

OCTOBER 28-30, 2025

Cradle-to-Career Fellowship Site Visit

Spartanburg, South Carolina

Welcome

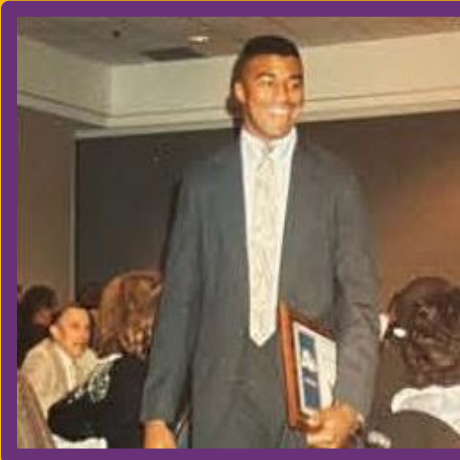


MY HOMETOWN

“Sparkle City”

“Hub City”

There's Only One.
Spartanburg.

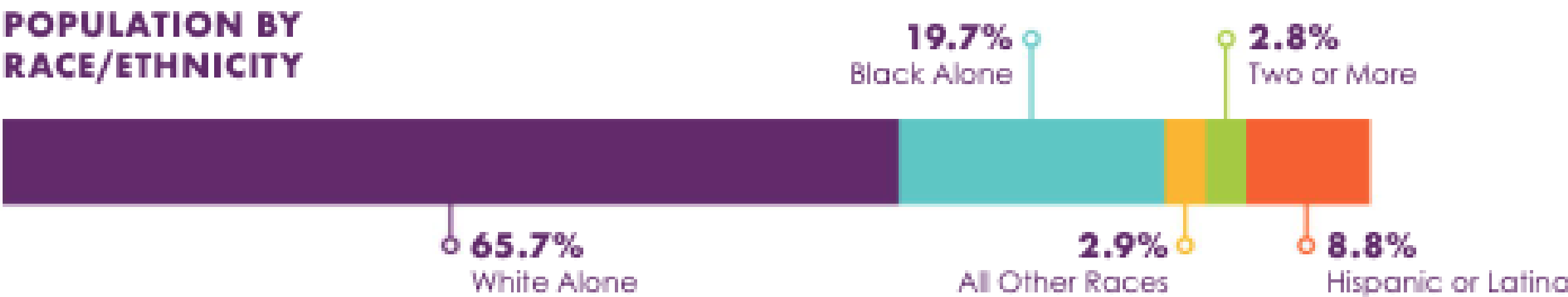


COUNTY-WIDE CONTEXT

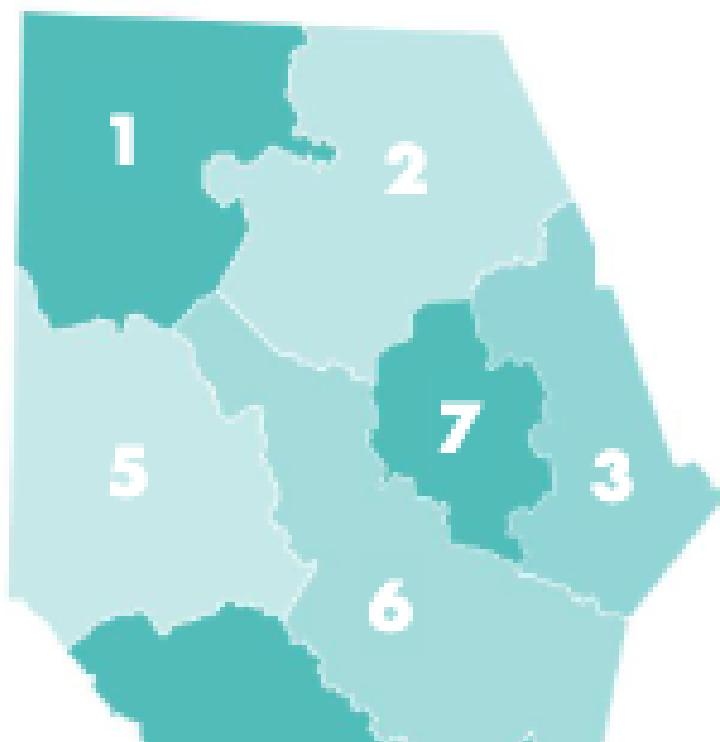
BY THE NUMBERS



MEDIAN INCOME
\$64,195



Source: American Community Survey 2023 5-year estimates

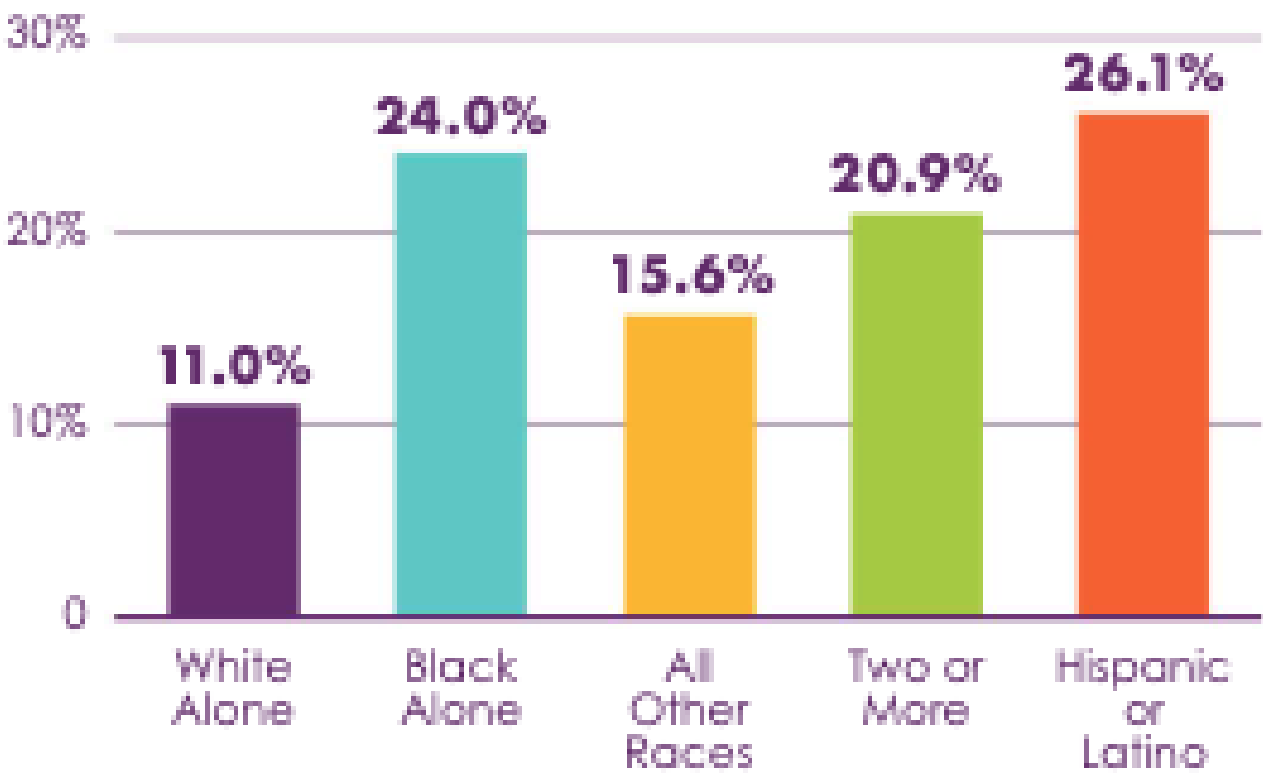


- DISTRICT 1**
5,417 students
Inman, Landrum, Campobello
- DISTRICT 2**
11,897 students
Boiling Springs, Chesnee
- DISTRICT 3**
2,819 students
Cowpens, Pacolet
- DISTRICT 4**
2,886 students
Woodruff
- DISTRICT 5**
10,670 students
Duncan, Lyman, Wellford

SCHOOLS
73
DISTRICTS
7
TEACHERS
4,400+

POVERTY BY RACE

Overall, **14.5%** of our population lives below federal poverty levels



CHILDREN

78,194
children under 18 years of age in Spartanburg County



Founded in 1854, Wofford College is one of the few four-year institutions in the southeastern United States founded before the American Civil War that still operates on its original campus.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PROVIDERS

There are five undergraduate educational institutions in Spartanburg County which together enroll **more than 16,000 students annually**. Two additional institutions, VCOM and Sherman College, serve post-baccalaureate students only and focus on healthcare. These seven institutions provide significant leadership to the higher education sector in the county and serve many Spartanburg County students.

Source: South Carolina Commission on Higher Education; *Fall 2024 (self-reported)

UNDERGRADUATE-SERVING INSTITUTIONS

FALL 2023 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT



1,129
STUDENTS



6,330
STUDENTS



1,029
STUDENTS



4,923
STUDENTS



1,873
STUDENTS

POST-BACCALAUREATE INSTITUTIONS

FALL 2023 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT



644*
STUDENTS

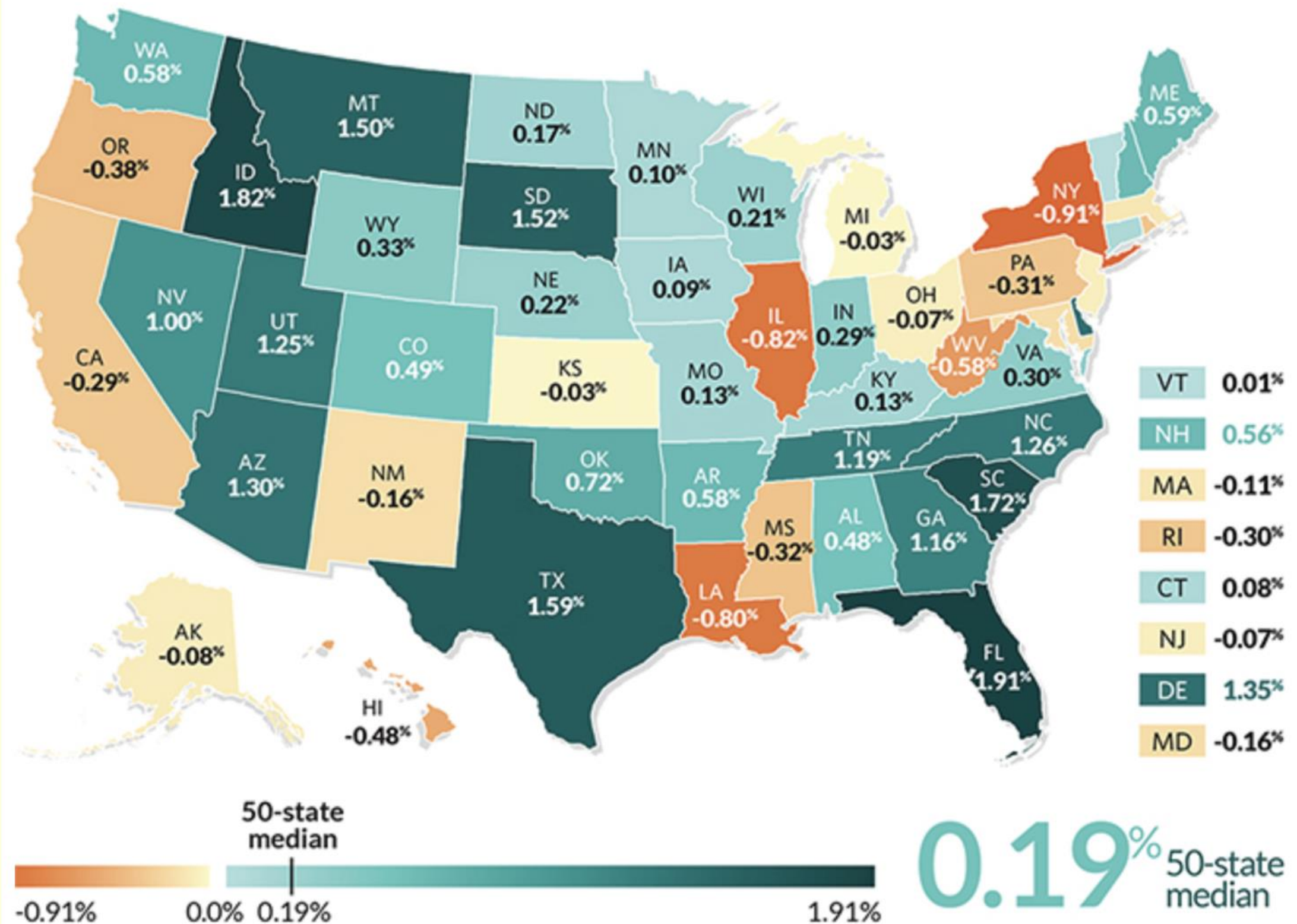


381
STUDENTS

POPULATION GROWTH

Spartanburg ranks as one of the fastest growing counties in South Carolina.

