

## Community Conversations Summary 2016

In October of 2015, The Lake County Community Foundation hosted a series of six community conversations in Antioch, North Chicago, Lake Forest, Vernon Hills, Mundelein and Grayslake with the goal of establishing a better understanding of key priorities. Nearly 200 stakeholders from different segments of the community – volunteers, donors, nonprofits, foundations, faith-based institutions and government—came together to share their experiences and feedback.

Following is a summary of the information gathered during these conversations and through the follow up survey. The Foundation is grateful to all who participated and we look forward to incorporating this valuable information as we establish our future grant making and community engagement priorities.

### **Recommended Priorities**

*Education was identified as the top priority by over 60% of survey respondents.*

Survey respondents indicated that this priority ranges from Early Childhood Education and after school programming to Adult Basic Education and Health Literacy.

### **Foundation Role**

When asked what role the Foundation and its partners can play to support a healthier, more dynamic Lake County, the top three recommendations emerged.

#### 1. **Coordination**

The Foundation supports resource and service coordination and cross-sector collaboration.

#### 2. **Convening and Networking**

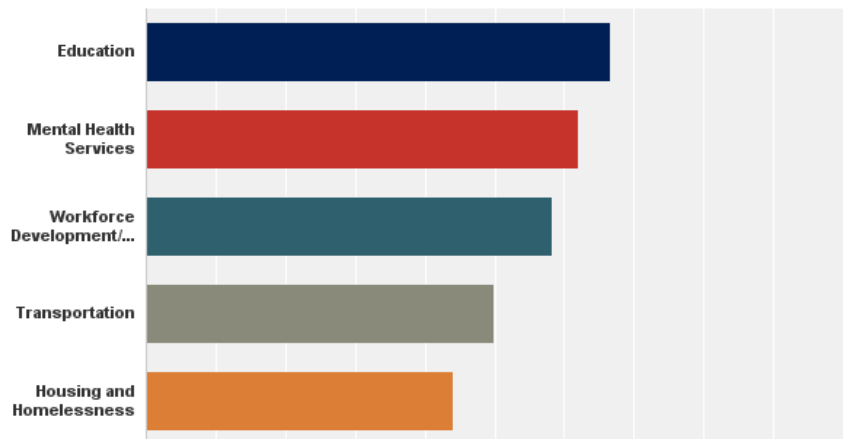
The Foundation serves as a convener, connector, unifier and thought partner to explore creative ways to work together to address pressing needs.

#### 3. **Research and Education**

The Foundation shares and supports the creation of research to help service providers and communities make informed decisions.

**Q5 Based on the preliminary responses compiled from the six Community Conversations, what major areas would you like to see the Foundation prioritize for its grant making and community engagement in the future? Please choose up to five.**

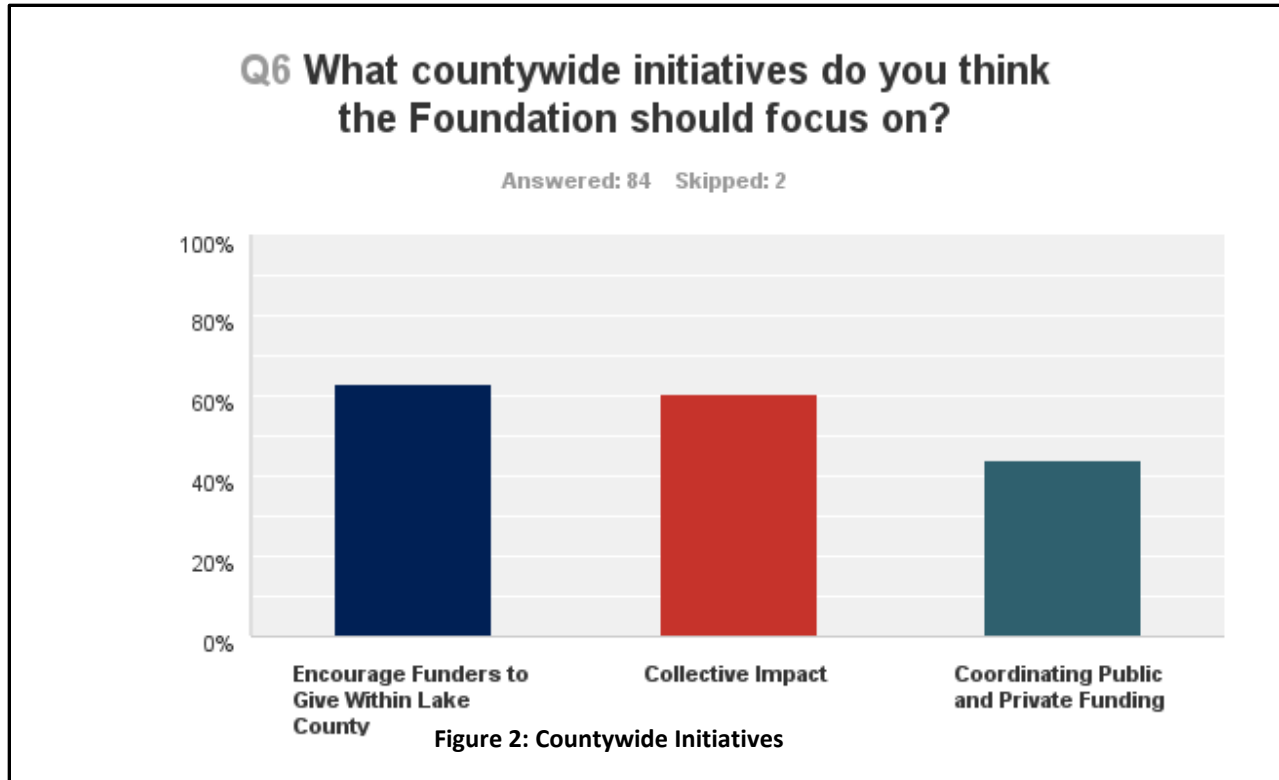
Answered: 84 Skipped: 2



**Figure 1: Top 5 Community Priorities**

## **Countywide Initiatives**

Encouraging funders to give within Lake County was the top countywide priority participants identified for the Foundation to focus on.



*“The Foundation needs to act as the convener of service providers and can communicate the picture of need in Lake County in a way that each individual organization can’t do.”*

## **Research**

Stakeholders identified the following issues as the top three research areas that would be most beneficial for the Foundation to support in 2016 and 2017.

- The growth of Lake County population in poverty relative to the growth of human service providers
- Immigration status statistics by community
- Public transportation networks relative to service provider locations

## **Next Steps**

In response to this feedback, the Foundation is:

- Using the information to inform the design of its grant making and community engagement strategy.
- Continuing to coordinate, convene and educate.
- Developing key messaging to encourage funders to give within Lake County.
- Supporting the development and dissemination of the three research priorities indicated above.

Source: *The Lake County Community Foundation, Lake County Community Conversations – Participant Survey, November 2015.*