



working cities
challenge

2016 Funders' Plenary
SPARK
March 2, 2016



SPARK

- ▶ Our Goal: is to help the everyday entrepreneur gain access to the knowledge and resources needed to accelerate business success.
 - ▶ Our Target Population: Greater Holyoke Residents
 - ▶ Our Shared Result: Increase Latino business ownership in Holyoke to 30% from the current 5%
 - ▶ Develop a downtown business district that is representative of our community.
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Core Partners

- ▶ Greater Holyoke Chamber Centennial Foundation
 - ▶ City of Holyoke
 - ▶ The Artery (Holyoke Creative Arts)
 - ▶ Nuestra Raices
 - ▶ Holyoke Public Library
 - ▶ Holyoke Community Collage
 - ▶ SCORE
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Stats

SPARK Launch Stats

July 2015 - Jan 2016

Demographics

- ▶ Total Students: 27
- ▶ Holyoke Residents: 60%
- ▶ Women: 48%
- ▶ Latino: 70%

Outcomes

- ▶ New Startups: 16
 - ▶ Existing Business Developed: 4
 - ▶ Jobs Created: 50
 - ▶ People Effected: 98
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Key Drivers

- ▶ Siloed Initiatives
 - ▶ Multiple city programs without collaboration strategy
 - ▶ Deteriorated Infrastructure
 - ▶ Neglected Buildings = High Cost to bring to code
 - ▶ Fragmented Community
 - ▶ History of division acts as a barrier to true city wide collaboration
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Strategies

- ▶ Entrepreneurial Ecosystem
 - ▶ Monthly Cross Program Director Meetings
 - ▶ Mapping Referrals and Entrepreneur's Pathway

 - ▶ Community Driven Events
 - ▶ Live, Learn, and Launch Series of Programming
 - ▶ Intentional Focus on Creating Truly Inclusive Offerings
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Learning About the System

- ▶ Space requirements come in all shapes and sizes
 - ▶ Turn Key Office Space
 - ▶ Makers Space
 - ▶ Community Kitchens
 - ▶ Popup Restaurants
 - ▶ Co-Work Space

 - ▶ A Safe Place to Incubate Ideas

 - ▶ Continuing to Work on Streamlined Permitting Process
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Progress Toward Systems Change

- ▶ Community Coming Together
 - ▶ Strong Cross Cultural Bonds Being Created
 - ▶ Entrepreneurers Know and Support Each Other
 - ▶ Holyoke on the Map for Entrepreneurship
 - ▶ Recognized by Surrounding Cities for Most Innovative Approach
 - ▶ Getting Noticed on a National Scale
 - ▶ Creating a change in the perception of our cities identity and potential for investment.
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Accelerating Change

- ▶ Statewide Entrepreneurial Network
 - ▶ Co-work and Incubator Space in Holyoke
 - ▶ City Wide Entrepreneurial & Developer Tax Incentives
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