18 States Lost Population Over the Past Year
Percentage change in state population, July 2021-July 2022



Source: Pew analysis of U.S. Census Bureau estimated annual data

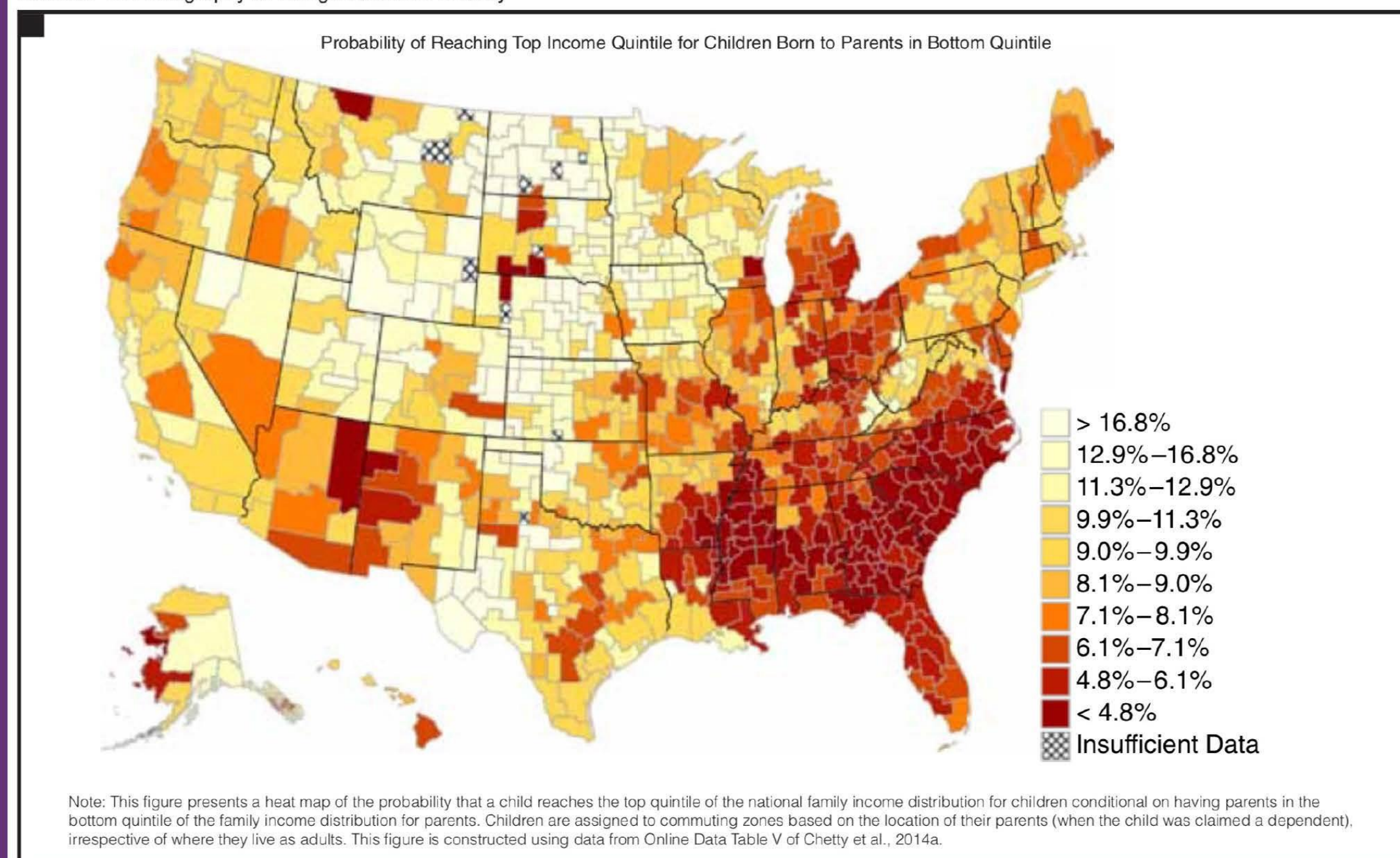
© 2023 The Pew Charitable Trusts

YET,

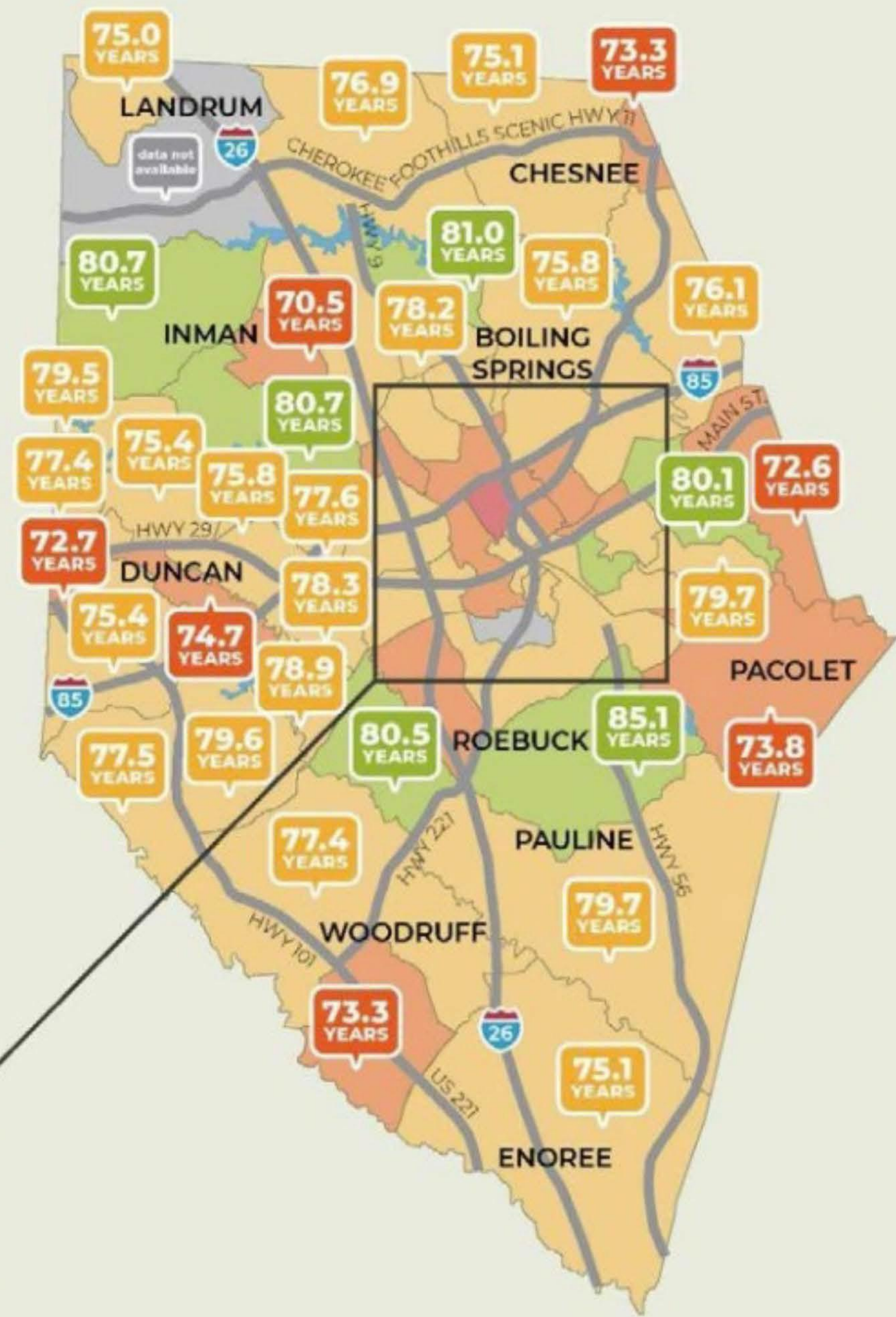
Spartanburg ranks in the bottom 10% of counties nationwide for economic mobility outcomes.

3,023/3,220

FIGURE 5. The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility



Source: Chetty et al., 2014a.



... and disparities in outcomes persist across our county

17+ Year Gap

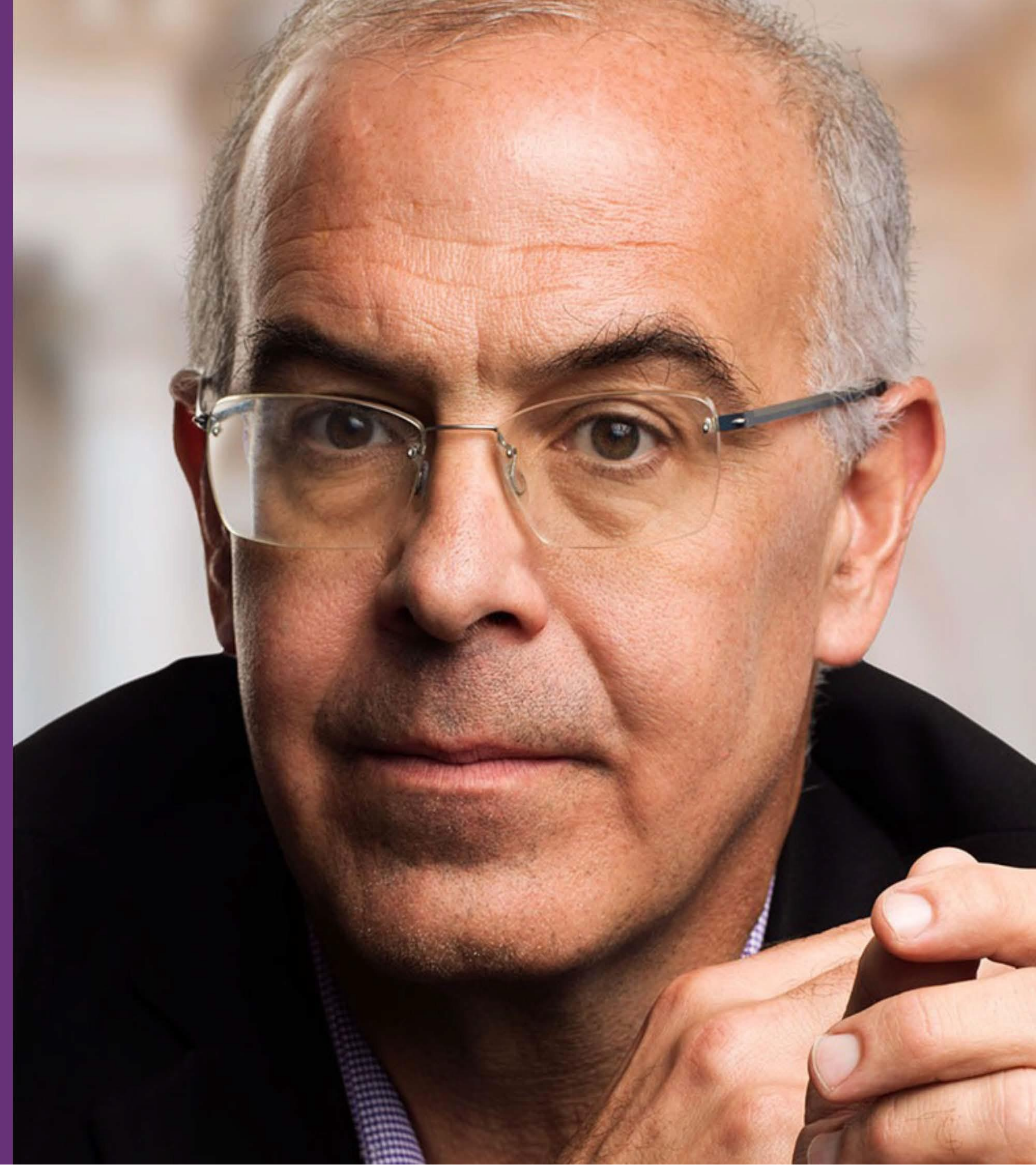
Life Expectancy Between Communities

A REALLY GOOD THING HAPPENING IN AMERICA

**A strategy for community
problem-solving does an
extraordinary job at restoring
our social fabric.**

New York Times—Published Oct. 8, 2018

David Brooks



- The network of relationships, trust, shared values, norms, and institutions that connect people and communities.
- The underlying structure that enables neighborhoods, families, schools, and organizations to collaborate, support one another, and cultivate a sense of belonging and shared responsibility.



