

CWC STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REVIEW, SEPTEMBER 2010

Context Setting

Strategic Review Process to Date – June 2009 to September 2010

This work was initially taken up at our board meeting in June of 2009 with the desire to “Identify clear indicators of strategic focus or direction for the organization.” This was a recommendation from Mark Leach (consultant and board meeting facilitator) emphasizing the importance of board and staff alignment on 3-5 key long term strategies for the organization to help guide us through the transition and beyond. It was acknowledged that we did not have the time or resources to do a full strategic plan at this time and the board’s decision was to embark on a process that would help answer some core questions, surface needs, and generate clarity around our organizational priorities.

1. Dec 2009 – Board and staff identified core questions to be considered.
2. January 2010 – Ginny, Torri and Danyelle established a process for engaging staff, board, faculty, alumni/ae and funders around those core questions.
3. Survey was designed, focus groups planned, one- on-one interviews planned
4. Challenged by time – survey results were generated without analysis at board meeting in June 2010 The board identified concerns with our questions, process
5. The board generated a list of priorities following our discussion of survey data and process.
6. Staff took survey data, notes from the June board meeting and have generated a draft strategic priority document with input from Polly Hoppin, Mistinguette Smith and Mark Leach and submit it now for comment.

Guiding Document

The document that follows is the CWC Strategic Priorities Review. Its purpose is to create clarity for the board to assess the organization’s progress on our key priorities. Board approved, this Review sets forth the agreed-upon priorities for CWC staff.

This review will be used to guide decision making and drive the use of organizational resources at both staff and board level. ***This Review is intended to be a living document. Timelines, objectives and tactics for achieving those priorities will evolve over time depending on resources available and organizational learning.***

Center for Whole Communities Strategic Review

CWC Core Purpose

The Center for Whole Communities supports and collaborates with environmental and social change leaders seeking to nurture healthy communities through the shared human relationship to land, land use and place; and to build personal & institutional relationships across the dividing forces of race, class, power and privilege.

Our methods: 1) we demonstrate that a human relationship to land, land use, and place is fundamental to a healthy, resilient society, and 2) we nurture and create relationships across divides, and 3) we work to counter the corrosive forces of race, power and privilege which consistently thwart relationships of all kinds in the United States.

CWC Overarching Strategy to Move the Work Forward

Our current strategy to fulfill this purpose is *to increase our organizational impact through collaboration, partnership and co-creation*. Using these three forces, we will leverage our resources to increase CWC's program effectiveness, organizational capacity and governance strength. This strategy speaks to the way we see our work evolving into the future.

Strategic Priorities

CWC will implement our strategy through focusing on five specific priorities:

1. Deepen our understanding, competency and practice of interculturalism as a primary means to improve the effectiveness of our programs; to serve diverse constituencies and our capacity to build partnerships with targeted sectors of the emerging land/land-use movement.
2. Sustain the health and growth of our distinct Whole Communities Programs - Whole Thinking Programs, Advanced Leadership, Whole Measures and Conservation-based programs.
3. *Collaborate-Co-Create-Catalyze*: Increasing the number of tools and mechanisms needed to effectively create partnerships and collaborative projects in which CWC is involved externally, and increasing shared leadership opportunities internally.
4. Assess and develop plans for co-created land-based leadership development experiences, both with partners at Knoll Farm and in other rural and urban settings.
5. Strengthening our leadership and organizational capacity to support effective collaboration, partnership and co-created programming.

These five strategic priorities, and indicators of their success, are described more fully below.

Strategic Priority I:

Increase both our capacity for collaboration, and the effectiveness of our programs across sectors by deepening our understanding and practice of interculturalism.

How does this priority advance our strategy?

Interculturalism is sharing and learning across cultures with the aim of promoting understanding, equity, harmony, and justice in a diverse society. Intercultural competence increases our ability to collaborate internally (as a board, as faculty, and with alumni). Intercultural competence increases our ability to partner with other organizations, and we see it as a pre-requisite for the successful evolution of our work.

How will we know if we are successfully implementing this strategy?

(NOTE: the Intercultural Breakthrough Working Group of the board will be refining and determining these indicators in the coming months)

- Board /staff committee will develop plan for ongoing training by ____ (date)
- Staff and board will receive ____ of training(s) on intercultural competence skills by ____ (date).
- Evaluation of CWC organizational intercultural competency to work with a more diverse constituency will take place by ____ (date).
- ____% of CWC staff will be people of color by 2015
- Maintain ____%??? People of color on board and faculty.
- 50% of CWC Whole Thinking Retreat program participants will be people of color by 2012
- Post-retreat contact rates among participants from the following groups (final list to be agreed upon by intercultural breakthrough group) will occur in proportion to their participation (e.g. if 50% of participants are male, 50% of post-retreat contacts will be male)
 - people of color
 - men
 - environmental Justice
 - climate justice
 - social justice
 - food justice
- We will develop ____ new funding sources that will allow us to do this work.

