The Tangelo Park Program: A Historical Case Study of the Program's First 25 Years Through the Lens of Social Capital

A Dissertation submitted
to the Graduate School
Valdosta State University

In partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

in the Department of Political Science
of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences

November 2023

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ABSTRACT

Beginning in the mid-1990s, Florida hotelier Mr. Harris Rosen focused his philanthropic efforts on the creation of the Tangelo Park Program, an initiative that intentionally coupled free preschool with a full-ride scholarship for a public college, university, or vocational school in the state. The Tangelo Park Program has become a national model of how private citizens can positively impact their communities by addressing the root causes of poverty, despair, and social disintegration.

This study utilized archival records and one-on-one stakeholder interviews with divergent voices to explore four research questions: how the program built social capital, how the assets-based approach developed self-interest and collective interest, how the program contributed to student- and neighborhood-level outcomes, and what are the best practices that emerged from the program's first 25 years. The findings can inform other communities in the customization and implementation of their whole-child programs.

The findings reveal that efforts to cultivate social capital must begin with the buy-in of the community's residents, institutions, and formal and informal leaders. Grassroots social capital-building requires trustworthiness and follow through, purposeful listening, a neighborhood presence, and respect for the will of the community. Recognizing cultural norms and mores is fundamental to successful interactions. Engaging families as partners in their children's education is paramount, and encourages the prosocial behaviors of cooperation and shared decision-making. This program was the impetus for children in Tangelo Park internalizing their potential for success, thus resulting in high school and college graduation rates that far outpace the state and nation. The program's $7:$1 return on investment as measured by degree completion and a reduction in crime is indicative of the transformation that defines this urban neighborhood.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I: INTRODUCTION 1

Tangelo Park Program Background 1

Purpose of the Study 4

Research Questions 4

Rationale for Mixed Methods 5

Outline of Dissertation 6

Chapter II: LITERATURE REVIEW 7

Theoretical Framework: Social Capital 7

Human Capital 13

Collective Efficacy 14

Applications of Social Capital 17

Educational Success Via Social Capital Development 20

Neighborhood-Level Factors 24

Socioeconomic-Based Factors 25

School-Based Factors 26

Individual-Level Factors 27

Tangelo Park Program Beginnings 28

Preschool to Post-Secondary Education 30

Evidence of a Successful Strategy 32

Shifting Neighborhood Demographics 37

Program Sustainability 40

Broadening Program Impact 42

Chapter III: METHODOLOGY 45

Overview 45
Sample Selection 46
Data Collection 48
Data Analysis 52
Ethical Considerations 53
Chapter IV: RESULTS 55
Overview 55
Historical Context of Tangelo Park 56
Addressing Social Ills in an Urban Neighborhood 56
Harris Rosen and the Origin of the Tangelo Park Program 58
Defining a Vision and Charting the Course 58
Implementation and Enhancement of the Program 60
Paving the Way with In-Home Preschools 60
Bridging the Gap From Preschool to College 61
Developing Informed and Involved Parents 62
Community Policing in Both Name and Practice 64
A Framework for Notable Leadership 65
Building and Sustaining Social Capital 65
Collaboration as an Impetus for Trust-Building 65
Forging Credibility, Reliability, and Intimacy 66
Fostering Purposeful Relationships 67
Social Capital Igniting Academic Success 70
Sustaining Social Capital Throughout the Decades 73
Evidence of Neighborhood Transformation 76
Bolstering an Intergenerational Sense of Community 76

Enhancing the Physical Environment 77
High School Graduation as the Expectation 78
A Collateral Benefit: Reduction in Crime 79
Sustainability and Replication 80
Misalignment of Mission and Scope 82
A Model Worthy of Replications: The Sum of Its Parts 84
Race as a Blockade to Replication 86
Not All Philanthropists Are Created Equal 87
Social Capital-Building as the Precursor to Replication 87
Strategies for Eliminating Barriers to Replication 89
Impacts of COVID-19 90
Impacts of Black Lives Matter 92
Chapter V: CONCLUSION 95
Project Summary 95
Findings and Implications 96
Approach to Data Collection 96
Research Questions 97
Limitations and Key Assumptions 103
Directions for Future Research 105
REFERENCES 108
APPENDIX A: Institutional Review Board Approval 118
APPENDIX B: Stakeholder Interview Question Line 120
APPENDIX C: Informed Consent for Stakeholder Interviews 123

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: *Degrees Conferred to Scholarship Recipients* 34

Figure 2: *Degrees Earned Versus Degrees Expected Among High School Graduates From Tangelo Park* 34

Figure 3: *Graduation Rates Among Scholarship Recipients* 35

Figure 4: *Race and Ethnicity of Tangelo Park Residents in 2000 and 2010* 37

Figure 5: *Percent Change in Race and Ethnicity of Tangelo Park Residents From 2000 to 2010* 38

Figure 6: *Age Distribution of Tangelo Park Residents in 2000 and 2010* 39

Figure 7: *Percent Change in Age Distribution of Tangelo Park Residents From 2000 to 2010* 39

Figure 8: *Tangelo Park Residents Living in Poverty in 2000 and 2010* 40

Figure 9: *Self-Reported Role(s) of Each Interviewee* 56

Figure 10: *Stakeholder Responses Regarding Strategies to Build Trust* 75

Figure 11: *Longitudinal Comparison of Tangelo Park and Florida High School Graduation Rates* 79

Figure 12: *Tangelo Park Crime Rate for 1994 Through 2020 (Standardized by 1993 Figures)* 80

Figure 13: *Stakeholder Responses Regarding Barriers to Program Replication* 84

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to my committee chair, Dr. James LaPlant, for his dedication, patience, encouragement, and scholarship. I am grateful to my defense committee, Dr. Charles Dziuban and Dr. Britt Davis, who generously provided knowledge, expertise, and motivation. This endeavor would not have been possible without the program records and stakeholder contacts provided by Dr. Dziuban. I would like to recognize Dr. Gerald Merwin for guiding me through the early years of this program. I am thankful for the continued support and inspiration of my classmates, colleagues, and friends.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my Mom and Dad. Thank you for your unwavering belief in me. I am grateful for your devotion and continuous cheerleading.

I adore you, Hudson, and look forward to celebrating your first patent.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

As wealth inequality in the United States increases, the growing divide between rich and poor creates a renewed sense of urgency to address the impacts of poverty. A number of public health, safety, and educational failures have disproportionately impacted underserved neighborhoods. In order to address urban and generational poverty, and its effects on youth and families, programs to increase student achievement in primary and secondary schools have been developed across the country.

A primary route out of poverty is education; it is regarded as the great equalizer (Obiakor & Barker, 1993). Systemic change within a neighborhood requires the buy-in of not only schoolchildren and their parents, but the entire community. Twenty-first century educational programs designed to improve the welfare, economic standing, and outlook of urbanites must recognize the underlying significance and necessity of social capital.

Social capital is broadly defined as the local networks, relationships, and associations that impact economic welfare and community development (Putnam, 2000). This construct represents an alternative source of collateral when physical or financial means are limited. Programs designed to increase social norms, trust, and relations must encourage community participation and indigenous leadership. Access to capital of this nature often translates to socioeconomic, political, civic, and educational advantages.

Tangelo Park Program Background

This case study focuses on the implementation and sustainability of a comprehensive educational program for urban youth within the context of building social capital in an economically disadvantaged neighborhood. The Tangelo Park Program began 28 years ago in

Orlando, Florida. Mr. Harris Rosen, one of Central Florida's most influential businessmen, selected a blighted Orlando neighborhood on the outskirts of the tourist corridor as the site for a pilot program designed to tackle the area's educational, social, and economic ills. The neighborhood, Tangelo Park, was predominantly African American, and plagued by poverty, open-air drug dealing, crime, a failing elementary school, and student drop-outs who expressed no hope for their future (Billman, 2016).