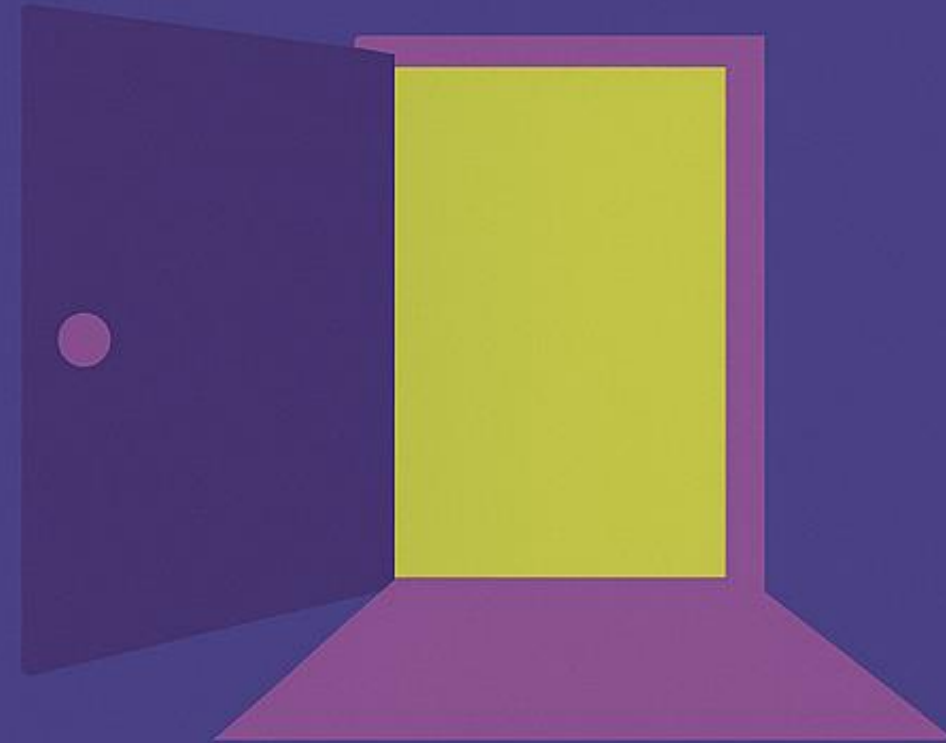
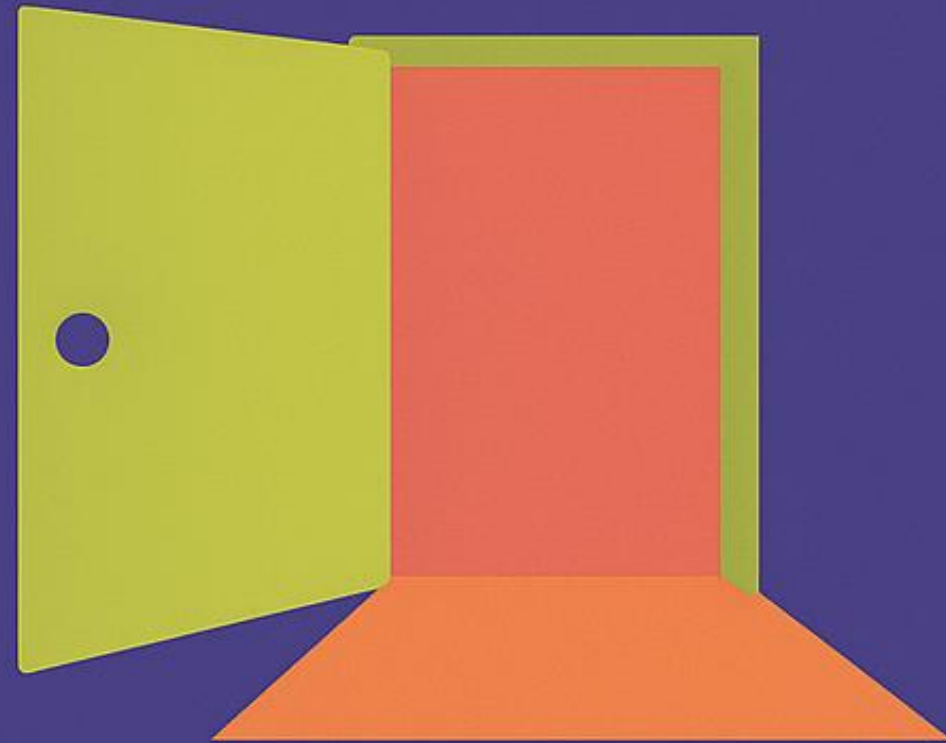
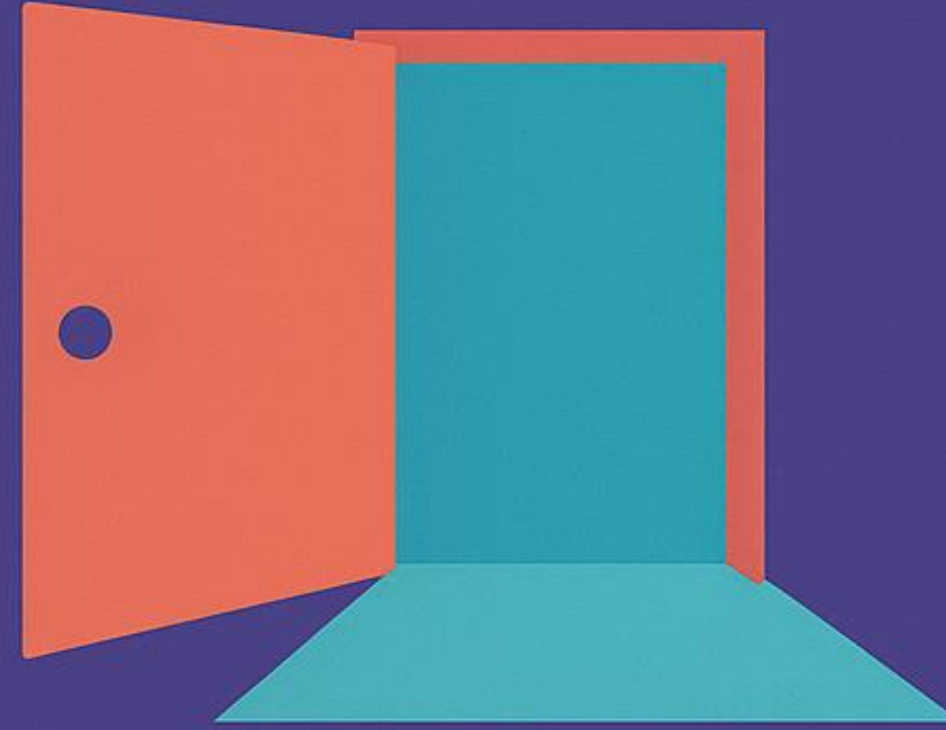
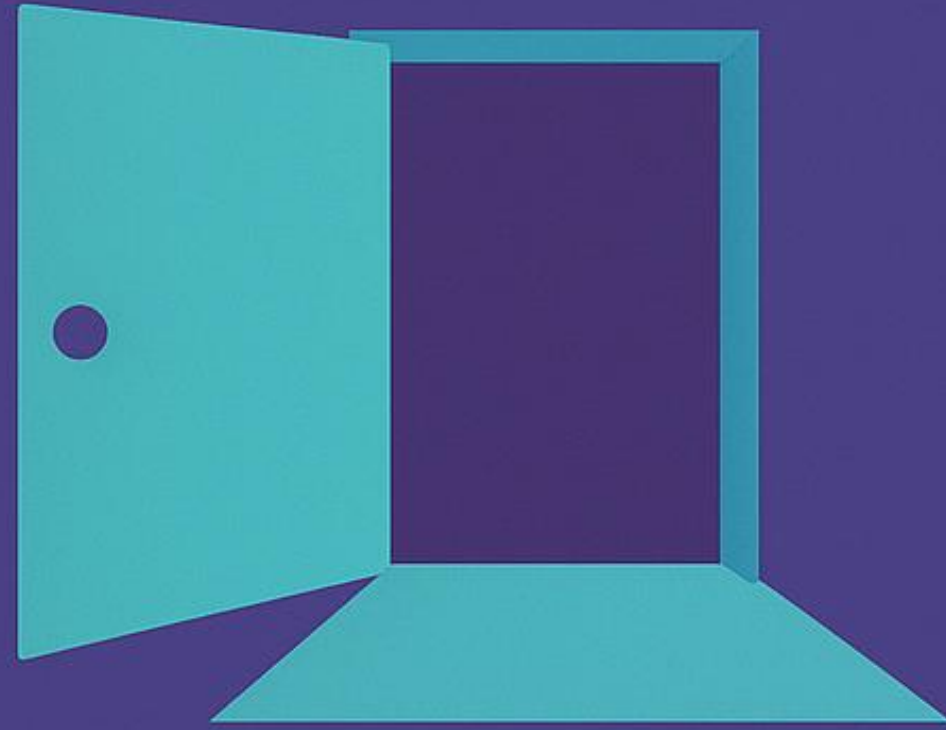
WEAVING OUR SOCIAL FABRIC







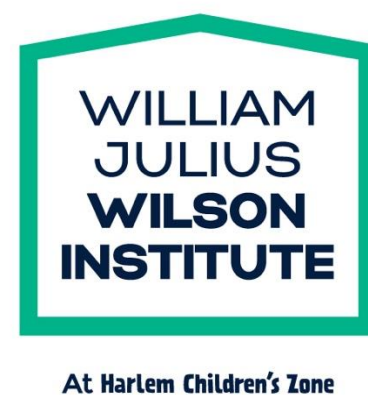
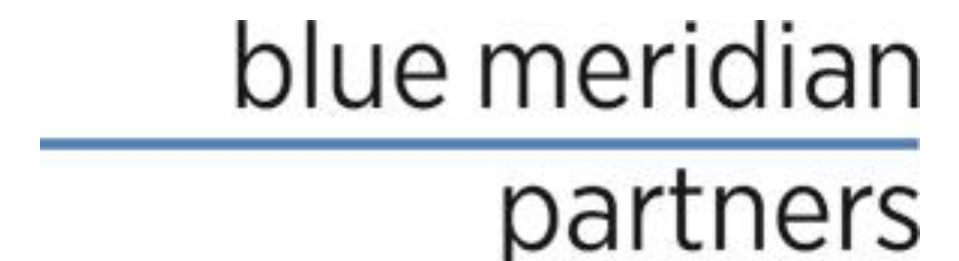
NO WRONG↑ DOORS



STRONG NATIONAL PARTNERS



**SPARTANBURG
ACADEMIC MOVEMENT**



HOW WE DRIVE IMPACT

We advance impact through a cycle of scaling outcomes and expanding influence

SCALING OUTCOMES

Population-level
outcomes change

Increased reach

EXPANDING INFLUENCE

Systems and policy change

Leverage of public and
private resources

“

**Not long ago, in
Spartanburg, S.C., I visited
the offices of something
called the Spartanburg
Academic Movement (SAM).**

DAVID BROOKS

#1 New York Times bestselling author
of *The Road to Character*

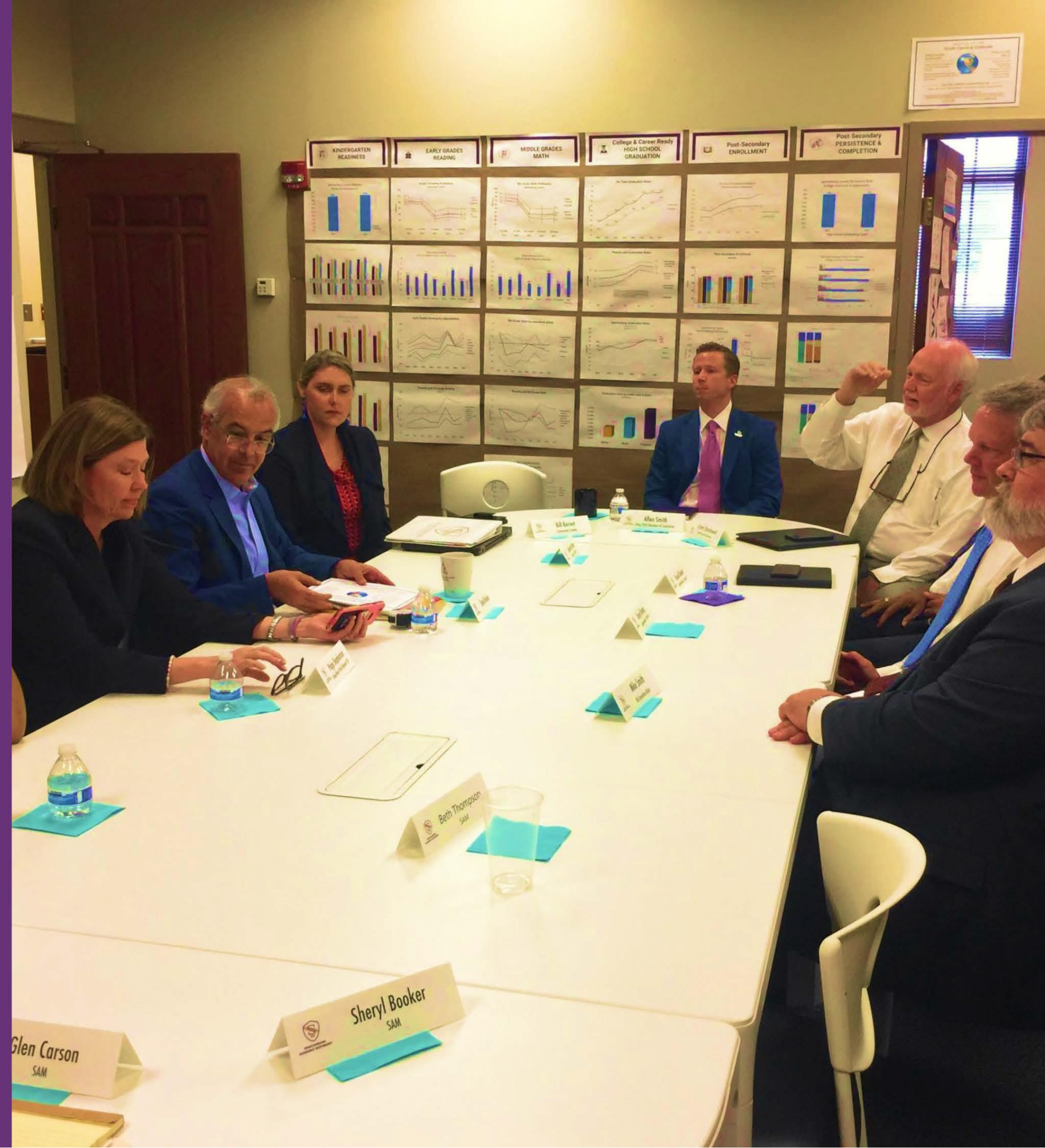
**DAVID
BROOKS**

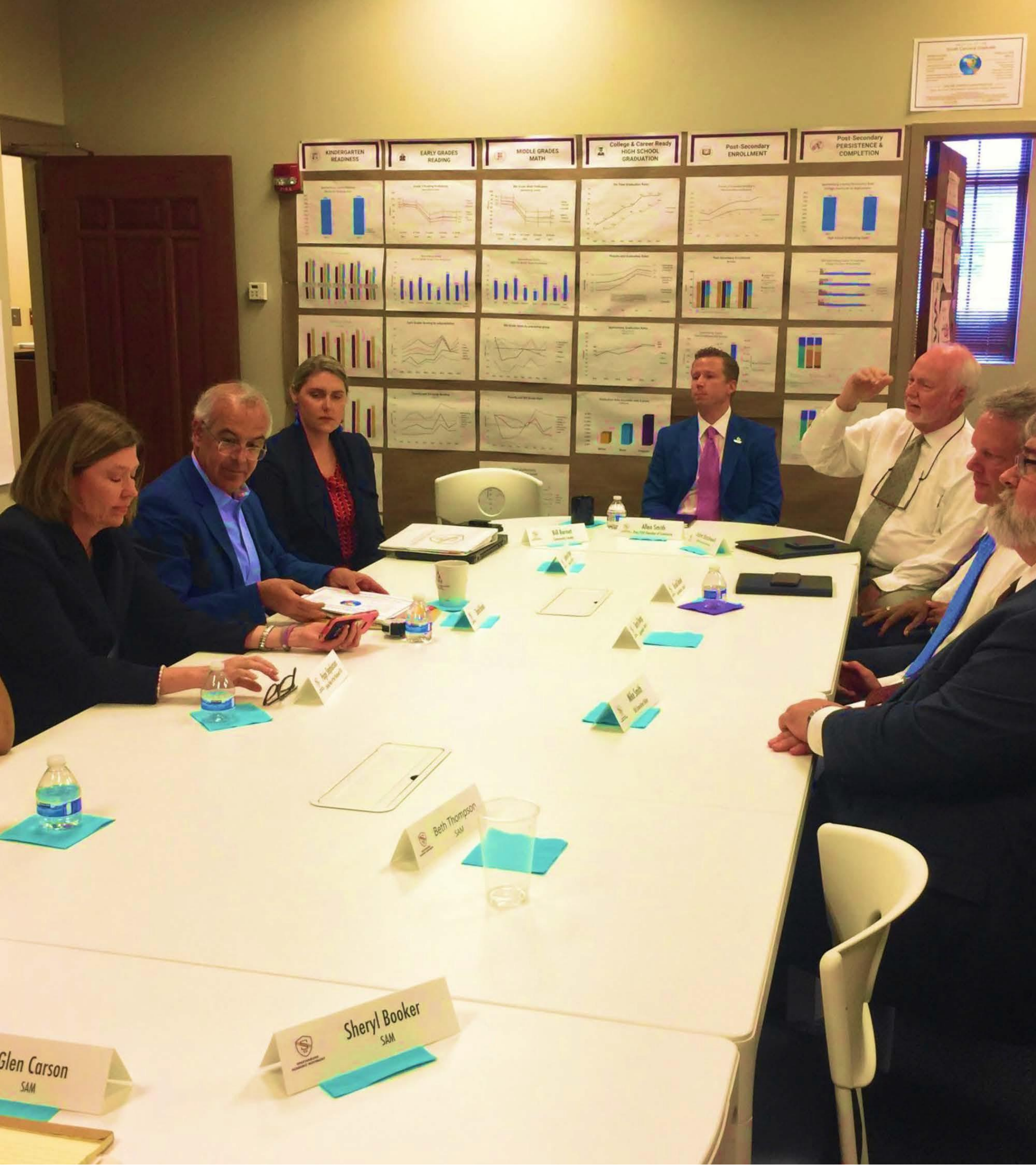
**THE
SECOND
MOUNTAIN**

The Quest for a Moral Life

“

Around the table was just about anybody in town who might touch a child's life. There were school superintendents and principals, but there were also the heads of the Chamber of Commerce and the local United Way, the police chief, a former mayor and the newspaper editor, someone from the healthcare sector, and a bunch of statisticians.