Strategic Priority 2:

Sustain the health and growth of our distinct Whole Communities Programs: Whole Thinking Programs, Advanced Leadership, Whole Measures and Conservation-based programs.

How does this priority advance our strategy?

The learning, relationships and connections that come through our Whole Thinking Retreats are fundamental to our work. Our program alumni/ae are change agents and our engagement with alumni/ae in their communities is the foundation for future collaborations.

How will we know if we are successfully implementing this strategy?

- Develop three new foundation supporters for the Whole Thinking Program to maintain at the minimum three Whole Thinking Retreats each season
- We will maintain our founding connection to the conservation community through directing energy and resources to help transform the practice of conservation.
 - Develop companion materials for Conservation in a New Nation over the next three to five years
 - Identify, train and support 2-3 conservation-connected faculty to provide Conservation in a New Nation presentations and programs by 2012
 - Play a supporting role in networking, convening, training the growing community of conservationists whose work has been transformed through their collaboration with CWC

Strategic Priority 3:

Collaborate-Co-Create-Catalyze: Increasing the number of tools and mechanisms needed to effectively create partnerships and collaborative projects in which CWC is involved externally, and increasing shared leadership opportunities internally.

How does this priority advance our strategy?

This approach will enable our small organization to have a huge impact. Rather than house all the expertise under our roof, we want to be a small org that has tremendous relationships, partnerships and collaborations which enable us to do really big work.

How will we know if we are successfully implementing this strategy?

- We will have updated curriculum materials in collaboration with faculty that will allow faculty to successfully and flexibly facilitate all CWC programs including Whole Thinking, Whole Measures, Transformational Leadership and Mission workshop and retreat programs by May of 2011
- Our partnerships with Center for Diversity and the Environment, with Interaction Associates are successful and we will capture and share our learning
- Explore opportunities to develop strategic partnerships with urban-based organizations
- Continue our investment in and commitment to the **2042 Today** program and collaboration with Center for Diversity and the Environment

Strategic Priority 4:

Investing in co-created land-based leadership development experiences, both with partners at Knoll Farm and in other rural and urban settings.

How does this priority advance our strategy?

With multiple home places in addition to Knoll Farm, CWC can embody different experiences of the value that land holds for people. By collaborating with those in cities and rural settings whose roots, history and current activities reflect a deep diversity of experience, we will offer our distinct land-based leadership development programs in settings that more fully draw from the diversity that we honor.

How will we know if we are successfully implementing this strategy?

- CWC will maintain a long-term permanent commitment to doing programs at the founding home place of Knoll Farm
- Over the next two to five years we will develop other home places in location(s) in addition to Knoll Farm – including possible collaborations with a partner organizations to deliver programs at a “sister” center(s)
- We will update organizational language that speaks primarily to the conservation and environmental movements and to speak more directly to the work of environmental justice, social justice and other Sectors – movements by 2012
- Increased investment in advanced leadership as a primary way of delivering our work, helping our alumni to implement.
 - *To support implementation of Whole Communities work, we will expand investment in the development of workshops that happen on alumni home ground and which are focused on implementing core practices of: story, working with difference, whole measures, re-inventing conservation.*
 - *We will continue to focus on building strong regional cohorts of alumni to create a tipping point for change - Current regional foci are: Chesapeake Bay, New England, SF Bay Area, Carolina’s, Michigan*

Strategic Priority 5:

Strengthening our leadership and organizational capacity to support effective collaboration, partnership and co-created programming.

How does this priority advance our strategy?

Stabilizing the internal systems and developing the capacity and infrastructure is required for effective collaboration, internally among staff, board and faculty and with external organizational partners. Our vision for new forms of leadership demand change from our alumni/ae, we must be continually developing our own capacity to evolve and grow internally.

How will we know if we are successfully implementing this strategy?

- Providing regular reports online to share what we are learning in our work

- Upgrade our current evaluation practices to be more inclusive
- Increase our earned income from 10% of budget to 25%, build individual donor giving from 20% of budget to 30%, effectively diversifying our funding base to decrease reliance on foundation funding.
- Clarify the outcomes of our program work by May 2011 so that we can be competitive at a much higher level in the foundation world
- Develop and implement a three year fundraising plan
- NEED TO ADDRESS BOARD CAPACITY/DEVELOPMENT SPECIFICALLY HERE