SOCIAL MOBILITY IN RURAL AMERICA

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Why this issue?

- **Unique moment in time**
- **Alignment with our missions and work**
- **Scope of the issue**
- **Ability to explore these issues in a unique way**
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<th>Income Quintile at Birth</th>
<th>Income Quintile as an Adult</th>
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For every 10 African Americans born into the middle class

Only 3 will stay there or be upwardly mobile

Source: Social Genome Model, Brookings Institution, Tabulations by Joanna Venator of Social Genome Data, based on NYSY79 and 97
Knox, Cedar counties

Stark, Mercer, McLean counties

Redwood, Brown, Cottonwood counties

Hansford, Ochiltree counties
HIGH EXPECTATION THAT YOUTH WILL “OPT IN”

SENSE OF SHARED FATE, COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINING THE COMMUNITY

STRONG, INFORMAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR ACCESSING OPPORTUNITIES

EARLY FOCUS ON CAREER PATHWAYS

OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH TO BUILD LIFE SKILLS

SIX COMMON FACTORS OF UPWARD MOBILITY
HIGH EXPECTATION THAT YOUTH WILL “OPT IN”

“...You just get used to being busy and having a full schedule. I don’t like not being busy anymore!”
Everyone is so supportive. Everyone is behind you.
I look at jobs that are growing in the market and shrinking to think about my future.
OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH TO BUILD LIFE SKILLS

“...I’m a waitress at a café and I also do postsecondary enrollment option classes, and then I also like to volunteer at the nursing home...so I’m learning a lot of time management.”
CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR ACCESSING OPPORTUNITIES

"If you want to do something, you can...If you want to get involved, you can."
If we don’t come back, we could lose our school. And if you lose your school, you lose your community.”
Building inclusive communities
Broadening our perspective

20-43% People of Color
Six questions for moving forward

1. Does our community expect all our young people to participate and stay engaged?

2. What support systems are we providing to our youth, and which are most needed?

3. Are we imbuing our young people with a sense of possibility and helping them plan accordingly toward a better life?

4. Are we providing a wide array of opportunities for youth to build life skills?

5. What actions are we taking to extend access to resources and opportunities to all our people, regardless of their income, race, religion, or location?

6. What steps are we taking to build the “demand side” of the economic opportunity equation—are we making our community a place where young people want to remain or return to if they leave?
DISCUSSION
Think of a specific community in your state where you are particularly focused today
Take 2 minutes and rate your selected community from 1-5 on each of the following factors:

1. The community expects all young people to participate and stay engaged.
2. The community is providing strong support systems for youth.
3. The community is imbuing young people with a sense of possibility and helping them plan accordingly toward a better life.
4. The community is providing a wide array of opportunities for youth to build life skills.
5. The community is taking adequate actions to extend access to resources and opportunities to all people, regardless of their income, race, religion, or location.
6. The community is taking steps to build the “demand side” of the economic opportunity equation and making the community a place where young people want to remain or return to if they leave.
Individual Reflection (5 minutes)

• Where do you see the greatest potential to move the community forward on one or more of these factors?

• What specific ideas do you have that could be implemented in the next couple of months to make progress? (be as concrete as possible)

• What resources would be needed (human, financial, otherwise) to implement those ideas and move the needle?
How could each community best move forward?
THANK YOU