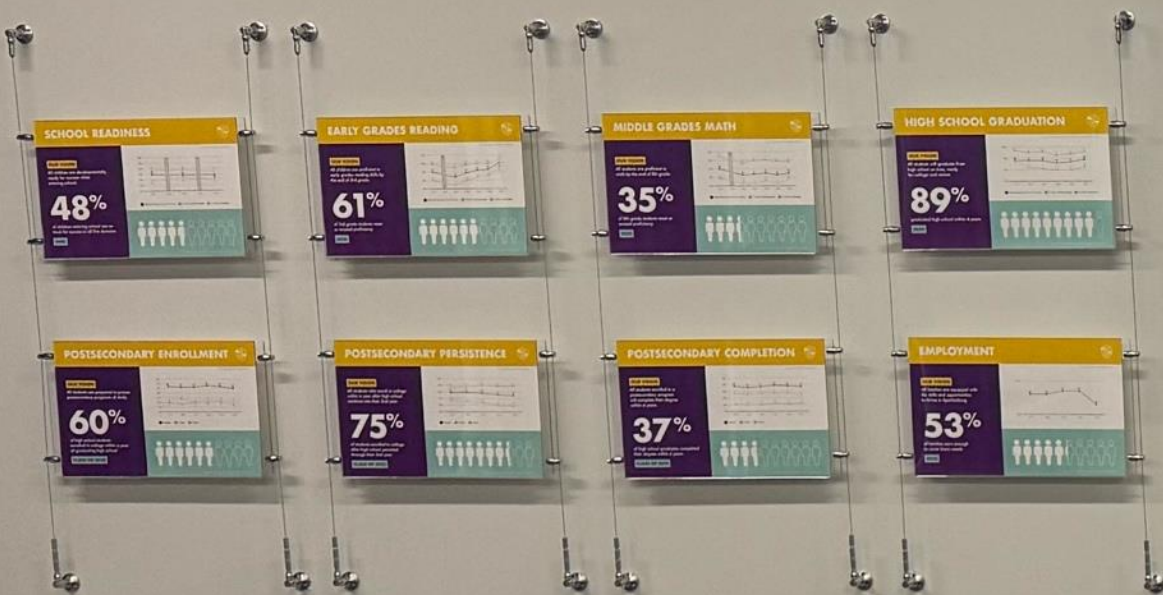
“

The walls were lined with charts measuring things like kindergarten readiness, third-grade reading scores and postsecondary enrollment. They gather everybody who might have any influence upon this data...

And then together, as a communitywide system, they ask questions...

PURSuing

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



OCTOBER 28-30, 2025

Cradle-to-Career Fellowship Site Visit

Spartanburg, South Carolina

Together, we're turning collective impact into collective success.

Welcome to Spartanburg and SAM.

EdRedesign

SPARTANBURG ACADEMIC MOVEMENT

DRIVING

LASTING ACHIEVEMENT



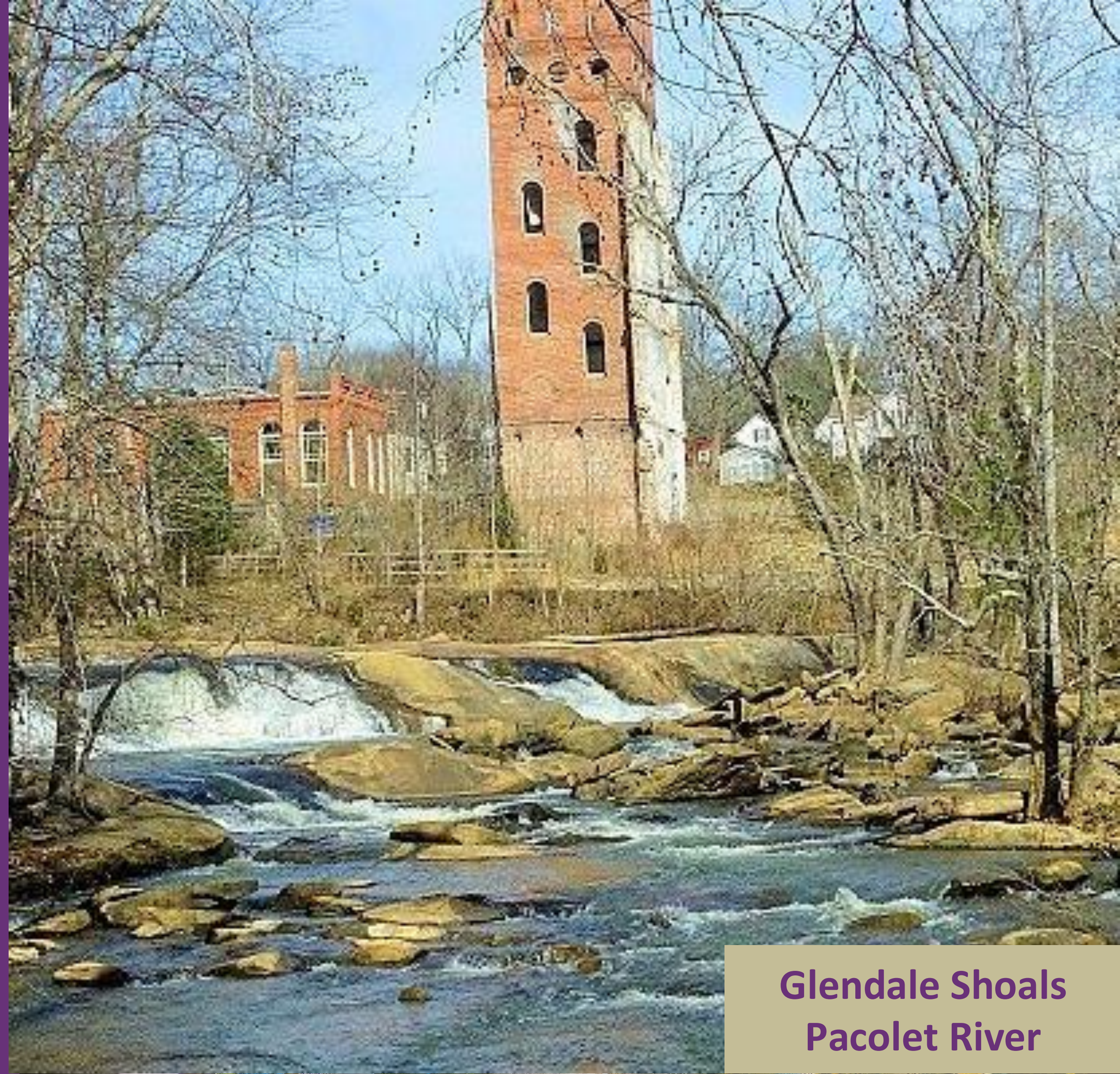
“

**There are a lot of
things I love about
this approach.**

“

First, it understands that life is longitudinal...Our actual lives are influenced by millions of events that interact in mysterious ways.

And when life is going well it's because dozens of influences are flowing together and reinforcing one another. SAM tries to harness those dozens of influences.



**Glendale Shoals
Pacolet River**

“

Second, SAM treats the whole person...Children don't leave behind their emotions, their diet, their traumas, their safety fears, their dental problems and so on when they get to school.

If you're going to help kids, you have to help the whole kid all at once.



“

Third, and maybe most important, SAM embodies a **new civic architecture**, which has become known as the “**collective impact**” approach.

SAM organizes the community of Spartanburg around a **common project**. Then it creates an informal authority structure that transcends public-sector/private-sector lines, that rallies cops and churches, the grass roots and the grass tops.



United Way, Superintendent, Neighborhood, Researcher, Deputy City Manager, Community, Foundation, Chamber, Mayor, SAM

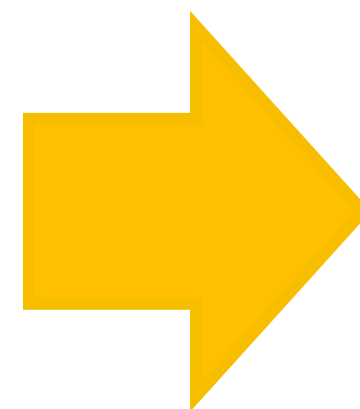
**Which
Comes
First?**



The Nest!



A NEW CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE





Disorder and Confusion



Isolated Impact



Alignment

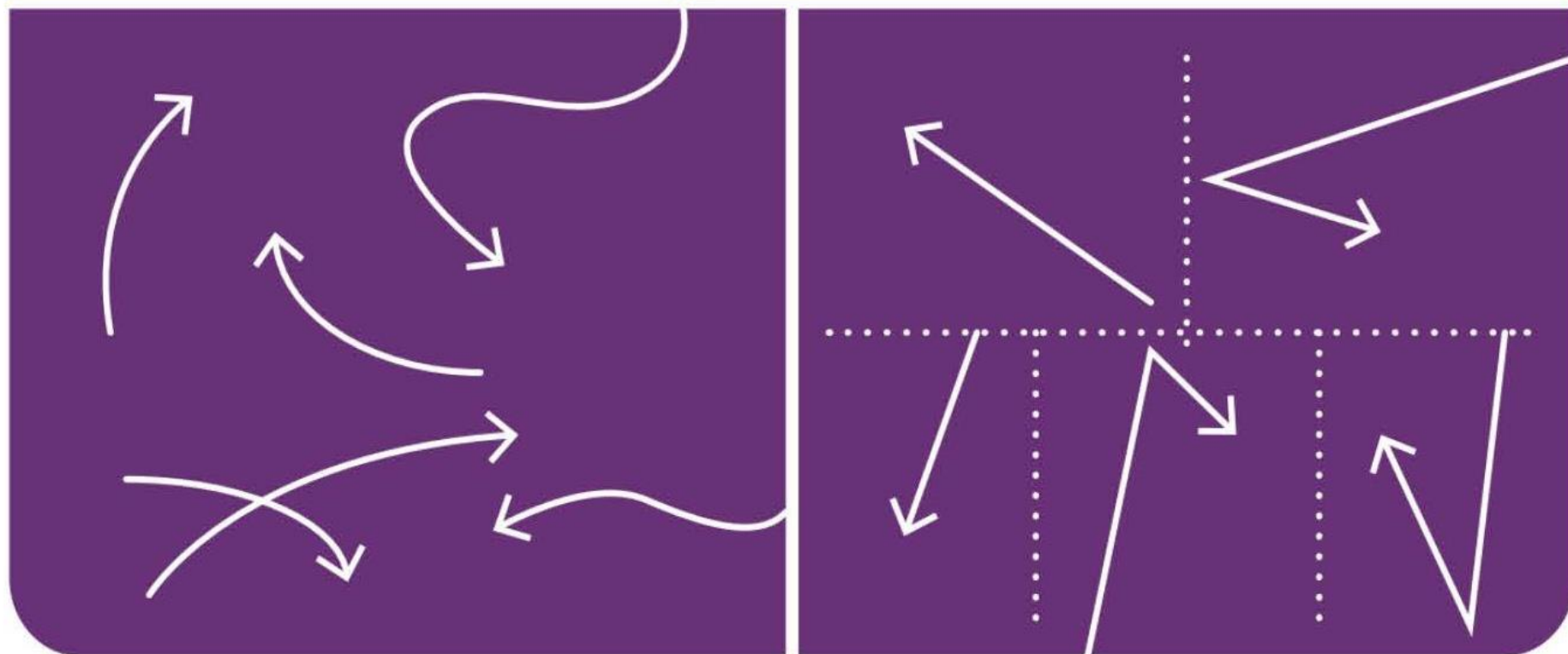


Collective Impact

Aligning our educational ecosystem...



OLD/CURRENT BEHAVIOR

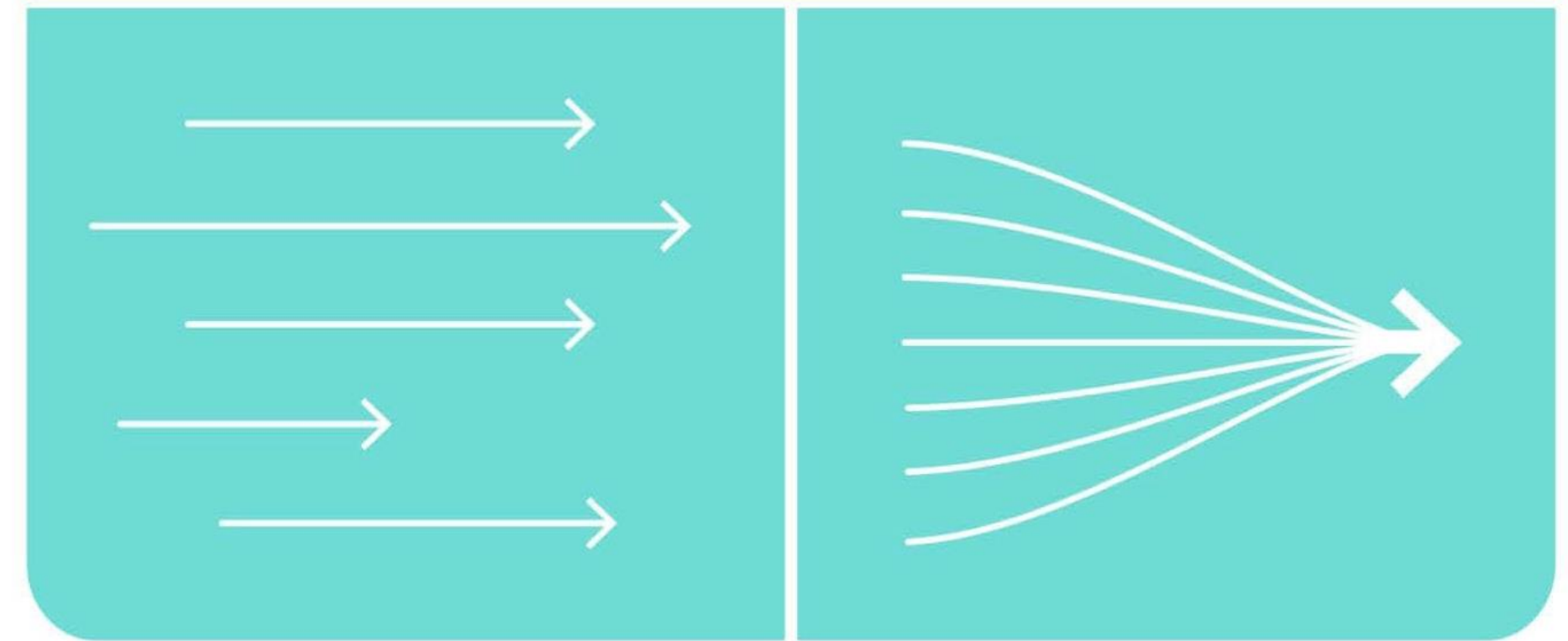


DISORDER & CONFUSION

ISOLATION



NEW BEHAVIOR



ALIGNMENT

COLLECTIVE IMPACT



SAM's Vision



**Advanced opportunity, anchored
in academic achievement –
countywide, cradle through
career**

WHY WE EXIST



T

MISSION

Ensure Spartanburg County's children and youth reach academic and life success by convening partners, aligning resources, and advancing opportunity for all.

