Getting Started Strand: Making Your Community “College-Ready”**
Your K-12 schools, post-secondary institutions and community organizations will be critical partners in a successful Promise program. It is never too early to think about your community’s assets and needs around the question of college readiness.

- What does a college-going culture look like?
- Where does your community stand on college readiness resources, and what additional resources may be needed?
- What do higher education partners need to do to support the success of Promise students?

**Facilitated by:**
- Louise Myrland, Director of Scholarship and Evaluation, Denver Scholarship Foundation
- Dr. Michele Scott Taylor, Chief Program Officer, College Now Greater Cleveland
- Steve Thorndill, Director of Scholarship Services, College Success Foundation
- Roslynn Wilson, Director of Specialized Programs, Community College of Allegheny County

**Creating a College Going Culture in Your Schools**
Promise programs raise the stakes for local school districts already struggling with low graduation rates. Hear from school leaders about how a college-going culture can be created within a K through 12 system and how Promise programs can act as a catalyst for school reform.

- What does a college-going culture look like in a K-12 system?
- How can K through 12 school districts best prepare their students to make the most of a Promise-type program?
- What are the most promising strategies for supporting academic, social, and behavioral college readiness in a K through 12 setting?
- What role do career awareness programs play in preparing students for higher education?

**Facilitated by:**
- Jeanine French, Chief of School Performance, Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Michael Rice, Superintendent, Kalamazoo Public Schools
- Robert Watson, Superintendent, El Dorado School District

**Enlisting the Community in Support of Students**
A Promise community requires a focus on student success that extends beyond the formal school system to encompass nonprofit and faith-based organizations and families. Most communities have a variety of services available to support students; the challenge is how to deploy them for greatest effectiveness and align them with the overall Promise effort.

- What does a comprehensive system of community support for students from pre-K through college look like?
- What are some alternative strategies for the delivery of support services? (e.g., school based v. community based models)
- What are the most promising strategies for engaging families to support student success?

**Facilitated by:**
- Pam Kingery, Executive Director, Communities in Schools of Kalamazoo
- Angela Kremers, Senior Associate for Education, Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation

**The Economic Development Potential of Promise Programs**
Most Promise programs seek not just to improve opportunities for young people but also to energize and strengthen a community’s economy and enhance its attractiveness to residents and businesses.

- How can a Promise program contribute to your community’s economic development goals?
- What are the most promising models for engaging business and local/state government as critical partners?
- How will the community hold itself accountable for progress? (the role of evaluation)

**Facilitated by:**
Concurrent Sessions • Thursday 10:30 A.M.-12:00 P.M.

**What it Takes: A College-going Culture**

*Dr. Michael Rice, Superintendent, Kalamazoo Public Schools*

*Facilitator: Patricia Coles-Chalmers, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning Services, Kalamazoo Public Schools*

Join Dr. Rice and other school leaders to hear about the hard work it takes to move a large urban district forward. Using a complex and multi-faceted approach, Dr. Rice will discuss both the challenges and opportunities associated with being the leader of a school system preparing all students to be college-ready. Facing tremendous pressure to constantly improve results for student learning, the pressure becomes even greater when the bar is raised and expectations for all youth to attend college are held. From a district perspective, Dr. Rice will discuss specific strategies that have yielded great results in district culture, student achievement and community support. District initiatives such as early childhood, early elementary, community involvement and advance placement courses will be shared. Members of the audience will share ideas and challenges, and have an opportunity to dialogue around this important topic.

*Room: Great Lakes V*
*Strand: Student Support: K-12*

**What Do Students Need Most to Succeed in College?**

*Student Panel Members: Michelle Brenes, Michael Johnson, Lauryn Scott, and Alonzo Wilson II*

*Facilitator: Pam Kingery, Executive Director, Kalamazoo Community in Schools*

A panel of recipients of the Kalamazoo Promise attending higher education institutions that are located in other cities in Michigan will discuss their experiences in attending college away from their home community of Kalamazoo. What have their support needs been and how have they been met or not? Looking back, what supports would have been helpful throughout K-12 in order to be “college-ready?”

*Room: Great Lakes III*
*Strand: Student Support: K-12*

**Destination Branding**

*Greg Ayers, President, Discover Kalamazoo*

*Facilitator: Lila Phillips, Executive Director, El Dorado Education Foundation, AR*

Branding products has been a part of our culture for decades. A relatively new phenomenon has been to brand destinations. Through strategic planning and research, a new destination brand theme and identity were developed for the Greater Kalamazoo region to market and sell the destination to current and potential visitors. In this session, Discover Kalamazoo will present the steps utilized to engage the community and include The Kalamazoo Promise in its process. Presenters will also discuss how the inclusion of higher education has impacted its target audiences.