Data from the 2000 U.S. Census indicate that 89.1% of the population of Tangelo Park CDP (Census-Designated Place) was black or African American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a). In 1999, the per capita income for this CDP was $11,744. Fifteen percent of families with related children under 18 years were living below the poverty level, and among female-headed households with related children under 18 years, the percentage living below poverty totaled 23.8% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000b).

In the spirit of responsible capitalism, Mr. Rosen invested part of his fortune to revitalize Tangelo Park with a focus on education, beginning with preschool to ensure that the youngest residents of this neighborhood would not enter Kindergarten disadvantaged. Mr. Rosen's philanthropy also includes full scholarships (tuition, books, housing, and travel) for all Tangelo Park graduating seniors attending a state college or university, community college, junior college, or vocational school in Florida. Although there are thousands of scholarship programs – merit- and need-based – available to deserving students, the Tangelo Park Program is the only *first dollar* scholarship program of its kind in the nation. First dollar scholarships are awarded to the student regardless of eligibility for any other type of grant, loan, or public or private funding.

At the time the Tangelo Park Program was established, the national dropout rate for black, non-Hispanic students was 12.6%, and among white, non-Hispanic students the rate was

7.7% (U.S. Census Bureau, 1994). In comparison, the high school dropout rate for students in the Tangelo Park neighborhood hovered at 25% (Naipaul & Wang, 2009). Since the launch of the Tangelo Park Program, the high school graduation rate has steadied in the upper 90% range. In 2018, 100% of Tangelo Park seniors received a high school diploma. The figure statewide climbed to 86% (The Tangelo Park and Parramore Programs, 2020).

The grade point average (GPA) of these students has steadily increased, and between 2014 and 2017, the GPA of Tangelo Park Program students averaged 3.03. For comparison, during the program's first four years (2004-2007), the GPA of Tangelo Park Program students averaged 2.56.

The Tangelo Park Program was designed to strengthen relationships within the neighborhood, and between neighborhood residents and outside stakeholders. The program represents an organic collaboration among public, private, and non-profit organizations. From its outset, the program enlisted the support of four long-standing community institutions in Tangelo Park: Tangelo Park Elementary School, Tangelo Park YMCA, Tangelo Park Baptist Church, and Tangelo Park Civic Association (The Tangelo Park Program Overview, n.d.). The program is governed by the leadership of the Tangelo Park Program Advisory Board that meets monthly using a shared decision-making model. The board is comprised of 31 collaborators representing different facets of the program's administration, monitoring, and service delivery.

The Tangelo Park Program's influence on social capital is evidenced by the fact that all program stakeholders volunteer their time and expertise in-kind; no program funds are used to compensate collaborators for salaries, materials, etc. Ever since the program's early days, the number and diversity of organizations providing resources and services to the neighborhood's

residents has continued to grow. For example, at present, residents are eligible for preventative healthcare screenings, pro bono legal aid, and parent leadership training.

The impact neighborhood-wide has been widely documented in recent years, and the scope of Mr. Rosen's pioneering social enterprise in Orlando continues to grow. In 2016, The Rosen Foundation designated a second economically disadvantaged neighborhood, Parramore, as the next site for this highly-regarded educational reform built on the reemergence of relational and socioeconomic capital.

Purpose of the Study

This case study is unique insofar as it is the first of its kind to study the Tangelo Park Program's evolution through the lens of social capital. This case study will help inform the neighborhoods, philanthropists, corporate donors, and community partners interested in exploring the creation of a wide-ranging urban educational reform through the building of social cohesion. It may be effectual in shaping the elements, processes, and products of future educational initiatives designed to envelop at-risk students and their neighborhoods from pre-school to high school and beyond.

This mixed methods study describes the structure, performance, and leadership of the Tangelo Park Program throughout its first 25 years; explores the characteristics, culture and conditions of the neighborhood and participants served, and examines how community connectedness has been leveraged to gain (and maintain) support for the program over the last quarter-century. It is framed by four research questions.

Research Questions

1. How did the program build social capital in the form of community buy-in and ownership among the neighborhood's residents?

2. How did the program's assets-based approach develop community stakeholders' self-interest and collective interest?
3. In what ways has the Tangelo Park Program contributed to student- and neighborhood-level outcomes with regard to high school graduation and neighborhood safety?
4. What are the best practices that have emerged from the program over the past 25 years that may be replicable or transferrable?

Limitations of the current study are that it is bound by time and place. Although the findings are expected to inform future programs of a similar nature, the geographic, economic, and situational context of the Tangelo Park neighborhood must be a consideration for the program's portability or replication.

Rationale for Mixed Methods

This dissertation will include elements from the instrumental case study identified by Stake (2000). The unit of analysis for this descriptive case study is the community stakeholders and students of the educational program. The express purpose of qualitative research is to understand and explain participant meaning (Morrow, Rakhsha, & Castañeda, 2001). Creswell (1998) identifies qualitative research as an inquiry-based process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of exploring a social problem. Qualitative research has the advantage of offering the researcher a rich, complex view of informants in a natural setting.

Morrow et al. (2001) propose a series of reasons for the use of qualitative research to study multicultural issues in particular. They include: 1) recognizing context as an essential

component of the research, 2) addressing the researcher's process of self-awareness and self-reflection, 3) capturing the meanings made by participants of their individual experiences, 4) expanding methodological possibilities to address questions that cannot be answered using conventional methods, and 5) providing an opportunity for marginalized and underrepresented voices to be brought into the fold.

Archival program records and data originating from the Orange County Sherif's Office and Orange County Public Schools complement the 16 one-on-one stakeholder interviews.

Outline of Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into five chapters and an appendix section. The first chapter offers an introduction of the Tangelo Park Program, the purpose of the study, the rationale for qualitative methods, and the research questions. Chapter II introduces the theoretical framework of social capital and collective efficacy, the four interrelated factors that inform this research, and a comprehensive review of the literature related to the Tangelo Park Program's implementation and outcomes. The third chapter describes the research methods including how stakeholders were selected, the sources of data, how the data were analyzed, and ethical considerations. Chapter IV presents and highlights the results of the analysis. In this chapter, the themes that emerged from the stakeholder interviews, program artifacts, and graduation and crime data are reviewed in detail. Chapter V provides a summary of the findings and implications, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework – Social Capital

The theories that provide the framework for this study include social capital and collective efficacy. Social capital is a conceptual model that merges components of both sociological and economic perspectives. "Social capital is used in the creation of human capital by demonstrating its effect in the family and in the community on the educational development of youth" (Feldman & Assaf, 1999, p.11). Attempts to grow opportunity communitywide require an expanding stock of social trust, norms, and networks.

The historical economic, educational, and social ills that once plagued Tangelo Park are not unique to this Florida neighborhood. In fact, the community's demographics, drug use, school dropout rate, and transiency are representative of thousands of neighborhoods across the country. The Tangelo Park Program is a community-supported, private sector innovation, designed to revive the lost civic commitment of decades past. The program encourages community participation and indigenous leadership. It merges the human capital of the private, public, and non-profit sectors, and represents the spirit of interagency collaboration (Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001).