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OUTCOMES

SCALE

SUSTAINABILITY

LEADERSHIP

ORGANIZATIONAL
HEALTH

Changes in the
conditions and
well-being of the
target population

Expansion
of programs,
practices, policies,
etc. benefiting a
significant portion
of the target
population

Renewable and
reliable revenue
sources to
cover ongoing
organizational
costs and financial
well-being

CEO and
leadership team
with the vision,
values, experience,
expertise, and
dispositions
(especially
learning) to scale
equitable impact in
evolving contexts

Organizational
capacities to
sustain outcomes
at scale, including
leadership and
board composition
and capacity,
talent, technology,
and organizational
strategy and
infrastructure



SAM'S EVOLUTION



Children's
Services
Alliance



**SPARTANBURG
ACADEMIC MOVEMENT**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PHIL FEISAL, CHAIR

President
Spartanburg Medical Center

KIRA REAVES, E.D.D., SECRETARY

Chief Human Resources Officer
Spartanburg School District 7

INGO ANGERMEIER, PH.D., TREASURER

Founder
Patient Strategies International

B. COLE ALVERSON

Spartanburg County Administrator

DON BEATTY

Retired Supreme Court Chief Justice

CATHERINE BASS BLACK

Odgers Berndston

SHAUNTE EVANS

Chief Executive Officer
Spartanburg Housing

RANDALL GARY, ED.D.

Superintendent
Spartanburg District 5

TROY HANNA

President & Chief Executive Officer
The Spartanburg County Foundation

BENNIE HARRIS, PH.D.

Chancellor
University of South Carolina Upstate

ARACELI HERNANDEZ-LAROCHE, PH.D.

Director
SC Centro Latino Alianza Spartanburg

JACK MCBRIDE

Co-Founder,
Contec

G. MICHAEL MIKOTA, PH.D.

President
Spartanburg Community College

BETSY NEELY SIKMA

Senior Director - Communications
Milliken & Company

ALLEN SMITH

President
OneSpartanburg, Inc.

R. TODD STEPHENS

County Librarian
Spartanburg County Public Libraries

PAIGE STEPHENSON

President & CEO
United Way of the Piedmont

JOHN STOCKWELL, PH.D.

Founding Executive Director

MOLLY TALBOT-METZ

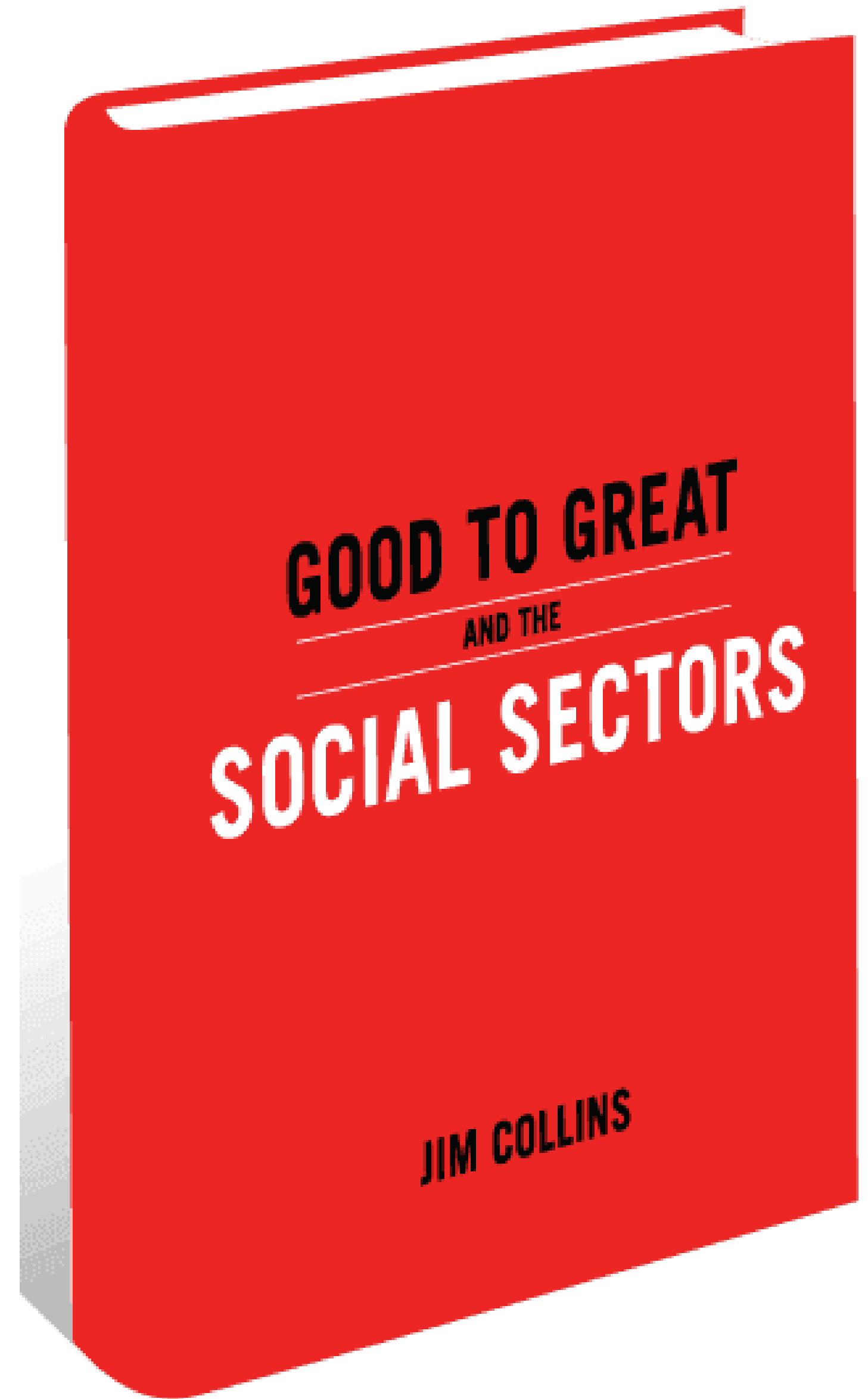
President & CEO
Mary Black Foundation

***WILLIAM BARNET III**

***SUSU JOHNSON**

*Emeriti

FIRST WHO THEN WHAT





SAM Founding Director Dr. John Stockwell
2017 Cradle to Career Champion



Michael McAfee & Sondra Samuels

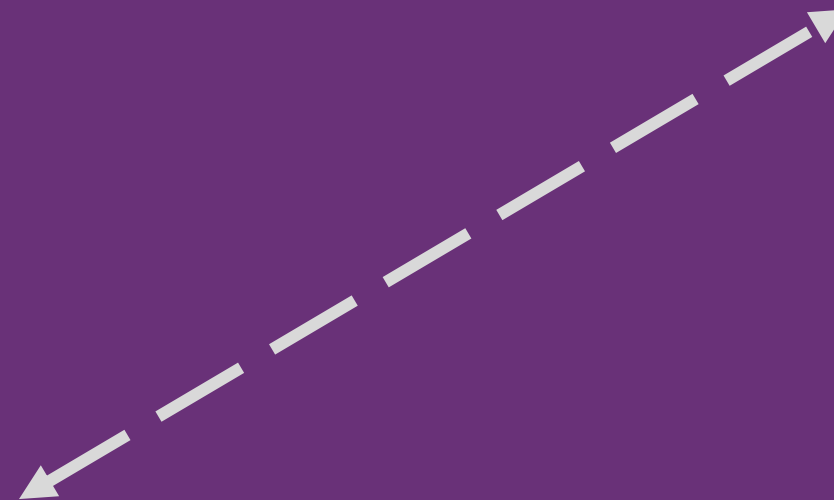
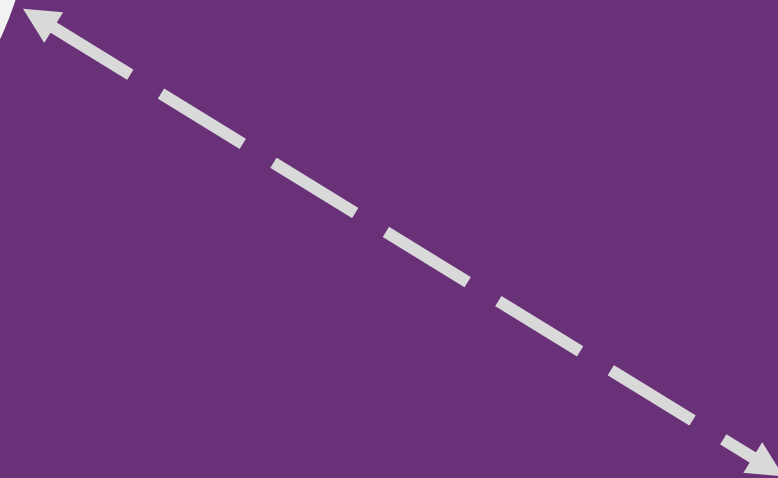
2017 StriveTogether Convening