*Room: Great Lakes I*
*Strand: Core City*

**Evaluating the Kalamazoo Promise**

*Randy Eberts, President, W.E. Upjohn Institute and Gary Miron, Professor, Western Michigan University*

*Facilitator: Michelle Miller-Adams, Visiting Scholar, W.E. Upjohn Institute*

This session will survey what researchers are learning about the Kalamazoo Promise, now in its fifth year. Representatives of the W.E. Upjohn Institute and Western Michigan University will present data covering a range of outcomes, including who is using the Promise, how the scholarship is affecting enrollment in KPS, and how students, teachers, and parents are responding to the program. Bring your questions and results from your own communities, as there will be plenty of opportunity for dialogue.

*Room: Great Lakes IV*
*Strand: Research and Evaluation*
Concurrent Sessions • Thursday (session descriptions continued page 15)

**Regional Economic Development: National and Local Perspectives**

Dave Tomko, Regional President, PNC; Lori Jewell, Great Lakes Zone Manager of Public Affairs and Alyssa Bisanz, current national State Farm Youth Advisory Board, State Farm; Don Wales, President, El Dorado Chamber of Commerce, AR; Steward Sandstrom, President & CEO, Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce

Facilitator: George Erickcek, Sr. Research Analyst, W.E. Upjohn Institute

This session is focused on the intention of regional/business organizations to leverage education as a commodity in their community. Participants from the business sector will discuss a variety of strategies they are using to put education at the center of economic development. How these organizations communicate and market scholarship programs will also be discussed. With the eventual goal of retaining and bringing businesses and professionals into the community to improve economic development, these organizations have leveraged education in many of their daily activities in some creative and useful ways. These presenters will discuss their ideas and leave plenty of time for dialogue and audience ideas.

Room: Great Lakes II
Strand: Economic Development

**Fostering A College-going Culture within Communities & K-12 Schools**

Sue Byers, College Success Foundation, WA and Pam Kingery, Executive Director, Kalamazoo Communities in Schools

Facilitator: Eddy Jones, Project Manager, Pittsburgh Public Schools, PA

Students continue to be divided into two groups – those who take for granted they will be going to college and those will think that college is for others, not them. Just as previous generations had to create an assumption that everyone would attend and graduate from high school, we must create an expectation that all students will prepare themselves for education beyond high school. This session will be a facilitated discussion among participants on successful strategies for shifting to a college-going culture in communities and school districts.

Room: Great Lakes III
Strand: Student Support

**Secondary Schools: Doing Things Differently**

Timon Kendall, Director of Secondary Education, Kalamazoo Public Schools; Johnny Edwards, Principal, Loy Norrix High School; Jennifer Iriti, University of Pittsburgh; Von Washington, Principal, Kalamazoo Central High School

Facilitator: Patricia Coles-Chalmers, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning Services, Kalamazoo Public Schools

Presenters in this session will share ways and ideas for increasing student achievement at the secondary level. There will be a discussion on raising student expectations to prepare students for college. Panelists will join with the audience in answering some hard questions about the most effective ways to get more students on the path for success. Come to this lively discussion to hear about actual implementation of the most effective methods being used at the high school level today.

Room: Great Lakes I
Strand: K-12

1:30-2:45 P.M.

**Community Alignment: Bringing All the Stakeholders Onboard**

Janice Brown, Executive Director, The Kalamazoo Promise; Bobby Hopewell, Mayor, City of Kalamazoo; Juan Olivarez, President & CEO, Kalamazoo Community Foundation; Michael Rice, Superintendent, Kalamazoo Public Schools; Sheri Welsh, Welsh & Associates

Facilitator: Janice Brown, Executive Director, The Kalamazoo Promise

Important to the work of promise-type programs is creating a collective vision that aligns stakeholders, develops communication systems, gets to the grass roots, prioritizes projects and creates accountabilities. During this session you will be able to discuss community alignment with the group of community leaders undertaking this process in the Kalamazoo area. Beginning in 2006, it was clear that The Kalamazoo Promise was much more than a scholarship program. Creating the strategic priorities was the first step in this process, and this alignment group has used these priorities in the development of its framework. Find out who is involved, how the work is being done and what the anticipated process will do for this community, and why it is necessary to those communities involved in the development of a promise-type initiative.

Room: Great Lakes II
Strand: Core City