Although poverty is largely regarded as the absence of *economic capital*, a void of community relations and support is defined as an absence of *social capital*. The two constructs can operate independently: it is conceivable for a person to be financially impoverished yet rich in social capital. Social capital is likened to the adhesive that holds societies intact. This phenomenon refers to ". . . the internal social and cultural coherence of society, the norms and values that govern interactions among people and the institutions in which they are

embedded" (Feldman & Assaf, 1999, p.iii). Social capital describes an abundance of relationships – formal and informal – and connections that can be relied on for mutual aid and collective power (Greenbaum, 2008).

Prominent theorists have differing opinions on how this construct should be defined, and how it fits into the individualism-collectivism schema. Does growth in social trust, norms, and networks inexorably require a sacrifice of individualism? Moreover, must one's individual goals be supplanted in favor of the goals of the group?

Cavaye (2004) drew attention to the dark side of social capital. An abundance of this asset does not necessarily equate to more functional communities. In fact, it can be used to prop up unjust community power structures, support unhealthy norms, and reinforce existing fractures in the community. It can contribute to misinformation and, when perverted, reduce the tolerance granted to outsiders.

In the absence of complex social networks, there can be no economic growth or well-being of humanity, and society will erode. Social capital theory maintains that local networks and associations have a positive, cumulative, and measurable impact on economic welfare and community development. Latent structure is what emerges in the wake of crises, such as wildfires or hurricanes, when neighbors mobilize to assist one another. Cavaye (2004) questioned how communities can bottle even a fraction of latent function to further their proactive participation and cooperation in everyday interactions.

According to Harvard Professor Robert Putnam (2000), social capital works through a series of channels. First is "information flows" which includes interactions such as the exchange of ideas, learning about job openings, discussing the views of political candidates, etc. Second is "norms of reciprocity" or mutual aid, which relies on sustained social networks. This involves

the establishment of bonding networks that connect individuals within particularized or homogeneous groups, and bridging networks that connect people from generalized or diverse groups. Third is "collective action" which describes the role of new and existing social networks in managing and mobilizing cooperation, services, and resources. Lastly, the concept of "broader identities and solidarity" is meant to transition the residents of a community from an individual ("I") mentality to a group ("we") identity (Putnam, 2000).

The economic advantages of social ties are not exclusive to certain ethnic enclaves; rather, they are regarded as a potent resource across every level of the social hierarchy. Putnam (2000) noted that in all parts of the economy social capital is ". . . perhaps even more important than human capital (education and experience)" (p. 321).

This public good oftentimes represents an underutilized yet embedded resource for low-income urban neighborhoods. The Tangelo Park Program was designed to strengthen relationships within the neighborhood, and between neighborhood residents and outside stakeholders. The outside stakeholders have a genuine, altruistic interest in the neighborhood's success. Neighborhood residents' efforts to build community and devise comprehensive solutions are nurtured through a collective identity, values, and social norms.

Cavaye (2004) cautioned that social capital in and of itself cannot address fundamental disadvantages within a community. It is just one element of a complex process of change in communities, and its effects are localized. "It may be inappropriate to expect investment in social capital to have wide societal benefits" (Cavaye, 2004, p. 9). The Tangelo Park Program succeeded in applying a tailor-made approach to fostering community goals and ownership.

This construct does not equate to merely having an extensive number of social ties. Lack of social capital is believed to be an indicator of disadvantage insofar as it signifies one has few connections to rely on in times of need or when seeking enterprising opportunities.

Through his ladder-esque visualization, Putnam (2000) underscored the hierarchical nature of formal and informal social ties as the backdrop for improving the quality of social relations. Putnam argued that a decline in racial and ethnic homogeneity within a neighborhood inhibits cohesion and engagement in public life (see also Twigg, Taylor, & Mohan, 2010).

In their research, Allik & Realo (2004) sought to understand how select indices of individualism correlate with the metrics of social capital both in the United States and across 42 countries. Drawing from Putnam's The Social Capital Index, and Vandello and Cohen's Individualism-Collectivism Index, the researchers uncovered a strong correlation in 48 states between high levels of this paradigm and high levels of individualism. "In the United States, states that are characterized by a higher degree of civic engagement and political activity, where people spend more time with their friends and believe that most people can be trusted, are also more individualistic" (Allik & Realo, 2004, p. 42). States that have been successful in developing and maintaining robust social networks based on interpersonal trust and voluntary cooperation – two measures of this construct – are also more individualistic.

Using international indices of individualism-collectivism, Allik & Realo (2004) identified that the countries with the greatest levels of interpersonal trust are also characterized by high levels of individualism. In addition to the United States, these include Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Canada.

In their analysis of data from the European Social Survey (Round 6), Beilmann, Koots-Ausmees, & Realo (2018) unearthed a positive relationship between social capital and

individualism at both the individual level and the cultural level. Essentially, individuals who embrace independent thought, action, and adaptability are also more inclined to believe that most people are trustworthy, and they express a willingness to engage in informal social networks. Individualism acts as an incubator for social capital, and it appears to be a conduit for individualism, both within and across cultures.

In modern societies, the tension between individualism and collectivism gives rise to an ever-increasing division of labor. "The division of labor unites, rather than separates individuals; it causes activities that can exist only in the presence of or in coordination with other activities" (Allik & Realo, 2004, p. 31). Paradoxically, self-interest and autonomy breed reciprocity and trust, triggering the realization that helping each another pursue collective goals contributes to economic and moral benefits.

Modernization and the inclination toward rugged individualism might appear, on the surface, to pose an intractable threat to social cohesion and communal association. Western, democratic societies place great value on individualism, and the focus on individual rights and freedoms is perceived as being at odds with the native harmony between individuals and society. Yet, Allik & Realo (2004) identified that autonomy and independence are, in large measure, a precondition for the promotion of interpersonal cooperation and social solidarity. Their findings align with Emile Durkheim's view that as individuals become increasingly autonomous – effectively unshackling them from social bonds – they do, in fact, become more dependent on society. Social capital increases as an individual's radius of trust enlarges to include a greater number of contacts and social networks.

Hill, Jobling, Pollet, & Nettle (2014) differentiated thick from thin trust in their explanation of complex social networks and cooperative communities. Thick trust develops over

time through repeated interactions with family, friends, and confidants with whom we have established personal ties. In contrast, "Thin trust is of the anonymous 'other' and includes trusting strangers or people with whom we have weaker social ties" (Hill et al., 2014, p. 60). Thin trust is synonymous with generalized social trust and correlates with higher social capital.

Whereas more affluent individuals can avail themselves of resources and formal social ties to get ahead, deprived individuals are more likely to rely on informal social ties. Building trusting social networks is therefore of greater necessity for residents of disadvantaged neighborhoods, yet the repercussions of mistakenly trusting those around you can land one in a precarious position. Herein lies a "chicken and egg dilemma": how to overcome the adverse conditions, mistrust, and distress that often characterize a disordered neighborhood while encouraging the prosocial behaviors of relationship-building, collective interest, and cooperation.

Social capital research has been criticized for promoting vague, esoteric ideas, and perpetuating – and falling victim to – casual empiricism. Greenbaum (2008) theorized that noted social scientists William Julius Wilson and Robert Putnam categorically undervalue the social ties among low-income individuals in urban areas, going so far as to view them as an inhibitor of success. Greenbaum (2008) contends that this view of the "underclass" as isolated has erroneously served as the impetus for many urban housing decisions and strategies in recent decades, some of which have deliberately fractured the existing network of relationships. Per Greenbaum (2008), although the intention of urban renewal programs may have been to improve the economic standing of families living in poverty, they contribute to socio-spatial inequalities and damage the longstanding social structures.

