



## FRONT PAGE

### Capacity-Building News to Use for Wiregrass Organizations



#### **HOT TOPIC** **Lessons Learned from the Wiregrass Public Safety Center**

The recent CapCONNECT program on “collaboration” was not selected by WF. Program topics are determined by participant needs, and workshops are built sequentially by the Development Team. But this particular topic came at a perfect time for us. The needs of the community far out-strip WF funding. And at our biennial Retreat, we reviewed our own grantmaking and the statistics defining the Wiregrass. What project designs have the most success, and which ones have difficulty reaching objectives? On which issues are we as a community making progress, and where do we continue to struggle? How does WF use this information to put our investments to the best possible use? **Our Lesson Learned:** Impact is more powerful when we employ a developmental process where design of programs and facilities is preceded by information, reflection, and collaboration. Emphasis on the latter.

This was the process used to design the Wiregrass Public Safety Center. We started with a question: “What is the major challenge we are trying to address?” From there, the role for WF was clear: gather the right team; seek broad stakeholder input; research other community solutions; contract with the best in-field expertise we can find; visit model solutions or engage with their creators; discuss, debate, and ultimately collaborate on the best-fit solution for our community. This type of process takes time, money and serious commitment by participants. Everyone, including WF, had to leave our subagendas at the door and be willing to truly COLLABORATE. No turfs. No sacred cows.

WF plans to apply this same developmental process to other major challenges. Most of the problems our community wants to solve are complicated and huge. But with the right people, data, expertise, time, funding, commitment, and willingness to work together, we can overcome them all, one collaboration at a time.

#### **GRANTS RECENTLY AWARDED** **(April Meeting)**

**Dothan City Schools**—Infrastructure Study  
\$100,000

**Spectracare**—Haven Project  
\$750,000

**Ozark-Dale Co. Library**—New Library  
\$61,423 Planning; \$500,000 Challenge Grant  
**Wallace Community College**—Dual Enrollment  
\$64,800

**Wiregrass Hope Group**—Center Awareness  
\$20,823

**Dothan Housing Authority**—Summer Feeding Program  
\$28,000

**Dubois Center**—Nutrition Education Center  
\$25,000

\$40,000 in Microgrants to nine organizations.  
Ongoing support for Foundation programs:  
Bright Key and CapCONNECT

#### **COLLABORATION**



WF’s CapCONNECT recently hosted Zach Anderson with *Converge for Impact* for a workshop on collaborations and partnerships. Zack introduced *The Five C’s*: a roadmap

for effective collaboration, an excellent framework to assist collaborations of any size, in any environment. Collaborations sometimes stall due to personal, political, cultural, or organizational undercurrents. *The Five C’s* guide the process clearly and intentionally. #1-**Clarify** the purpose, or the specific issue at hand. #2 -**Convene** the right people to bring different perspectives and knowledge to the issue and commit to follow through. #3-**Cultivate** trust among the group, forming relationships with emotional security and objectivity. #4-**Coordinate** existing activities by sharing work already being done and be willing to support each other’s work. #5 -**Collaborate** for systems impact. Participants must also remember that the result may not always be the success the group envisioned. A failed effort today may not fail tomorrow. Timing must be right for all involved. Collaboration is especially healthy in the nonprofit sector when results depend on cooperation and input from other stakeholders. Thanks to Zach for sharing this with us and with our grantee partners!