

7. Building the Civic Capacity of Colorado Communities for Community Driven Change

Mentors: [Patti Schmitt](#), [David MacPhee](#), [Paula Yuma](#)

Location: Fort Collins (with limited travel around the state)

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Internship Opportunity Snapshot:

Join this exciting and innovative CSU Extension driven effort to develop a tool for communities and groups to assess their civic capacity for community-driven change. This first of its kind effort involves a panel of national experts and practitioners who are part of a research based approach to developing a tool that will allow communities and groups to assess current gaps for community collaboration and where they could leverage resources to increase their capacity for community-driven change. This internship opportunity will feature opportunities for; hands on experience with the final rounds for developing the civic capacity index tool, working with experts in the field to design trainings and materials for communities to use the tool, piloting the use of the civic capacity index in a urban and a rural community, connecting with local, regional and state community organizations and government offices in outreach efforts, and working behind the scenes with the FLTI of Colorado staff and faculty on campus related to this important civic engagement work.

What is the Family Leadership Training Institute of Colorado at CSU Extension?

The Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI) of Colorado at CSU Extension is a one of kind community training focused on building individual and community capacity for inclusive collaboration and civic engagement by bringing diverse voices to the decision-making table. FLTI promotes greater collaboration between individuals, families, institutions, public administrators, and elected officials as they seek strategies to respond to pressing community social, health, and economic issues. Colorado State University Extension's mission is to empower Coloradans to address important and emerging community issues using dynamic, research-based educational resources. The development of a Civic Capacity Index comes from an identified gap nationally in the engagement field for a tool to increase community driven efforts.

What is Community-Driven Change?

Historically, civic leadership has been defined in terms of a top-down approach, in which public administrators and elected officials define the problem, decide how the problem will be addressed, and assess whether the desired outcomes were achieved. Increasingly, however, foundations, government agencies, and other institutions aspire (at least rhetorically) to support community-driven responses to challenges such as health, education, housing, policing, and crises that require the community to adapt or to be resilient. Two premises inform this thinking about community-driven change: (1) it is more effective in making lasting progress because a broad range of stakeholders are involved, from defining the problem to taking action to address the problem; and (2) it is more inclusive and egalitarian, therefore more democratic. At its core, then, community-driven change might be defined in terms of shared power between decision

makers and community members, multiple perspectives on issues, strong participation from diverse people, a focus on the common good, and decision-making processes that are equitable, authentic, and transparent.

How is the Civic Capacity Index being Developed?

We are using a concept mapping process to identify key features of community-driven change; these key elements will serve as the basis for a Civic Capacity Index.

Mentorship Opportunity:

This internship will provide a student with an opportunity to work closely with the FLTI team and our lead researcher with the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Dr. David MacPhee. Additionally, Dr. Paula Yuma, in the Department of Social Work will provide mentorship for this work and its connection to designing community intervention strategies for community level impacts. We anticipate this work will fall in both the Community Development PRU as well as the Individual, Family, and Community Well-being PRU. Most work will happen on campus, but there will be an opportunity to travel. FLTI has limited budget to pay for travel.