Human Capital

Fukuyama (2001) affirmed that social capital cannot be easily operationalized or quantified, nor does it share the same hallmarks of other forms of capital. Regarding human capital, Brisson (2004) explained that this construct can be deciphered using rudimentary mathematical principles. "When people expend capital, they are left with less capital. Or, if they add more human capital, their stock of human capital has increased" (p. 22). Whereas human capital is the collective skills and knowledge of individuals, and physical capital is embodied in observable material form, social capital is a form of non-monetary currency that stems from the very structure of social relationships (Coleman, 1990). Similar to human capital, social capital can be converted into a resource in the attainment of durable goods and services. It can be an intentional or collateral outcome; a derivative of relationship-building that intensifies with use and dwindles with disuse.

Behavioral economist and Nobel laureate Gary Becker (1975) created an analytical framework around human behaviors that occurred beyond the disciplinary boundaries of economics. He found that nearly every facet of human behavior could be reduced to a cost-benefit analysis (Wolfers, 2014). Per Becker, individuals make decisions with purpose; they weigh the consequences of their actions and are responsive to incentives.

Becker maintains that inequality in education and training is positively correlated to the inequality in earning and income distribution. Investments in human capital from education and on-the-job training are a gain not only for the individual, but for society as well. Becker (1975) contends that some individuals earn more than their counterparts ". . . simply because they invest more in themselves" (p. 231). The economic effects of education are subject to personal-level

investment, ability, and opportunity. Improvements in emotional and physical health may yield returns in human capital.

James Heckman, Nobel Prize winning economist and prominent scholar in human capital policy, was one of the first theorists to explore the value of non-cognitive skill development for the individual and society. Attributes such as grit, dependability, persistence, and teamwork – better known in present-day terms as 21st century skills – play a pivotal role in student and occupational success. Heckman noted that although these attributes are not as easily measured as prevailing measures of achievement, non-cognitive skills can be improved over time and lead to academic achievement (Harms, 2004).

Heckman's research emphasized the value of early childhood education on cognitive skills and, even more importantly, on non-cognitive skills such as self-discipline and socialization. Preschool programs, early childhood intervention programs, and mentoring programs such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters are examples of investments in young people meant to build human capital (Harms, 2004).

Collective Efficacy

Social capital theorists have examined the relationship between neighborhood-level factors and collective efficacy. The construct of collective efficacy is comprised of two interrelated components: residents' perception of social cohesion, and informal social control. Racial homogeneity is correlated with perceptions of cohesion and control. In fact, racial homogeneity and social disorganization have been shown to create both a positive and negative relationship. "Today's metropolitan areas are inhabited by groups of people who typically live in homogeneous sub-groups and like their predecessors share similar cultural norms" (Madison, 2009, p. 49).

Neighborhood social cohesion has been correlated with health, safety, and educational achievement (Brisson & Walker, 2015). Although neighborhood social cohesion is fundamental to many anti-poverty and other social service programs, surprisingly little is known about this construct. In their study of survey data from The Annie E. Casey Foundation's *Making Connections Initiative*, Brisson and Walker (2015) discovered that neighborhood social cohesion varies by time and place, and appears to be a sound entry point for intervention work.

The neighborhood-level effects of social cohesion and informal social control are moderated by racial homogeneity (Collins, Neal, & Neal, 2016; Lenzi et al., 2012; Twigg, Taylor, & Mohan, 2010). Shared beliefs help neighborhood residents shape the social, economic, and political landscape of their community. With a sense of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual trust comes a willingness among residents to intervene and take action on neighborhood disorder. Using data from the *Making Connections Initiative*, Collins et al. (2016) identified a positive relationship between perceived social cohesion and informal social control. Collective efficacy influences neighborhood-level outcomes including crime and disorder. Based on this research, the association between neighborhood racial composition and social cohesion stands to benefit the residents of Tangelo Park.

Collins et al. (2016) uncovered that racial homogeneity may be a structural precursor to social cohesion. This does not mean, however, that community-building efforts in diverse communities are doomed to fail. In fact, depending on the neighborhood context, community organizing networks stand to benefit from the provision of a variety of methods of engagement across racial, ethnic, and religious lines (Speer et al., 2003; Wood, Fulton, & Partridge, 2012).

Gomez and Muntaner (2005) explored the effects of social capital on the health outcomes of an urban neighborhood undergoing redevelopment. Using four ethnographic research

methods (informal interviews, focus groups, surveys, and in-depth informant interviews), the researchers presented evidence to support the notion that community connectedness is impacted by government enterprise and unwanted urban redevelopment. With regard to individual health and the general health of the community, residents of this east Baltimore, Maryland, neighborhood reported feeling powerless and experiencing a lack of control and trust.

Ineffective bonding and bridging social capital in this Baltimore neighborhood were particularly evident in the unequal power of the stakeholders. Residents did not feel that they had a voice in working with the government, community associations, or private developer to negotiate the redevelopment in a way that represented their interests as long-standing members of the community (Gomez & Muntaner, 2005). In fact, the (self-serving) collaboration between the government and the private developer was viewed as a detriment to effective collective action insofar as residents were forced out of their homes, and their community was reengineered without consent. This pattern of redevelopment in urban areas nationwide often results in the displacement of residents, feelings of disenfranchisement, and the erosion of distrust of the legal, political, and institutional environments.

Per Gordon and Armour-Thomas (1992), the urban living environment is characterized by diversity and is teeming with contradiction. Residents of urban neighborhoods are simultaneously flooded with harmonious and discordant cultural influences. This incongruence is an inherent by-product of urban dwelling, and represents yet another barrier for youth in their formative years. Historically, K-12 schools have not taught students how to understand and manage this ". . . paradoxical phenomenon of contradiction" (Madison, 2009, p. 50).

Jacqueline Mattis, a psychology professor and dean of faculty at Rutgers University, has been researching how residents in poor communities outwardly defined by depravity and chaos

can achieve elevated levels of social capital. Mattis maintains that although much of the existing research on this construct showcases it as the domain of the middle- or upper-class, it can be found in abundance in marginalized communities (Averett, 2021). In fact, it is these pockets of resilience ingrained in poorer communities that contribute to the improvement of living conditions, social mobility, and engaged networks.

Averett (2021) contends the prevailing assumption that " . . . distressed or low-income communities cannot manufacture it themselves and therefore rely on interventions to build social capital" fails to account for the collectivism that permeates predominantly black enclaves (p. 52). She explains that this phenomenon has been coined the "Black helping tradition" by some social scientists. It illustrates how people cope and thrive in the face of challenging and oppressive circumstances, using this asset to harness hopefulness, form mutual bonds, and solve problems. The common threads of spirituality found in black churches encourage social action on behalf of the community and inspire congregants to look after one another.

Applications of Social Capital

Endeavors to improve the circumstances of high-poverty neighborhoods date back to the late 19th century. Neighborhoods are, after all, the cornerstone of place-based engagement, from physical and economic to social and political. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's place-based initiative of the 2000s, *Making Connections,* was designed to strengthen families and promote community change. The comprehensive demonstration project emerged from the premise that children thrive in communities that offer a range of opportunities, support networks, social services, and resources (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013).

In its attempts to understand community-specific challenges, Making Connections uncovered that neighborhoods often lacked the necessary level of organizational infrastructure to

foster and sustain an effective, coordinated collection of resources. Making Connections experienced some successes in the 10 sites where the initiative was fully implemented in 2002-2003. The Annie E. Casey Foundation identified "several key attributes for successful neighborhood transformation . . ." such as interagency cooperation, robust educational and support services for children, accessible job training and financial literacy programs for adults, low transience, and actively engaged residents (2013, pp. 11-12). The development of stronger communities with improved conditions is a byproduct of building better connections among residents – youth and adults alike. Effective resident engagement with the power to transform communities is spurred by a sense of ownership of Making Connections' flagship activities.