Mark Sturgis & Keisha Gray

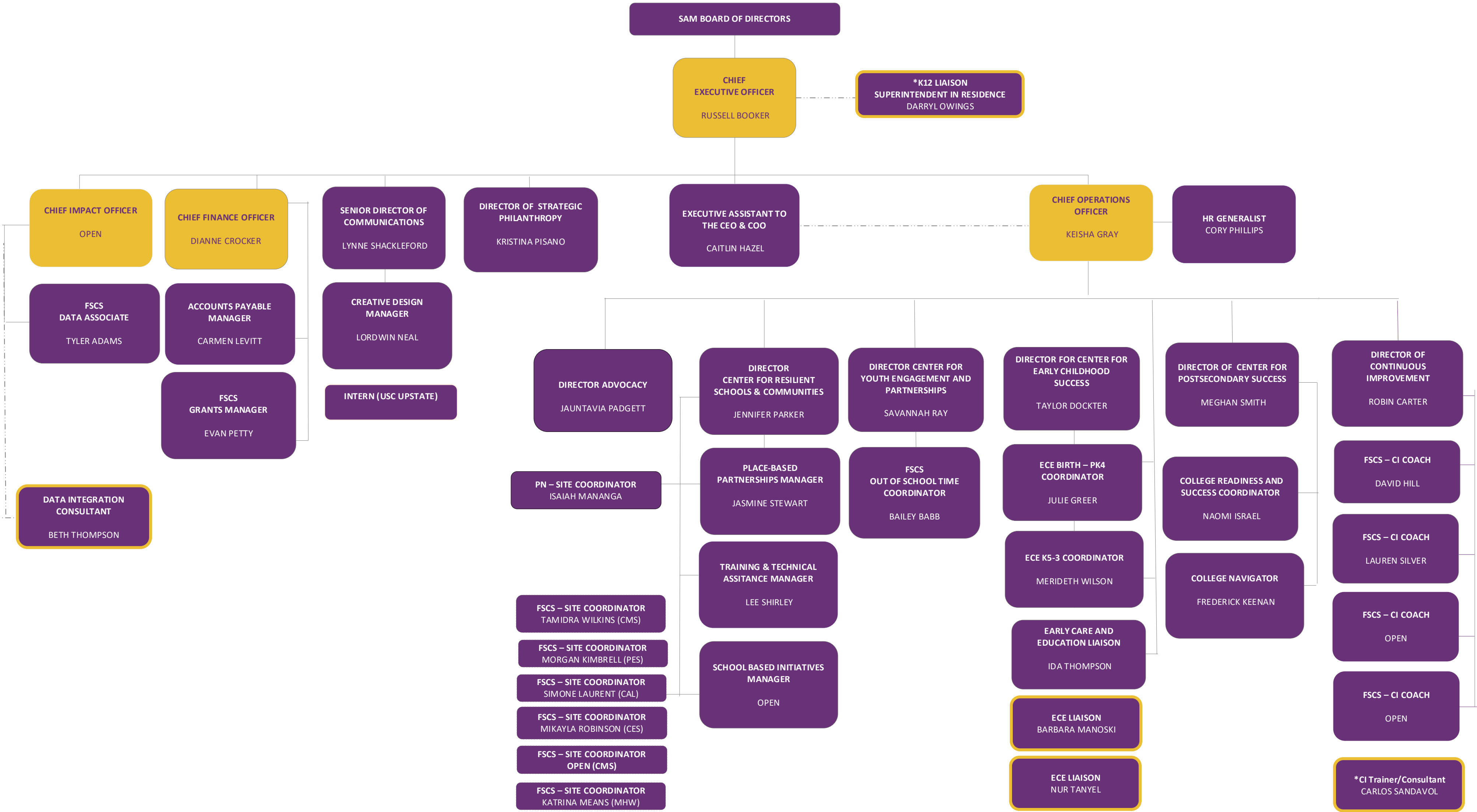


Steve Ballmer

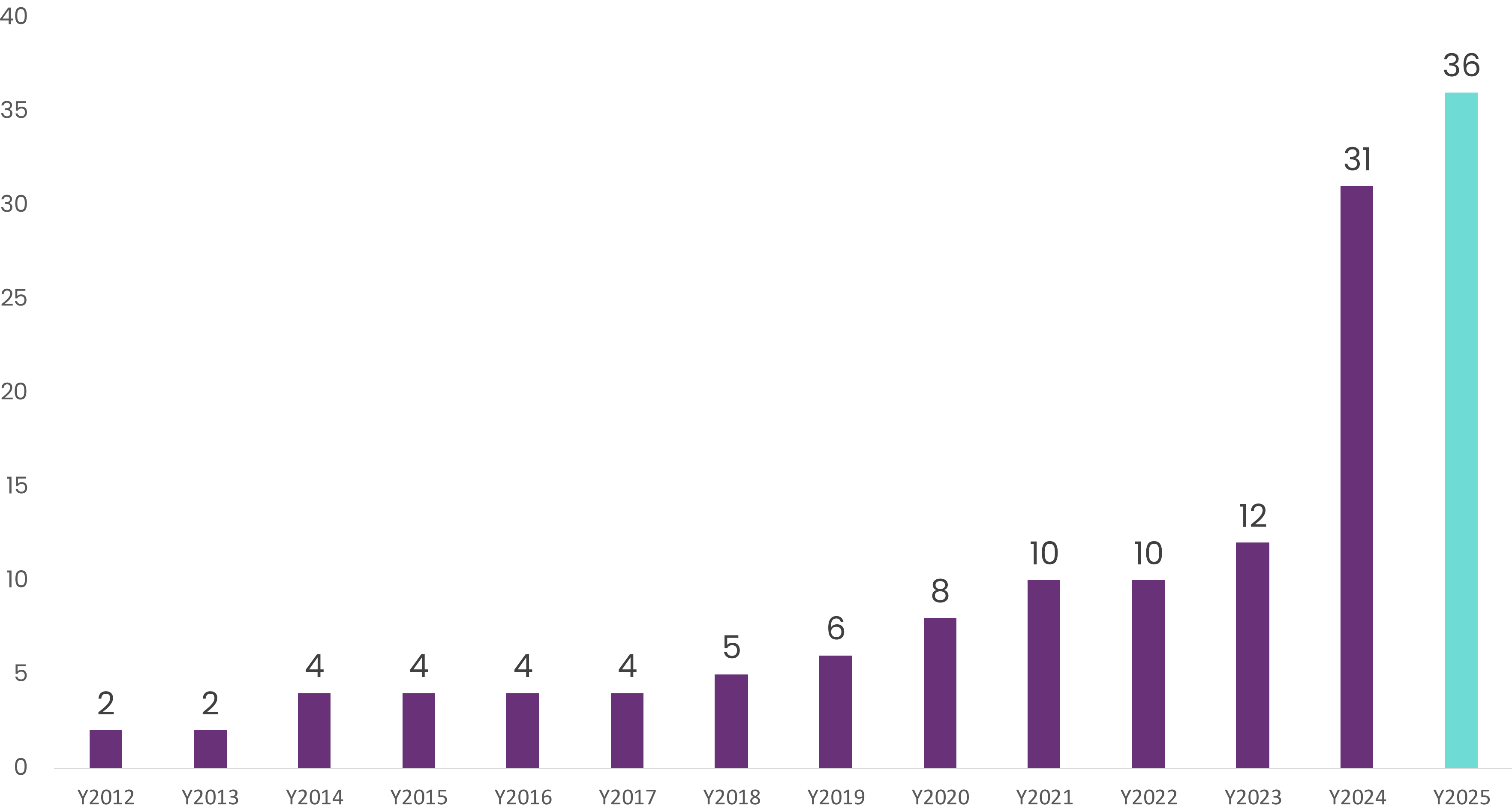


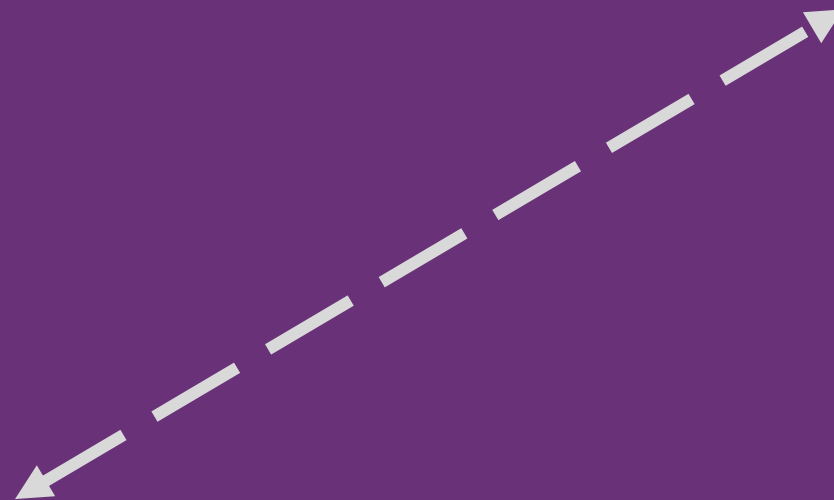
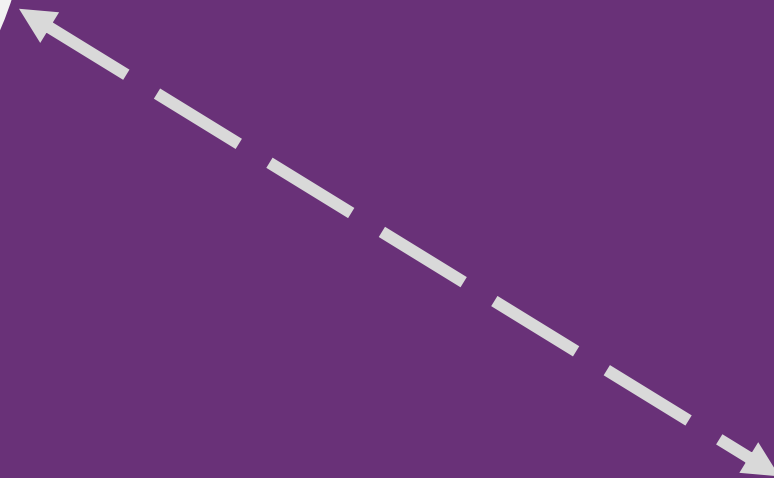
OUR FAMILY





Staffing Changes Over Time





STRONG NATIONAL PARTNERS



SPARTANBURG
ACADEMIC MOVEMENT



EdRedesign
OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL



blue meridian
partners



CHILDREN'(\$)
FUNDING PROJECT



At Harlem Children's Zone



LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE
FOR
FAITH AND EDUCATION



STRIVETOGETHER
THEORY OF ACTION

theory of ACTION™			GETTING BETTER RESULTS FOR EVERY CHILD, CRADLE TO CAREER			StriveTogether®	
	EXPLORING	EMERGING	SUSTAINING	SYSTEMS CHANGE	SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION	LEADS TO EQUITABLE OUTCOMES	
SHARED COMMUNITY VISION	A cross-sector partnership, including Black, Indigenous, Latinx and Asian youth and families and those experiencing poverty, defines a geographic scope and organizes around an equity-driven cradle-to-career vision The partnership establishes a diverse, cross-sector leadership table and accountability structure The partnership develops a set of messages aligned to the equity-driven cradle-to-career vision, and communicates these messages across the community	The partnership operates in alignment with the accountability structure The partnership builds authentic relationships with youth, families and diverse community partners and publicly communicates progress toward shared goals	The partnership takes aligned action to shift policies, practices, resources and power structures The partnership refines its vision and strategies in collaboration with, and centering the perspectives of, youth and families	Multiple sectors are aligned and accountable to the cradle-to-career vision, and youth and families contribute to decision making The partnership publicly communicates progress and challenges to grow its coalition and promote shared accountability	Youth and families use decision making authority to shift policies, practices, resources and power structures across systems The partnership regularly communicates about the aligned contributions of partners in service of economic mobility		PROOF POINT is a designation for partnerships that meet the systems change and/or systems transformation benchmarks and are:
EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING	The partnership identifies core indicators for the cradle-to-career outcomes to share accountability for improving	The partnership collects and publicly shares data for core indicators disaggregated by race, income, gender and other priority demographics The partnership identifies, collects and publicly shares systems indicators	The partnership facilitates the sharing of data for youth- and family-informed cross-sector action The partnership mobilizes partners to use systems indicators to address inequities in policies, practices and resources	The partnership supports a cross-sector data infrastructure that enables partners to shift policies, practices, resources and power structures	Cross-sector partners, including youth and families, regularly use outcomes and systems data to achieve equitable outcomes		- Improving cradle-to-career outcomes at the population level; - Closing gaps and demonstrating more equitable outcomes for Black, Indigenous, Latinx and Asian youth and those experiencing poverty - Making progress on systems indicators
COLLABORATIVE ACTION	The partnership adopts a framework for collaboration The partnership prioritizes focus areas based on disaggregated data and community perspectives and insights	The partnership establishes collaborative action networks with cross-sector representation and a clear call to action, effectively applying its collaborative framework Collaborative action networks identify underlying factors that lead to inequitable systems The partnership builds collaboration skills among backbone staff and the community	Collaborative action networks align to advance equitable outcomes The partnership tests strategies that address inequitable systems using rapid-cycle continuous improvement The partnership mobilizes the broader community to advance equitable outcomes	Sustained collaborative action efforts shift policies, practices, resources and power structures The partnership spreads and scales strategies that advance equitable outcomes	Youth and families lead decision making in collaborative action networks that informs the adoption and implementation of cross-sector strategies to advance equitable outcomes Strategies that advance equitable outcomes are sustained and scaled		CRADLE-TO-CAREER OUTCOMES
INVESTMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY	The partnership establishes a backbone with daily management capacity, revenue sources to cover operational expenses and demonstrates commitment to hiring and retaining diverse staff The partnership engages with local, state and/or federal leaders who influence policy The partnership engages investors to support the operations and collaborative work of partners to advance equitable outcomes	The partnership capacity exists to support daily management, data needs, facilitation, communication and engagement with the community and has multiple revenue sources to implement its work The partnership identifies policy changes that will lead to equitable outcomes and identifies how key policy roles will be filled The partnership allocates resources to strategies that support the advancement of equitable outcomes	The partnership develops a sustainability plan that includes implementing and sustaining practices to advance racial equity and inclusion The partnership co-creates policy advocacy efforts with youth and families The partnership aligns public and private resources toward strategies that demonstrate equitable outcomes	The partnership secures resources to ensure its continuation and builds the capability of diverse staff, partners and leaders to implement its strategic plan The partnership advocates for changes to local, state and/or national policies based on the perspectives of youth and families. Policies change to advance equitable outcomes. The partnership aligns public and private resources to spread and sustain data-informed strategies	The partnership secures resources to implement its strategic plan and consistently builds capability of diverse staff, partners, leaders and youth and families to shift policies, practices, resources and power structures The partnership maintains a sustainable policy infrastructure, led by youth and families, resulting in advocacy for and implementation of policy changes across institutions and sectors that advance equitable outcomes The partnership ensures that youth and families have formal authority to make decisions about the allocation of public and private resources that shift policies, practices, resources and power structures		- Kindergarten readiness - Early grade reading - Middle grade math - High school graduation - Postsecondary enrollment - Postsecondary completion - Employment

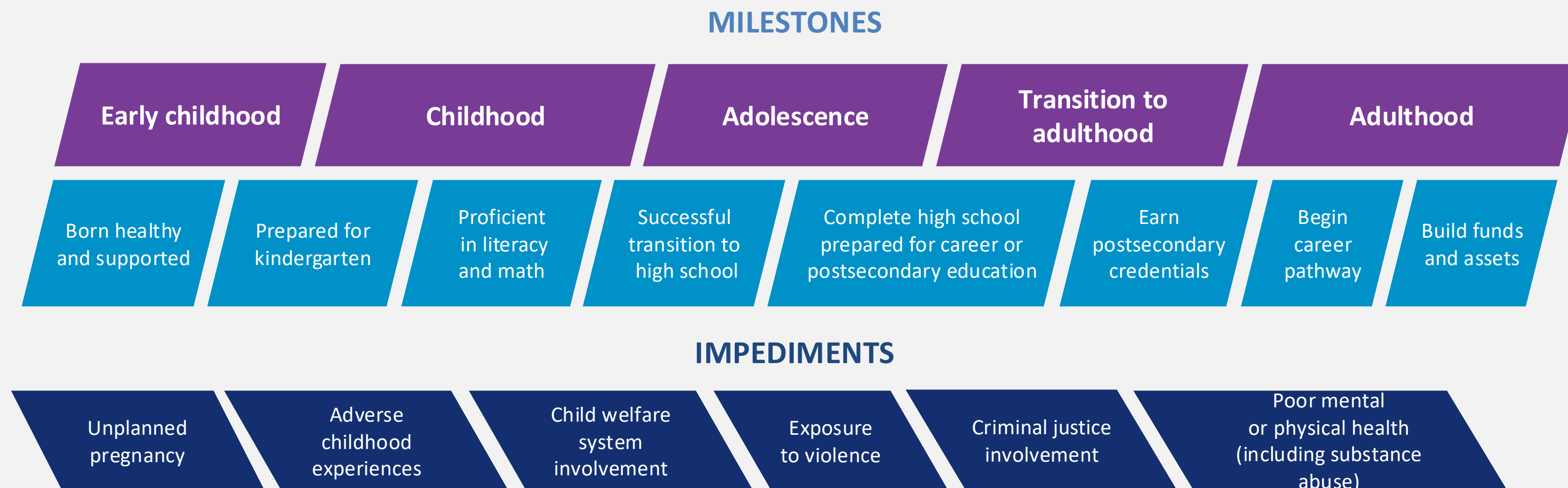
*StriveTogether is currently refining the Proof Point definition and will pause Proof Point designations until 2024.



The Comprehensive Framework

blue meridian
partners

To create pathways to mobility, Blue Meridian Partners invests in scaling solutions that enable young people and families to reach key milestones from cradle to career and address critical impediments to mobility.



* The Comprehensive Framework was developed by the Social Genome Project, a partnership between the Brookings Center on Children and Families, the Urban Institute, and Child Trends, and is supported by multiple studies.

