Restoring the **American Dream**: What Would It Take to Dramatically Increase Mobility from Poverty?

**Webinar**  
February 1, 2018  
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Webinar Housekeeping

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• #MobilityFromPoverty
American Dream

Work hard, get ahead
American Dream

Work hard,
get ahead

You do well,
your children
do better
American Dream

Work hard, get ahead

You do well, your children do better

Today’s Reality

Children less likely to do better
American Dream

Work hard, get ahead

You do well, your children do better

Today’s Reality

Hard work isn’t enough

Children less likely to do better
American Dream

- Work hard, get ahead
- You do well, your children do better

Today’s Reality

- Place matters
- Hard work isn’t enough
- Children less likely to do better
Children less likely to do better than their parents
% of children earning more than their parents

Year of child's birth

Source: Chetty et al. "The Fading American Dream: Trends in Absolute Income Mobility Since 1940"
Hard work *isn’t enough*
Nowhere in the US can a FT minimum wage worker afford a 2-BD apartment
Disparities by race, gender, & immigration status persist
Share of workers ages 18-64 who earn low wages

- White
- Black
- Hispanic

Source: US Partnership on Mobility from Poverty calculations, based on March 2016 CPS-ASEC data.
Place matters
Chances of moving from bottom 20% as children to top 20% as adults

Poverty is *isolating & stigmatizing*
Beliefs about Attributes of “the Poor” & Middle Class

What would it take to dramatically increase mobility from poverty?
The Partners

David T. Ellwood, Chair
Harvard Kennedy School

Elisabeth Babcock
Economic Mobility Pathways

Joshua Bolten
Business Roundtable

Arthur C. Brooks
American Enterprise Institute

William J. Bynum
Hope Enterprise Corporation

Raj Chetty
Stanford University

Rev. Luis Cortés, Jr.
Esperanza

Jennifer L. Eberhardt
Stanford University

Kathryn Edin
Johns Hopkins University

Robert Greenstein
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Cheryl L. Hyman
formerly City Colleges of Chicago

Anthony B. Iton
The California Endowment

Lawrence Katz
Harvard University

N. Gregory Mankiw
Harvard University

Ai-jen Poo
National Domestic Worker Alliance;
Caring Across Generations

john a. powell
Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society

Cecilia Rouse
Princeton University

Juan Salgado
City Colleges of Chicago

Eldar Shafir
Princeton University

Srinija Srinivasan
Loove

Marta Tienda
Princeton University

Jeremy Travis
Laura and John Arnold Foundation

Roxane White
The Aspen Institute

Hirokazu Yoshikawa
New York University
Dreaming: Big Themes
US Partnership on Mobility from Poverty. 05.12.16.
Exploration: Building Blocks for Mobility
Building Blocks for Mobility

- Family Formation & Stability
- Parenting Skills
- High Quality Child Care & Early Learning
- Housing
- Community Building & Social Capital
- Elementary & Secondary Education
- Postsecondary Education
- Employment & Training
- Wages, Wage Supplements, & Work Supports
- Cash or Near-Cash Safety Net
- Asset Formation & Access to Capital
- Health & Mental Health
Site Visits: Detroit
Site Visits: Mississippi Delta
Site Visits: Mayfair, East San Jose
Mobility Definition

Economic Success

Mobility

Being Valued in Community

Power and Autonomy
Strategies

→ Change the narrative
Narratives are like the air we breathe: It’s the context for everything.

— Ai-jen Poo, Partnership member
Strategies

Create access to good jobs
Robots don’t yet do empathy.
— Larry Katz, Partnership member
Strategies

Change the narrative

Create access to good jobs

Ensure zip code is not destiny
Ensure Zip Code is Not Destiny

The community [should] work with people for solutions. It works if you feel like you’re both understanding why you’re doing it and you have a choice in it. As opposed to something being done to you.

—African American woman & Detroit resident
Strategies

- Change the narrative
- Create access to good jobs
- Ensure zip code is not destiny
- Provide support that empowers
Lummi people do not consider themselves poor because they are following the values of their elders: family, land & water, balance, love & respect, and voice. There is not word for poverty in their language. It would most closely translate to, “to be without family,” which would never happen.

—Lummi woman & resident of Lummi Nation
Change the narrative

Create access to good jobs

Ensure zip code is not destiny

Provide support that empowers

Transform data use
We review every child death that happened in the city. In many cases, each of us has a file on the child or the family at least an inch thick.

—Dr. Leana Wen, Commissioner of Health, City of Baltimore
Mutually reinforcing strategies
+
Cross-sector collaboration
What are your reactions and questions?
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For further information

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