In Kalamazoo, Michigan, the Building Blocks program is part of a neighborhood strategy designed to build social networks and the organizational infrastructure that links residents of hard-pressed neighborhoods. The program ". . . asks neighborhood associations to select target areas of single streets with a range of between 15 and 50 homes" (Cummings, 2019, p. 58). Building Blocks is an outcropping of Putnam's work that success and trust – once established – can engender increasing levels of success and trust, even in a neighborhood where binding social networks were not previously in existence.

Cummings' research (2019) focused on how these projects succeeded in generating social capital and, ultimately, maintaining social capital of significance. In accordance with the conditions of social organization, Building Blocks uses front-line organizers and neighborhood associations to support cooperative projects (typically in the range of $100-$500) of small target areas. Initially, the assets-based program appeals to self-interest, but its collateral impact is in its ability to promote – rather organically – personal networks, trusting relationships, and street-level social consciousness.

Dominguez and Watkins (2003) examined how low-income African American and Latin American mothers worked independently and collaboratively to build social cohesion in an effort to generate resources for survival and social mobility. Social capital as an extension of relational networks can provide both social support and social leverage (De Souza Briggs, 1998). Dominguez and Watkins (2003) identified social support as the ties that help individuals cope with the realities of everyday life. Typically comprised of families, close friends, and even neighbors, social supports help to ensure that basic survival needs are met. Conversely, "Networks composed of ties that offer social leverage help individuals to 'get ahead' or change their opportunity structure" (Dominguez & Watkins, 2013, p. 113).

African Americans living in poverty-stricken areas face economic deprivation, alienation, and a paucity of political consciousness and opportunity. Community engagement among the truly disadvantaged presents a paradox: ". . .people don't participate because they're not mobilized, and not mobilized, they can never savor the fruits of participation" (Putnam, 2000, p. 343).

In his case study of the Logan Square Neighborhood Association in Chicago, Illinois, Warren (2013) indicated the effectiveness with which public schools can improve low-income urban neighborhoods is contingent on the presence of family and community engagement within schools, and the network connectance in the surrounding communities. Warren (2013) identified the potential for public schools to double as institutional sites for building social norms and networks in urban neighborhoods. Given that public schools are democratically accessible and comparatively stable, they, along with houses of worship, are regarded as the most ubiquitous institutions in low-income communities.

Warren (2013) contends that public schools are ill-equipped for the tasks of relationship-building, and may hold long-standing ". . . deficit orientations to families in poor communities, especially those of color" (p. 6). While community organizing groups are the de facto authority on *creating* social capital and collective action, public schools should be regarded as "institutional anchors" to local social capital-building efforts. Public schools play a vital role in community identity, and are one avenue where teachers, parents, youth, and community members intersect.

Educational Success Via Social Capital Development

Although there are thousands of scholarship programs – both merit- and need-based – available to deserving students, the Tangelo Park Program is the only *first dollar* scholarship program of its kind in the nation. (There is not a selection process or competitive element to the first dollar tuition scholarships awarded by The Rosen Foundation.)

Scholarship programs tend to focus on first-generation college students, racial and ethnic minorities, students studying a particular discipline, or students attending a specific institution. Traditionally, scholarship programs require a formal application, letters of recommendation, and transcripts, and often have strict eligibility criteria. The Tangelo Park Program, meanwhile, is open to all graduating seniors who reside in the neighborhood, irrespective of their demographic makeup, evidence of academic performance, or intended field of study. Unlike most competitive scholarships, Tangelo Park seniors are not required to demonstrate their community service commitment, leadership abilities, or standardized test scores in order to prove to reviewers why they are the worthiest candidate. Furthermore, the financial standing of the student's family does not limit his or her ability to take advantage of the scholarship.

Several other programs designed to make college accessible and affordable for financially disadvantaged students have become nationwide models for improving educational outcomes through social capital development. The first is Say Yes to Education, a national non-profit organization founded in 1987 by money manager George Weiss (Sell, 2018). The program originated in Philadelphia with a select cohort of middle school students. Using the comprehensive Say Yes to Education model designed to create a sustainable framework for post-secondary readiness and attainment, the program has since launched community-wide chapters in Syracuse, NY; Buffalo, NY; Guilford County, NC; and Cleveland, OH (Sell, 2018).

Say Yes to Education is a wide-ranging partnership that includes city government, corporate leaders, philanthropists, community organizations, school districts, and higher education. Say Yes to Education offers last dollar college scholarship to eligible high school graduates from one of the chosen communities who have participated in the program's mentoring initiative. Last dollar scholarships (e.g., Pell Grant, Supplemental Education Opportunity grant, etc.) cover students' remaining tuition and fees after all state and federal grants have been exhausted.

The expansive program provides ongoing technical support and $15M in seed capital over six years to each community-wide chapter. The funding supports each community as it develops a scalable and sustainable structure for support services including healthcare, summer enrichment, counseling, etc., for the purpose of eliminating hurdles to educational attainment. Say Yes to Education partners with cities and counties to ". . . transform civic infrastructure" in order to ensure every public school student has the tools to graduate from high school and pursue a post-secondary education.

Approximately 13,000 students have received college scholarships through Say Yes to Education. With the launch of Say Yes Buffalo, the number of students graduating high school increased 15% between 2012 to 2016 (Say Yes to Education, 2019). Among African American and Hispanic students, the percentage climbed 17% during this same time period. Buffalo students matriculating to college in the fall semester following their high school graduation increased 8% between 2012 and 2017 (Say Yes to Education, 2019).

Harlem Children's Zone is a respected national model for breaking the cycle of poverty. The program's goal is to provide seamless, individualized support that propels students to and through college in order to become productive adults. Harlem Children's Zone (2019) serves over 12,000 youth, many of them facing the unrelenting obstacles of urban poverty. The program has adopted a holistic approach to building the community – 97 blocks and counting – of Central Harlem. The program prides itself on utilizing a comprehensive approach to child and adolescent development through the provision of education, social services, family support, health services, and community-building opportunities. Similar to the Tangelo Park Program, Harlem Children's Zone offers full-day, year-round pre-kindergarten titled Harlem Gems.

Students attending Harlem's Promise Academy I or II (charter schools) are eligible to receive the program's wraparound services. In addition to high caliber, standards-based instruction, student services run the gamut from extracurricular activities to wholesome meals. Admission to Promise Academy I or II is determined by a lottery, and preference is given to zone residents with the greatest needs.

In 2016, 96% of participating high school seniors were accepted to college, and 114 participants earned a college degree (Harlem Children's Zone, 2019). Unlike the Tangelo Park Program and Say Yes to Education, Harlem Children's Zone does not provide either first or last

dollar college scholarships to high school graduates in its geographic area. Rather, Harlem Children's Zone offers one-on-one tutoring, standardized test prep, and guidance on college admissions and financial aid applications. Similar to the Tangelo Park Program, Harlem Children's Zone represents a success story of effective social capital and communal cohesion (Harlem Children's Zone, 2019).

Kalamazoo Promise is a free college tuition program that began in 2005. Kalamazoo was facing growing numbers of homeless, teen mothers, and single parent households. The program is funded by anonymous donors who have made a commitment to invest in higher education within their community. All public-school students in Kalamazoo are eligible for the tuition subsidy regardless of socioeconomic status. The Upjohn Institute determined that students receiving the greatest tuition subsidies were actually from middle- and upper-income families (Mitchell & Hackman, 2019). These are the same students who, historically, are much more likely to attend a four-year college instead of a community college.

