INTERGENERATIONAL CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
FCA Workgroup Briefing Paper, October 2017

INTRODUCTION

This paper is concerned with one area of civic practice: Intergenerational Civic Engagement. The paper has been prepared by a Workgroup of the Florida Civic Advance, an initiative to strengthen civic life in Florida. Its major purpose is to help to guide discussion and seek input at the Florida Civic Advance Summit in Orlando on November 6 and 7, 2017 and produce a framework paper in early 2018.

BACKGROUND:

• Americans have gained over thirty years in life expectancy over the past century.
• Increased longevity represents tremendous assets yet few U.S. communities have successfully capitalized on this largely untapped and growing resource.
• Identifying ways to effectively utilize the skills, abilities, and experiences of the additional years of life has the potential to be leveraged to address a range of challenges facing individuals in every generation.
• Florida has the nation’s highest proportion of older adults (18%) statewide - with five county populations exceeding 30%.
• Older adults have time, interest (i.e. generativity/legacy), and receive many documented benefits to well-being from purposive engagement.

1 FCA Inter-Generational Civic Engagement Workgroup: Co Chairs, Jack Levine, Founder, 4 Generations Institute, Kathy Black, Professor of Aging Studies, University of South Florida, Dawn Carr, FSU Pepper Institute/Department of Sociology, Tallahassee Florida Workgroup Members: Brittany Birken, Executive Director, Florida Children’s Council, Tallahassee, Florida; Ken Brummel Smith, FSU School of Gerontology, Emeritus, Tallahassee Florida; Eric Hodges, Ph.D. Interdisciplinary Social Sciences Coordinator, Assistant Professor, ISS and Political Science, University of South Florida, Sarasota-Manatee, Jeff Johnson, Executive Director, AARP Florida, St. Petersburg, Florida, Donovan Lee Sin, Neighborhood and Community Services Officer, The Children’s Trust, Miami, Florida

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• Many communities are experiencing decreasing millennial population.
• Florida has six generations:

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<tr>
<th>Generations by Population in Florida</th>
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<tr>
<td>GI Generation (1901-1930)</td>
<td>521,965</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mature/Silents (1931-1945)</td>
<td>2,126,410</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers (1946-1964)</td>
<td>4,895,541</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generation X (1965-1980)</td>
<td>3,893,789</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generation Y/Millennials (1981-2000)</td>
<td>5,010,355</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generation Z/Boomlets (2001+)</td>
<td>3,412,740</td>
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*Source: Florida Health Charts, (2017).*

THE CHALLENGES FACING INTERGENERATIONAL CIVIC PRACTICE
• Awareness/ Recognition of potential value to generational groups and society.
• Leadership in identifying a vision and mobilizing resources.
• Evidence-base of impact and value across generations and organizations.
• Knowledge of how to operationalize a successful intergenerational program.
• Funding at the national, state and local level.

THE VISION OF WHAT COULD BE
• Florida is an ideal environment to develop a laboratory of civic engagement within and across generations.
• Florida could identify, bolster, and create efforts to enhance intergenerational civic engagement throughout the state.
• Florida schools, colleges and universities could serve a central role via a variety of activities including catalyst for engagement, repository for civic opportunities, reservoir for connecting youth and seniors, conduction of research and evaluation of impact.

STRATEGIES TO HELP US GET THERE
1. Develop Repository of Intergenerational Civic Practices across Florida
2. Conduct Research on Promising Intergenerational Civic Practices in Florida (see core research areas below)
3. Pilot a School-based Intergenerational Model
4. Create Educational Resources to Foster Awareness and Adoption across Sectors (Government, non-profit organizations, media and community groups)

KEY QUESTIONS FOR RESEARCH TO INFORM STRATEGIES
1. Understanding and Promoting Intergenerational Civic Engagement among Florida Veterans
   a. Per capita, Florida has the largest veteran population of any U.S. state. Recent studies have demonstrated a connection between military veterans and elevated levels of civic engagement, including intergenerational efforts. Preliminary review of practices in Florida indicate that veterans are currently engaged in intergenerational civic efforts.
   b. Research Questions:
      • What forms of intergenerational civic engagement are Florida veterans currently engaged with?
- Veteran to veteran? (For example, are Florida chapters of Vietnam Veterans of American aiding Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America?)
- Veteran to civilian? (For example, the Orlando 1st Platoon of the Mission Continues, is focused on addressing issues impacting disadvantaged youth in Central Florida.)
- Civilian to veteran? (Honor Flights, Gen Z school projects)
- What factors are associated with successful intergenerational veteran engagement?
  ▪ What barriers are experienced among veterans with intentions to volunteer in intergenerational activities?
  ▪ What are the comprehensive outcomes to participants of all ages- and communities-associated with veteran intergenerational civic engagement?

2. Understanding and Promoting Older Adults’ Intergenerational Civic Engagement in Age-Friendly Communities
   a. Promoting civic engagement is an explicit goal of age-friendly communities. There are 16 age-friendly communities in Florida (with more on the way). Identifying ways to enhance intergenerational engagement requires initial assessment of the ways in which older citizens and communities are already engaged.
   b. Research Questions:
      • What proportion of older adults are engaged in intergenerational activities in their communities?
      • What factors are associated with successful intergenerational volunteering activities?
      • What barriers are experienced among older adults with intentions to volunteer in intergenerational activities?
      • What are the comprehensive outcomes to participants of all ages- and communities-associated with intergenerational engagement activities?
      • What role can educational institutions play in facilitating intergenerational interactions?

3. School-based Generation to Generation Programming
   a. Builds upon concurrent efforts with Encore’s Gen2Gen initiative (which aims to engage 1,000,000 Boomer-aged + with youth). There are 16 sites nationally and one in St. Petersburg. Established groups such as the PTA can serve as organizational structure to embed programming.
   b. Research Questions:
      • What are the outcomes to youth and older adults participating in school-based programs?
      • What factors are associated with intergenerational volunteering among older adults?

RESOURCES TO HELP US GET THERE
4. Proven principles and practices
   a. Generations United - repository for helpful resources and ideas (http://www.gu.org/).
   c. Creating an Age-Advantaged Community - tool kit to recognize, engage and support all ages.