Social Environment and Political Capital

Supportive and protective personal relationships and networks

Built Environment

Access to reliable housing, amenities, and transportation

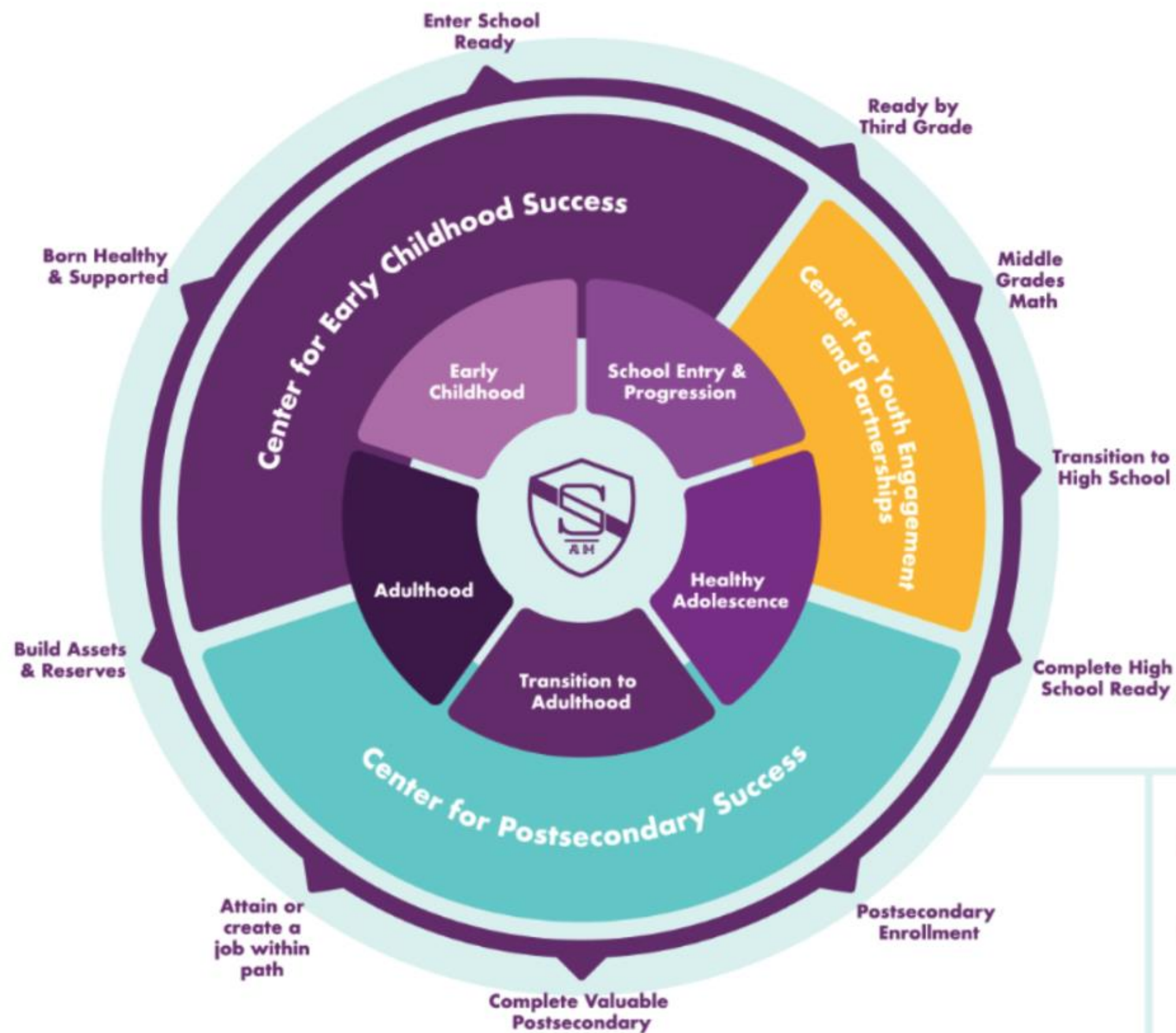
Economic Environment

Secure career pathways or entrepreneurial opportunities exist

Public Systems and Infrastructure

Government infrastructure exists on all levels to address market failures and gaps towards economic mobility

Organizational Framework



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OUTCOMES

SCALE

SUSTAINABILITY

LEADERSHIP

ORGANIZATIONAL
HEALTH

Changes in the
conditions and
well-being of the
target population

Expansion
of programs,
practices, policies,
etc. benefiting a
significant portion
of the target
population

Renewable and
reliable revenue
sources to
cover ongoing
organizational
costs and financial
well-being

CEO and
leadership team
with the vision,
values, experience,
expertise, and
dispositions
(especially
learning) to scale
equitable impact in
evolving contexts

Organizational
capacities to
sustain outcomes
at scale, including
leadership and
board composition
and capacity,
talent, technology,
and organizational
strategy and
infrastructure



**DATA,
NOT A
HAMMER**

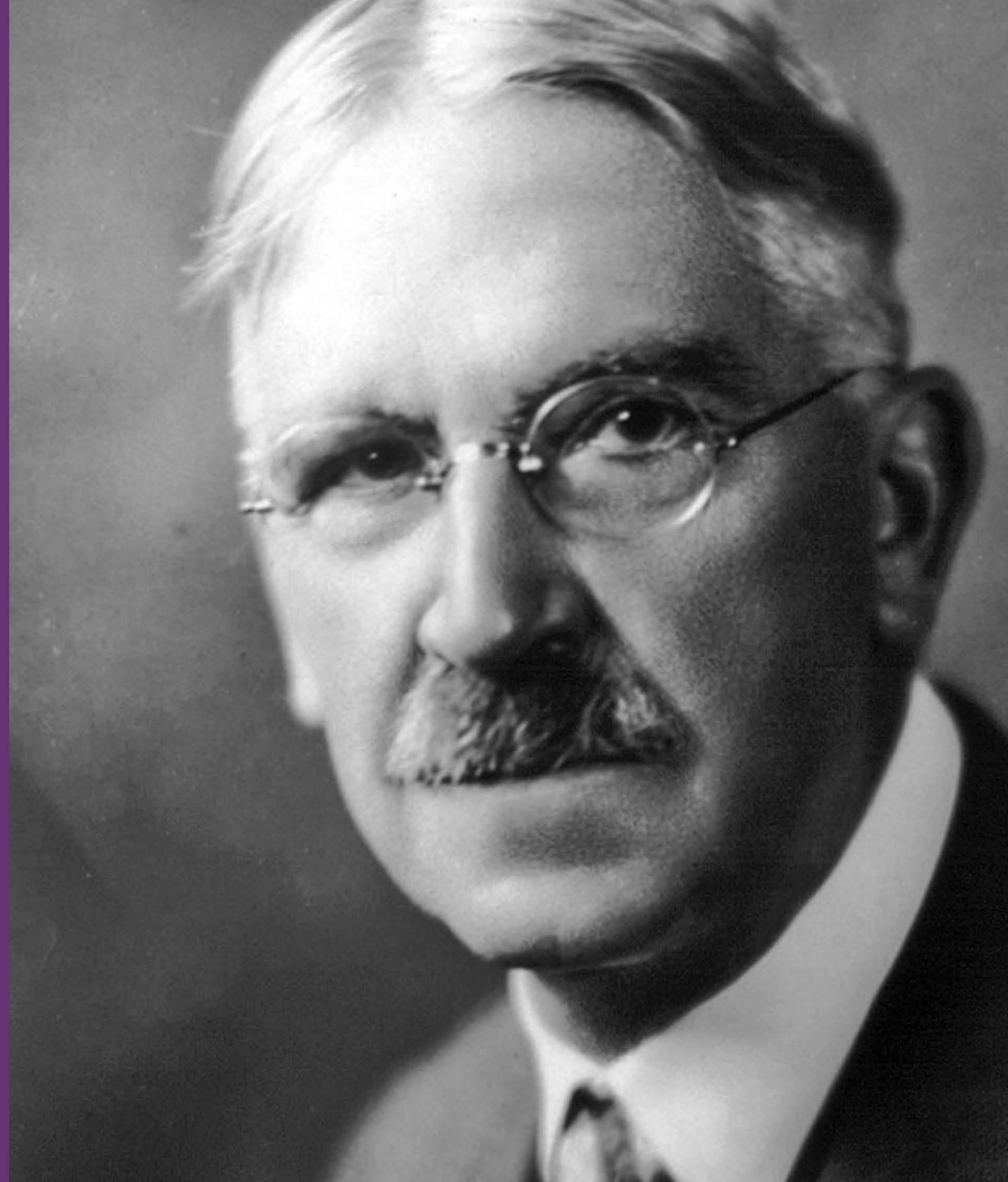
“

A society is a number of people held together because they are working along common lines, in a common spirit, and with reference to common aims. The common needs and aims demand a growing interchange of thought and growing unity of sympathetic feeling.

John Dewey

The School and Society

1899



THE COMMON PROJECT



**SPARTANBURG
ACADEMIC MOVEMENT**

blue meridian partners

Arrow Impact

Aviv Foundation

Ballmer Group, Philanthropy

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family

Coleman Family Ventures

The Druckenmiller Foundation

The Duke Endowment

The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation

Eugene and Marilyn Stein Foundation

George Kaiser Family Foundation

The JPB Foundation

MacKenzie Scott

The Samberg Family Foundation

The Sergey Brin Family Foundation

The Tepper Foundation

William & Flora Hewlett Foundation

Valhalla Foundation

ZOOM Foundation



**Identify communities driving success in
addressing youth and families in poverty**

**Pool capital and make \$100M investments
to accelerate, transform communities**

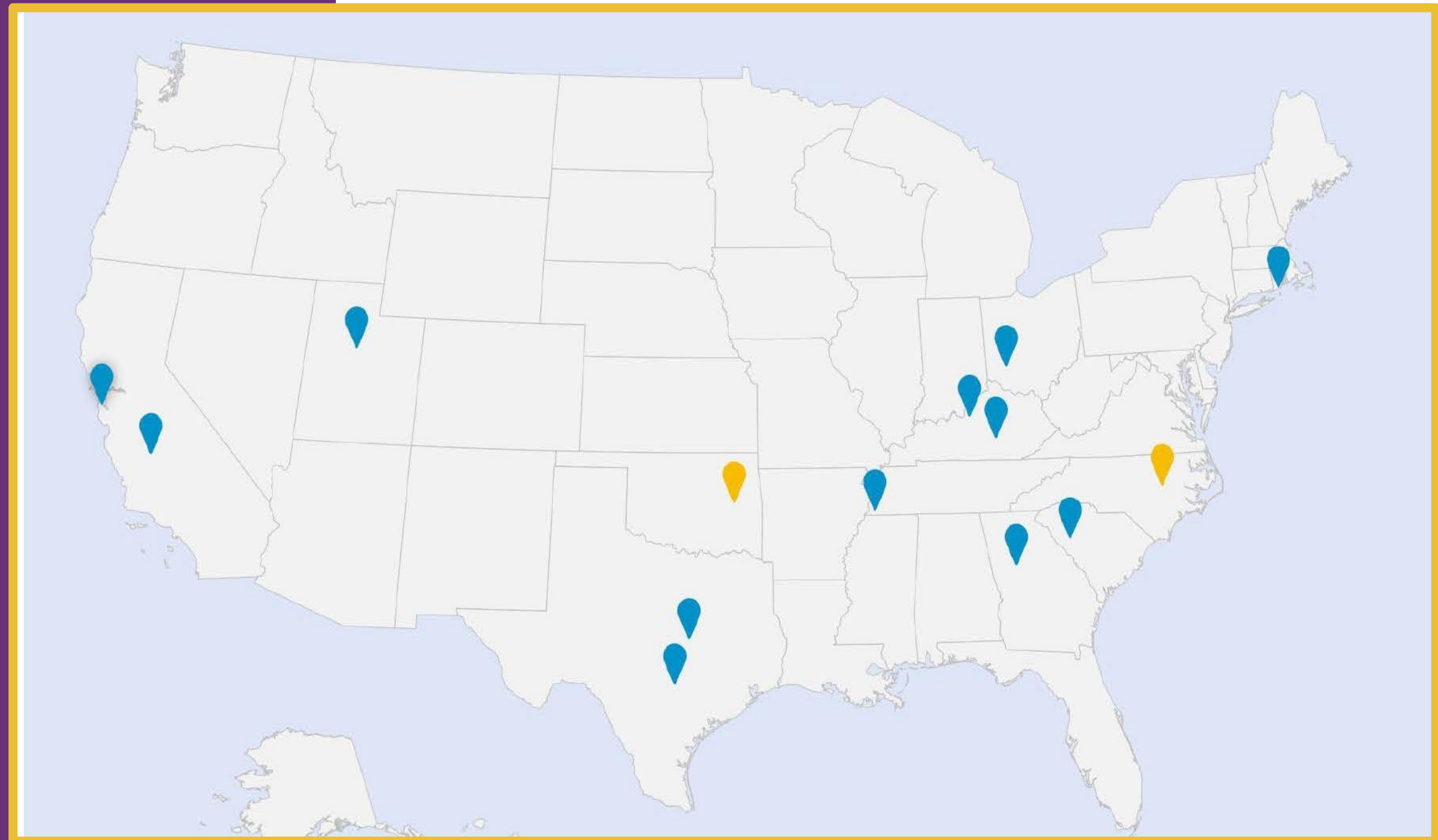
Investment Partners > \$4B in funding

PHASE 1 INVESTMENTS

blue meridian
partners

Place Matters Communities

1. Atlanta, Georgia
2. Berea, Kentucky
3. Dallas, Texas
4. Dayton, Ohio
5. Fresno, California
6. Louisville, Kentucky
7. Memphis, Tennessee
8. Oakland, California
9. Rhode Island
10. Salt Lake City, Utah
11. San Antonio, Texas
12. Spartanburg, South Carolina



PHASE 2 INVESTMENTS

blue meridian
partners

Investee Highlights



Dallas, TX



Spartanburg, SC



San Antonio, TX

enter
movement2030

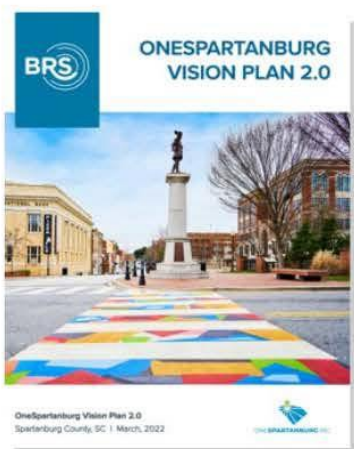
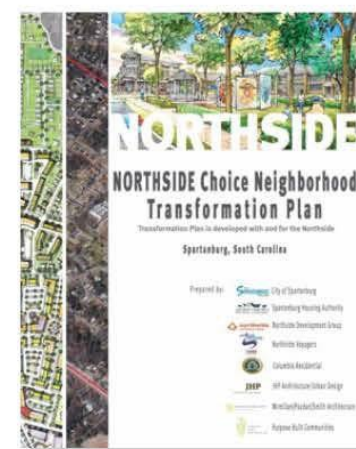


Movement 2030 is a county-wide initiative in Spartanburg, South Carolina driven by one guiding belief: **everyone can thrive here.**

With the goal of improving school readiness, educational attainment, and neighborhood outcomes for thousands of Spartanburg County residents, Movement 2030 is an effort by Spartanburg and for Spartanburg.