Within one year of the program's launch, Kalamazoo Promise contributed to a boost in the local economy, a 10% increase in the number of pupils enrolled in the school district, and a sense of community (Mitchell & Hackman, 2019). The program's impact on college completion, however, has been less remarkable. Three years prior to the launch of Kalamazoo Promise, the college degree or certificate completion rate averaged 34%. Between 2006 and 2012, this figure increased to 38% (Mitchell & Hackman, 2019). Among black students, the completion rate increased just one percentage point during the same time period. The needs of students of color and from lower-class families were not adequately addressed by the program. Program data reveal that other factors, such as familial obligations and a lack of academic preparedness, can hinder student persistence even when higher education tuition is covered in full.

Neighborhood-Level Factors

Many school reforms of late are buoyed by K-12 school districts' struggles with student underperformance and underachievement, retention, youth violence, and drug and alcohol abuse (Abbott-Shim, Lambert, & McCarty, 2003; Huffman & Speer, 2000). This is especially true in urban areas beleaguered by the conditions of poverty. Students growing up in this environment arrive to school with critical development needs that exceed those of their counterparts in less stressful, more affluent neighborhoods.

As communities become increasingly multicultural, and the problems they face even more multidimensional, engaging families as partners in their children's education requires the advancement of non-traditional, less generic methods. Effective strategies must not be limited to the school setting. Particularly in urban neighborhoods, efforts designed to inspire parental school involvement may be more successful within the boundaries of community institutions: churches, YMCAs, libraries, and meeting spaces that serve as congregational hubs (Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001).

Smalley and Reyes-Blanes (2001) describe the link between parental involvement and student achievement among African American parents in urban neighborhoods. The authors contend that actively engaging African American families in their children's academic lives remains one of the education system's most significant challenges. In African American communities, it is the involvement of the female family members – mothers, aunts, grandmothers – that most often take center stage.

In their research on Parent Leadership Training (PLT) in Tangelo Park, Smalley and Reyes-Blanes (2001) sought to help parents (or legal guardians) of K-12 students rediscover their leadership skills in order to better assist their children at school and at home. The researchers

uncovered that PLT had a positive impact on parental educational involvement and commitment. Via self-report, participants noted an increase in self-confidence, communication skills, problem-solving, and goal-setting. A few of the parents even mentioned their desire to empower other parents to take a more active role in their children's schooling.

Socioeconomic-Based Factors

The National Education Goals Panel, an independent executive branch agency of the federal government, is tasked with monitoring national and state-level progress toward the National Education Goals, and supporting systemwide reform for the provision of equitable educational opportunities. Unfortunately, not a single one of the panel's goals are attainable without also addressing the burden of poverty on education (The National Education Goals Panel, n.d.).

Children living in at-risk communities, and their communities as a whole, stand to benefit from effective and comprehensive educational achievement initiatives. As the racial and ethnic composition of the United States becomes increasingly diverse, the opportunities – or lack thereof – for all students to receive a quality K-12 education and equality in higher education pose serious economic and ethical concerns (Poitier, 1996).

At a minimum, public schools have an obligation to serve all students effectively in their pursuit of academic scholarship. The Tangelo Park Program and similar educational initiatives exceed this expectation by focusing instead on the whole child, whereby the school, family, and community join forces to create an environment designed to foster student success, upward mobility, and civic engagement (Barnes, 1998). Perceptions and attitudes about learning and valuing education are foundational to academic success. Families living below the poverty line

are fighting to gain a financial foothold while also dealing with erroneous judgements about their potential and worth.

"The impact of low socioeconomic status and poverty disproportionately affects minority students, which results in a higher rate of suspensions, expulsions, discipline referrals, exceptional education placements, remedial placements and dropouts" (Barnes, 1998, p. 1). Being a member of the underclass or working poor appears to predispose students, and perhaps resigns students, to low levels of academic achievement. However, residing in an impoverished community is not the most significant determinant of a child's academic success.

School-Based Factors

Urban elementary classrooms are leaving many school children underprepared for the rigor of formal instruction. From an ecological perspective, these conditions contribute to students in primary grades failing to develop the requisite attitudes and academic competencies for success, and faculty who – over time – develop low expectations for student performance. A pattern of low achievement in the primary grades has been found to persist in higher grade levels, especially among African American students (Alexander & Entwistle, 1988). "These early patterns of failure persist and predict future academic failures unless problems are remediated during the primary grades" (Madison, 2009, p. 45).

Contemporary educational practices in an urban environment must recognize competing and complementary cultural mores, student learning styles (e.g., auditory, tactile-kinesthetic, etc.), and teacher adaptability. Contextual awareness is an important component of the educational framework for students and their teachers, and is a key factor in combatting internalized failure (Madison, 2009).

The focus on immediate needs in the form of crisis intervention is a long-standing touchstone for educators in urban neighborhoods. In order to generate systemic change, however, engendering parent-school partnerships requires a more holistic and responsive approach to problem-solving at home and in the community. Urban empowerment must value, promote, and embrace achievement through active parent-school partnerships.

Individual-Level Factors

A study by Kerpelman and White (2006) was the first of its kind to explore the association between interpersonal identity formation and perceptions of social capital quality among rural, low-income, African American adolescents. The researchers recognized that ". . . the adolescent's interpersonal identity formation is both a product and producer of this social capital" (Kerpelman & White, 2006, p. 225). It is regarded as a crucial determinant of positive outcomes for rural African American adolescents, especially with regard to future opportunities and legitimate passageways into adulthood. Building interpersonal competence may serve as a buffer for at-risk male youth whose environments expose them to negative influences and stressful, adverse conditions.

In many low socioeconomic urban communities, the likelihood of African American youth completing a two- or four-year degree has become even more remote than it was for the previous generation. Among other factors, adequate federal financial assistance represents a staggering obstacle for students with aspirations to attend a college or university. "The Tangelo Park Pilot Program, and other College Access Programs, provide a window of opportunity for some fortunate groups of students to prepare to enter the 21st century as educated, productive citizens" (Poitier, 1996, p. 48).

Barnes (1998) noted, "The financial scholarships offered by TPPP [Tangelo Park Pilot Program] may appear to be incentive enough for any individual to stay in school; however, they are not" (p. 8). Given that impoverished families often feel alienated from the educational system based on prior negative experiences of their own – or of their relatives and neighbors – the promise of funds for post-secondary education alone proved insufficient. Instead, the initiative in Tangelo Park required supplementary services in the form of parent conferences, counseling, academic advising, and innovative outlets for information sharing (Barnes, 1998).

Tangelo Park Program Beginnings

Mr. Harris Rosen, born in New York City's Upper East Side to immigrant parents, worked tirelessly to build one of the country's most successful independently owned hotel chains (Alvarez, 2015). Although he came from humble beginnings, through hard work, a keen business sense, and perseverance, Mr. Rosen amassed a fortune in the hospitality industry. He was the first one in his family to attend college (Cornell University), and then he enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served as a 2nd Lieutenant in Asia and Europe before returning to the U.S. to begin his career.

Mr. Rosen purchased his first property – a 256-room hotel – in 1974. Today, his portfolio boasts seven hotels, and Rosen Hotels & Resorts is the largest independent hotel company in the state of Florida. It should be noted that six of Rosen's properties temporary closed during the pandemic. Fialkov affirms ". . . that won't stop Rosen from continuing his life's mission to end racial inequality and convince fellow millionaires to duplicate the TPP educational model in every city in America" (2022, p. 32).

In the 1990s, Mr. Rosen "decided it was time to thank his creator and give back." He knew he wanted to contribute to the community in a meaningful way by improving the quality of

life for its youth. He set up a meeting with the local school district's early childhood education coordinator and principal of Dr. Phillips High School – which was, and still remains the zoned high school for Tangelo Park (Weiss, 2018). Mr. Rosen envisioned a scholarship program that would help the disadvantaged students in this neighborhood reach their potential and make their way (debt-free) to college or vocational school.

It was quickly brought to his attention that a sustainable and comprehensive initiative of this kind must begin with early childhood education instead of high school seniors (Weiss, 2018). Mr. Rosen heeded the educators' advice and agreed to also fund a preschool component of the Tangelo Park Program to ensure that students entered kindergarten with the academic and social-emotional skills needed for success.

Tangelo Park is located in Orlando, Florida, only a few miles from the allure and fantasy of Walt Disney World, Universal Studios Florida, and a string of posh resorts. Tangelo Park is a community of 3,000 residents just southeast of the International Drive tourist area (Billman, 2016). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the demographic makeup of Tangelo Park was 90% African American or Afro-Caribbean (Weiss, 2018). This urban community experienced declining conditions: rampant drug dealing, poor school attendance, below average test scores, a climbing high school dropout rate, and a dearth of social capital.

In 1994, Mr. Rosen launched the Tangelo Park Program, a bold and broad initiative designed to meet the educational, social, and economic needs of children and families residing in this vulnerable neighborhood (Postal, 2008). Through the provision of neighborhood-based preschool programs, parental support, and full scholarships for post-secondary education and training opportunities, the program became a strategy for positive change and a beacon of hope for the neighborhood's forgotten residents. In the ensuing years, the program heightened

relational and socioeconomic capital among residents and community members; led to a reduction in crime, fear of crime and transiency; and even contributed to an increase in property values in Tangelo Park.

The program is an unparalleled example of a Comprehensive Community Initiative (CCI), a place-based program designed to create sustainable change for its school-aged residents and their families. With a thorough understanding of the neighborhood's ecology, the program's stakeholders succeeded in growing the neighborhood's capacity by cultivating relationships both within the neighborhood and among key outside resources from the public and private sectors. "The sustainable, community level skills and relationships that CCIs germinate are often referred to as social capital or community capacity" (Brisson, 2004, p. 5). CCIs differ from programs that seek to alleviate a discrete social problem, and those that operate with a top-down bureaucratic approach, both of which can have a disempowering effect on low-income residents (Schiller, 2001).

Preschool to Post-Secondary Education

Children ages two to four are provided between one and three years of free preschool education. During this time, students develop their foundational social and scholastic skills as well as their fine and gross motor skills. All caregivers are state certified, and the preschools operate from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., five days per week, allowing parents the flexibility to hold a full-time job and continue their own formal or technical education (Weiss, 2018). The majority of graduates from Rosen preschools enter kindergarten on or above grade level (The Tangelo Park and Parramore Programs, 2020). "Beginning at two years of age, students in the community show important progress in knowledge acquisition, executive function, and social-emotional learning" (Dziuban & Bush, 2020).

As of 2017, the program was funding a total of 10 preschools in the community for two-, three-, and four-year-old children. Each provider cares for no more than six children simultaneously. The preschools are equipped with computers and printers generously provided by The Rosen Foundation. The estimated annual cost of the preschool component of the program totals $250,000.

The impact of free preschool as a "building block" for the young residents of Tangelo Park has been the catalyst for a number of positive outcomes. Chief among them is the fact that Tangelo Park Elementary School became one of the first urban elementary schools in the state to receive an "A" rating based on Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) scores (Naipaul & Wang, 2009). Additionally, the program has heightened social capital among parents in the community as evidenced by the significant increase in Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and School Advisory Council (SAC) participation (Naipaul & Wang, 2009).

As for post-secondary support, any student graduating from Dr. Phillips High School who resides in Tangelo Park is given a full scholarship to any vocational school, community college, or public university in Florida (Postal, 2008). At Rosen's request, requiring a minimum GPA for participation in the Tangelo Park Program is not a prerequisite for eligibility (Poitier, 1996). This forward-thinking move was taken to ensure that all students in the neighborhood who wish to embark on post-secondary training would be able to do so, regardless of the circumstances that may have interfered with the students' ability to achieve high academic marks.

The Rosen Foundation has distributed over 500 scholarships to Tangelo Park seniors through the Tangelo Park Program. The scholarships cover tuition, books, room, board, and school-related travel expenses. Referred to as "first dollar scholarships," students do not have to apply for loans or undergo an eligibility review for financial aid prior to taking advantage of the

scholarship awarded by Rosen. Without the worry of accruing student loans or debt, students are in a better position to complete their degree program and avert financial stress as a recent college graduate. In 2017, the percentage of bachelor's degree recipients nationwide with student loan debt totaled 75%, and the amount of debt among these graduates averaged $29,800 (The Tangelo Park and Parramore Programs, 2020). Meanwhile, graduates of the Tangelo Park Program had zero student loan debt.

Evidence of a Successful Strategy

For the first 10 years of the Tangelo Park Program, no outcome data were collected (Billman, 2016). In those early years Mr. Rosen didn't talk about the program much nor did he go to the trouble of tracking the students being served. He shared that he purposely kept quiet about the program because he didn't want his efforts to be misconstrued as self-serving to further his business interests. It took a colleague's nudge to help Mr. Rosen realize that he was ". . . keeping secret something that had proven results" (Billman, 2016, p. 28).

Not until 2003 did the program begin gathering student participation data, and later, student achievement and graduation data. Program data have been compiled from a variety of sources including records and meeting notes, student and parent surveys, and Orange County Public Schools (Weiss, 2018). Tracking students from preschool through college graduation has proven challenging, but with the assistance of external stakeholders from the University of Central Florida (UCF) the breadth of data being collected and disseminated is increasing. For nearly 20 years, Dr. Charles Dziuban and Mrs. Marcella Bush have volunteered for the Tangelo Park Program as UCF liaisons, consultants, and advisory board members. Per Dr. Dale Whittaker, former UCF President, "Their work monitoring student progress revealed a 17 percent increase in graduation rates and 31 percent increase in college attendance"

(Kruckemyer, 2017). The Tangelo Park Program has improved the odds of college success for its participants from 9:1 against to 3:1 in favor (Dziuban, 2023).

Program data reveal significant increases in high school student graduation, GPA, standardized test scores, college attendance, and degree completion among participants. In 2011, 2012, 2014, and 2018, every participating senior received a high school diploma (Billman, 2016; Weiss, 2018). This greatly surpassed the graduation rate in the state of Florida which climbed to 86% in 2018 (The Tangelo Park and Parramore Programs, 2020). During the first five years of the program, the percentage of scholarship-eligible students who moved outside of Tangelo Park totaled 42%. In the program's most recent five years, that figure dwindled to just 7% (The Tangelo Park and Parramore Programs, 2020).

Out of the 614 high school graduates, 71% were awarded the Tangelo Park Program scholarship. Figure 1 illustrates the total number of degrees conferred to Tangelo Park Program scholarship recipients. Fourteen percent of graduates have earned multiple degrees. As shown in Figure 2, without the Tangelo Park Program, the number of degrees expected among the high school graduates is 55. The total number of degrees awarded totals 301 (Dziuban, 2023).