Aligning Our Work for COLLECTIVE IMPACT



EVERYONE CAN THRIVE HERE



INTEGRATED ECONOMIC MOBILITY PLAN

countywide results by 2030

 **improve readiness for kindergarten and school success**

~15-20% increase in each indicator

 **increase number of individuals with an associate degree, bachelor degree or high-value credential**

northside & highland results by 2030

 **Increase cradle-to-career outcomes to county averages**

 **Make tangible improvements in built and economic environments – building on existing transformation plans in neighborhoods**

65%
ready

70%
enrollment

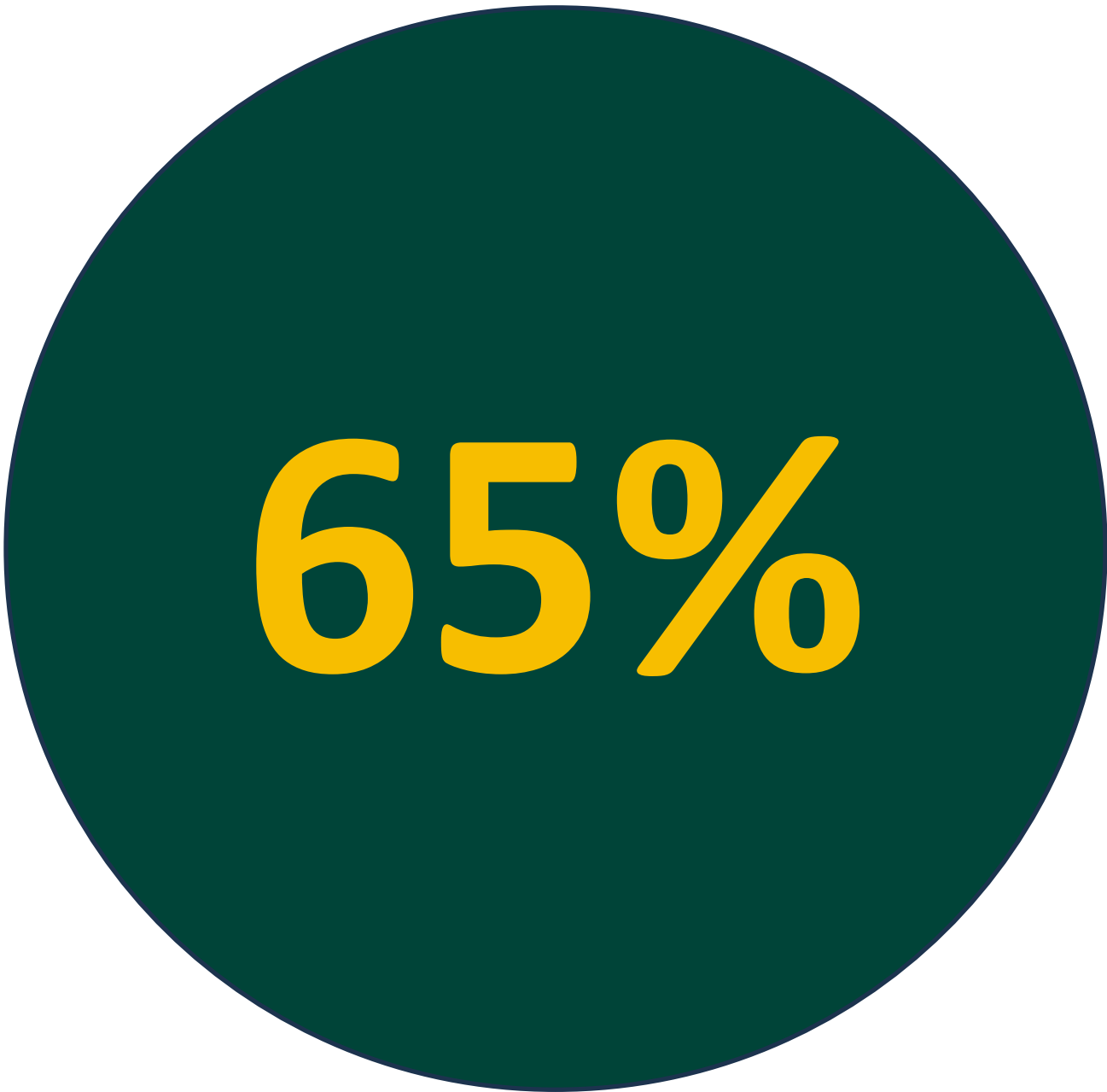
1500+
degrees &
credentials
per year

15–20%
increase in
each indicator

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

HELLO FAMILY





65%

2030 School Readiness Goal



EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT

**Fall-Winter Administration
Underway for 2024-2025**

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

HELLO FAMILY

1

Strengthen and grow prenatal and parent supports

Connect with every mother giving birth

Expand evidence-based programs to close gaps

2

Improve quality

Scale Quality Counts

Expand work with all public preschools, and pilot innovations in childcare deserts (e.g., homecare pilot)

3

Expand seats and investment 0-3

Open seats while addressing systemic barriers to expansion

4

Increase enrollment

Improve Hello Family's system of prenatal through five services to ensure equitable access for families

POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT

OUR PROMISE



2030 Goals

70%

**seniors enrolling within one year by 2030,
representing ~300 additional enrollees per year**

~1,000

**Additional degrees per year at Spartanburg
institutions for SY2030–2031; increased persistence
and completion**

~500

**Additional career ready certifications per year
aligned to industry needs**

~5,000

Adults are re-engaged by 2030

5 Priorities

1 **Aligning K-12 and postsecondary institutions**

2 **Ensuring Postsecondary access**

3 **Addressing barriers that hinder completion**

4 **Creating tighter linkages with the workplace**

5 **Re-engaging adults to degree and certification programs**

1. **Strengthening dual enrollment**
2. **Scaling early skill-building tied to in-demand jobs**
3. **Expanding mentorship and navigation supports**
4. **Lowering financial barriers**
5. **Advancing policy**
6. **Expanding supports and shifting practices to increase completion rates**
7. **Scaling mental health supports**
8. **Convening industry and postsecondary institutions to align programs with talent gaps**
9. **Piloting collaborative industry-aligned initiatives**
10. **Expanding internships and work-based learning opportunities**
11. **Re-engaging and connect adults to a degree or certificate program**
12. **Expanding tailored programs for adults to complete degrees while working**

SUPPORTING NEIGHBORHOODS

NEW BETHLEHEM CENTER – HIGHLAND



SUPPORTING NEIGHBORHOODS

PLACE MATTERS

1

Invest in two-generation and academic supports to close gaps

Support children and families through family navigation and academic supports from cradle to career

2

Improve the built environment

Northside:

- Grow homeownership and entrepreneurship.

Highland:

- Foster grassroots leadership
- Advance Transformation Plan focused on redevelopment and reinvestment in community assets

3

Strengthen anchor community institutions

Northside:

- Sustain NDG as a local backbone to advance economic mobility in Northside and supporting neighboring communities

Highland:

- Revitalize The Bethlehem Center as a community hub, including new building, expanded programming, and strengthened organizational capacity.



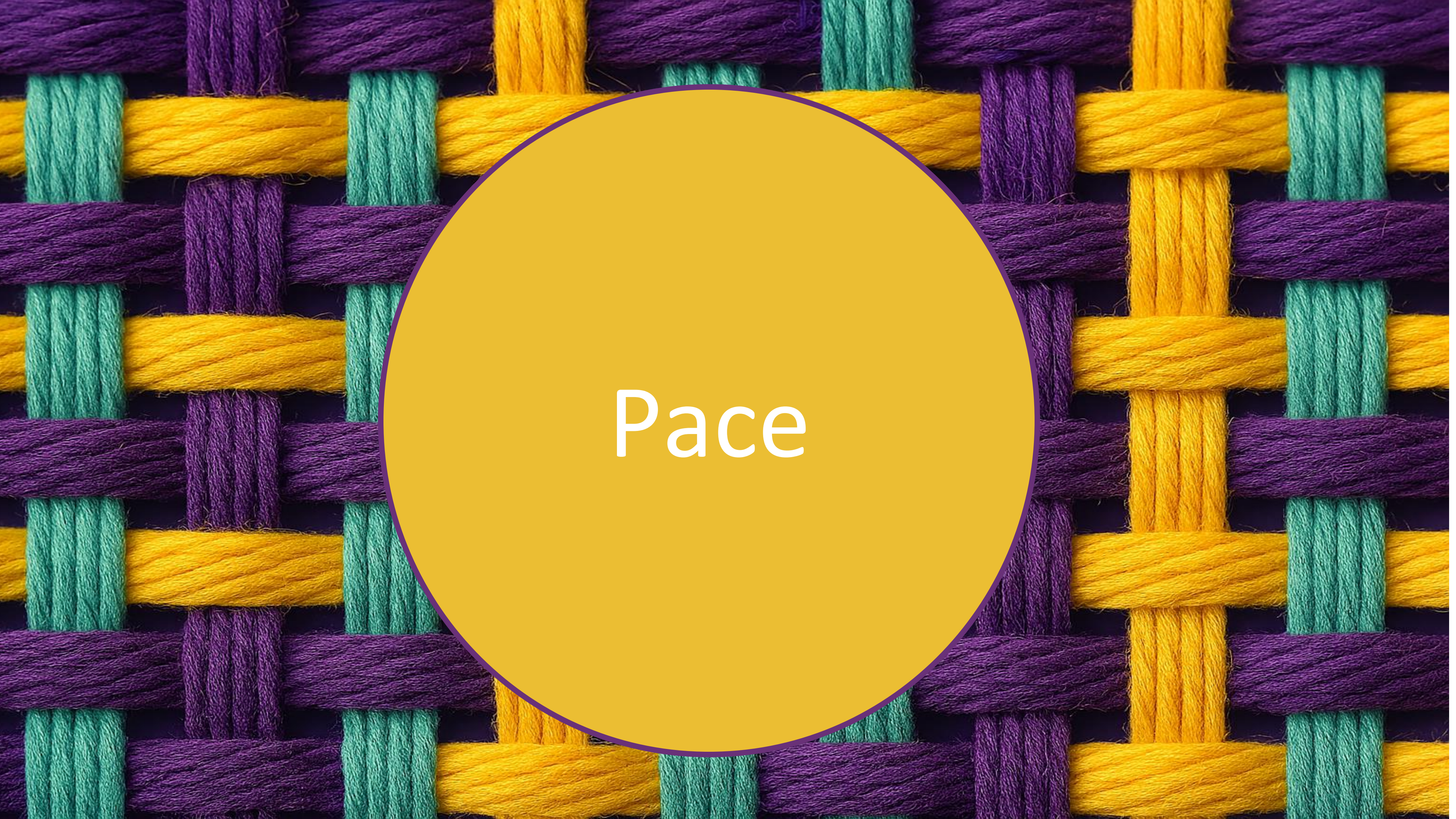
A flock of birds has the astonishing ability to travel together and shift course without individual birds bumping into each other. They do it, scientist have learned, because each bird follows three simple rules: maintain minimum distance between you and the neighboring bird; fly at the same speed as your neighbor; always fly toward the center of the flock.

DAVID BROOKS





Proximity



Pace



Purpose

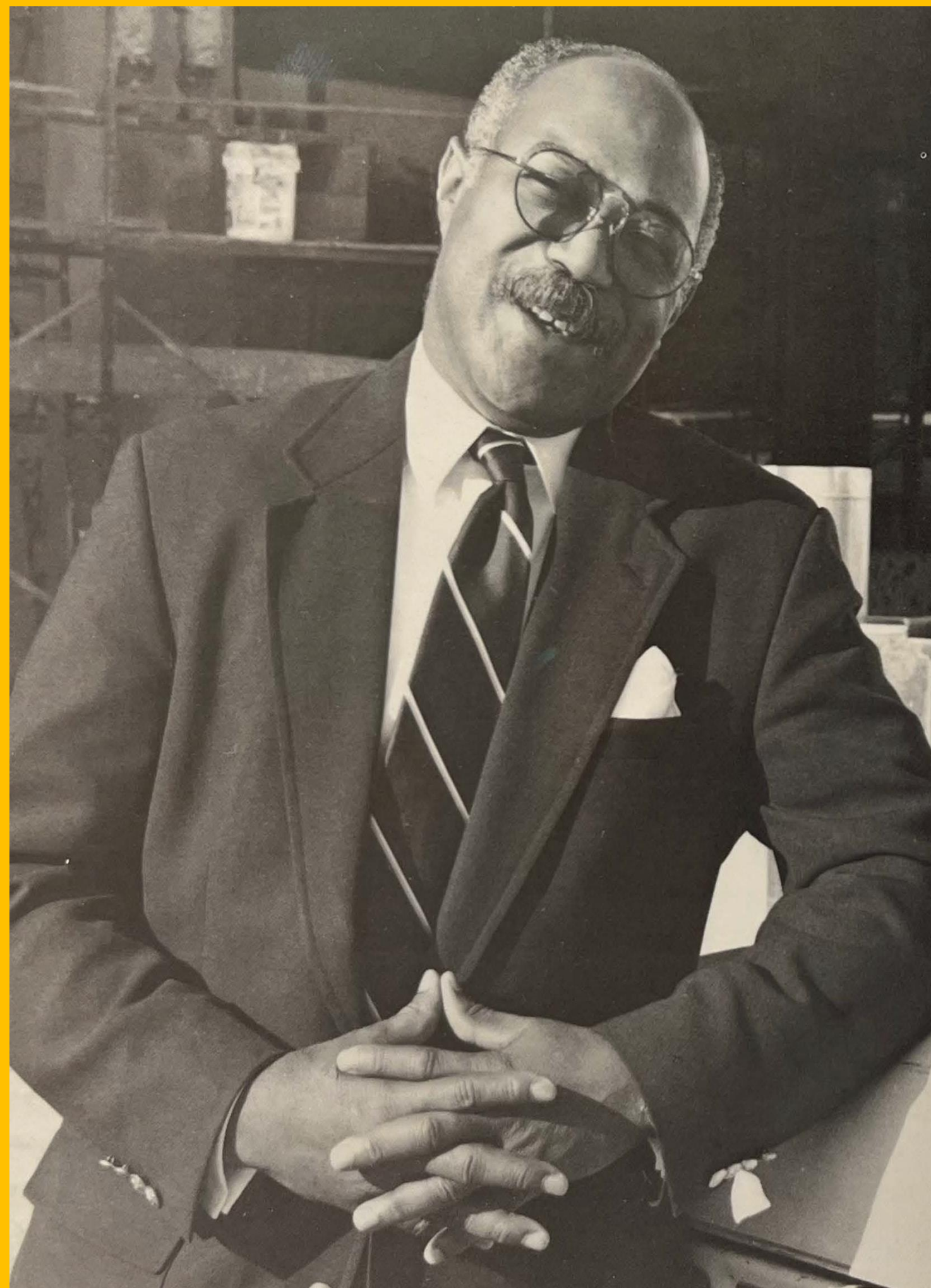
Our Real Work

Wendell Berry

It may be that when we no longer know what to do
we have come to our real work,

and that when we no longer know which way to go
we have come to our real journey.

The mind that is not baffled is not employed.
The impeded stream is the one that sings.



"We must start recognizing that we have a growing poverty class out there."

Claude Booker

Spartanburg Plant Environmental, Safety and Health employee Claude Booker, a native of the area and a long-time community activist, is convinced that reversing that trend requires "that we bring social science, human compassion and the democratic process together in meaningful ways." He supports that contention with more than lip service. Booker chairs his precinct committee. He's the immediate past, two-term president of the local literacy council. He's president of the South Carolina Literacy Advisory Council. He also chairs the advisory board of the brand new Village Partnership, which has an \$8.5 million grant to renovate a headquarters building and to support a five-year, 32-agency effort to deliver health and social services to at-risk families in cost-effective, compassionate and meaningful ways. "We've got the know-how to fix all our problems," says Booker. "We've just got to be willing to work at it cooperatively and with unity of purpose."

25%

90%

40

"...work at it cooperatively and with unity of purpose."