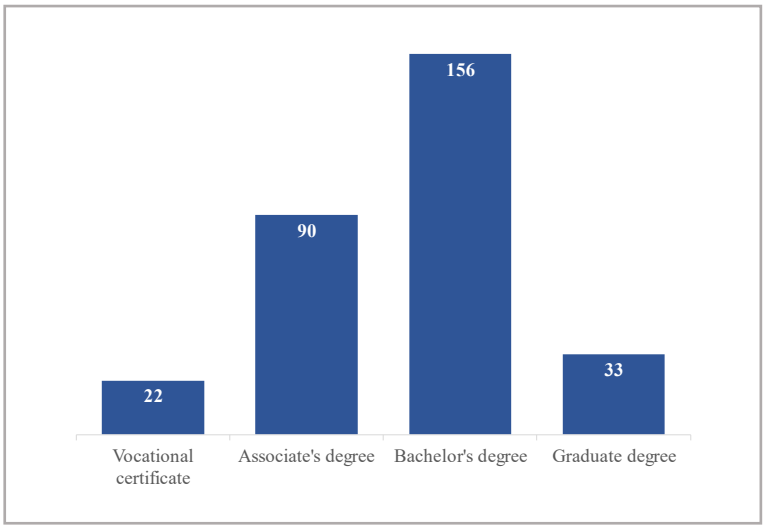

Figure 1. Degrees Conferred to Scholarship Recipients

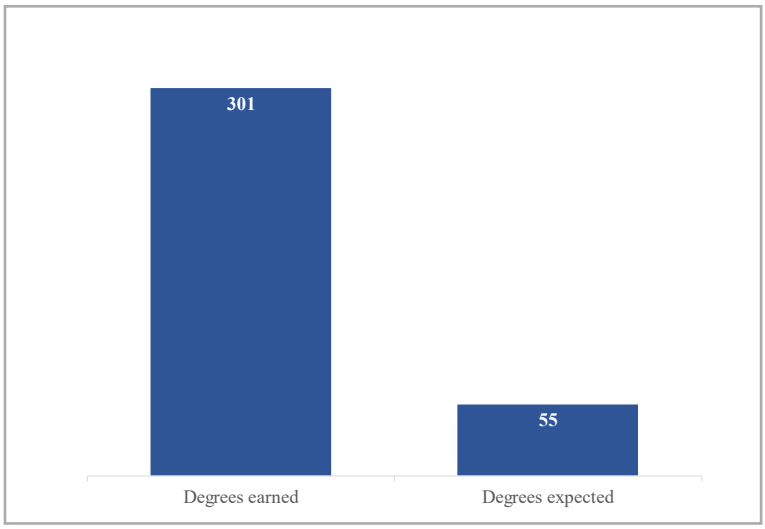

Figure 2. Degrees Earned Versus Degrees Expected Among High School Graduates From Tangelo Park

Figure 3 presents the impressive degree completion rates of Tangelo Park Program scholarship recipients. Interestingly, 52 of the 90 students who completed their associate's degree continued on to a bachelor's degree program with a 100% completion rate. Over three-quarters of Tangelo Park Program scholarship recipients who matriculated to four-year institutions – either directly or through community colleges – completed their degree. To

continue improving the degree completion rate, a mentoring program was recently established whereby Rosen scholarship alumni are serving as mentors to upcoming scholarship recipients.

To place these rates in context, among black students, only 23% of first-time, full-time undergraduates seeking an associate's degree in fall 2013 attained it within three years (150% of the normal time required for completion of the degree program). Among black students seeking a bachelor's degree, only 40% of first-time, full-time undergraduates completed their degree within six years (150% of the normal time required for completion of the degree program) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).

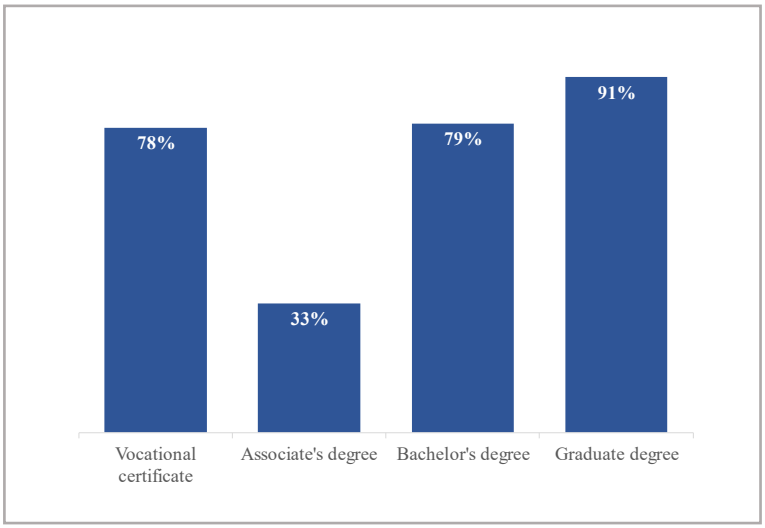

Figure 3. Graduation Rates Among Scholarship Recipients

The Tangelo Park Program has also had a positive impact on crime rates, residents' sense of safety, property values, and transiency rates in Tangelo Park. "The Orange County Sheriff's Office has acknowledged that the Tangelo Park Program has reinforced the relationships between their office and the community" (The Tangelo Park Program Overview, n.d.).

A cost-benefit analysis of the Tangelo Park Program was conducted by Dr. Lance Lochner, Canada Research Chair in Human Capital and Inequity. He sought to measure the

effects of the Tangelo Park Program on high school graduation and college attendance (a proxy for estimates of the increase in lifetime earnings), as well as local crime rates. In doing so, he compared ". . . educational attainment for the high school classes of 1991-93 (who would have graduated before the introduction of the program) with those of later cohorts (who stood to benefit from the program)" (Lochner, 2010, p. 2). Secondly, Lochner (2010) estimated the economic benefit from reduced criminal activity by measuring changes in crime rates from 1993-1994 to 1996-2003 in Tangelo Park and comparison communities.

Using data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) and Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) for the years 1992-2007, Lochner (2010) examined the landscape of high school and college educational attainment for Floridians. His analysis indicates ". . . there has been little change in educational attainment among cohorts that should have graduated from high school throughout the 1990s" (Lochner, 2010, p. 3). Thus, there is not a reason to have expected any significant changes in high school graduation and college attendance rates among Tangelo Park residents during this time period. He uncovered that between the time periods of 1991-1993 and 1998-2003, the high school graduation rate of Tangelo Park seniors increased nearly 17%, and the college attendance rate climbed by 31% (Lochner, 2010). This translates to an average lifetime earnings increase of $50,000 for each student in Tangelo Park, and a $1.05M annual benefit to the Tangelo Park neighborhood.

In his most recent analysis, Dr. Lochner calculated the return on investment as $7 for every $1 spent on the Tangelo Park Program. The 24-year investment of $12,807,800 has yielded a return of $89,654,600 (The Tangelo Park and Parramore Programs, 2020). Approximately two-thirds of the money has been spent on the early childhood program and one-

third has been dispersed as scholarships. "What many people don't know is that Rosen spends twice as much on preschool as college" (Maxwell, 2019).

The social benefits accompanying increased education include improved health and mortality rates, political involvement, and strong social networks. The return on investment as measured by student success and completion is indicative of the metamorphosis that defines the Tangelo Park neighborhood. The program has impacted the neighborhood across generational lines, proving that hopefulness for a brighter future has the potential to radically transform the condition of an entire community.

Shifting Neighborhood Demographics

Identifying how the neighborhood's changing residential landscape has impacted the sustainability of social capital within Tangelo Park is an essential aspect of this case study. The once predominantly African American neighborhood has seen tremendous growth in the number of Hispanic or Latino residents. In 2010, nearly 10% of Tangelo Park residents were of Hispanic or Latino origin, per the U.S. Census (Figure 4). Comparatively, in 2010, the estimate for Hispanic or Latino residents of Orange County, Florida, was 26.9%.

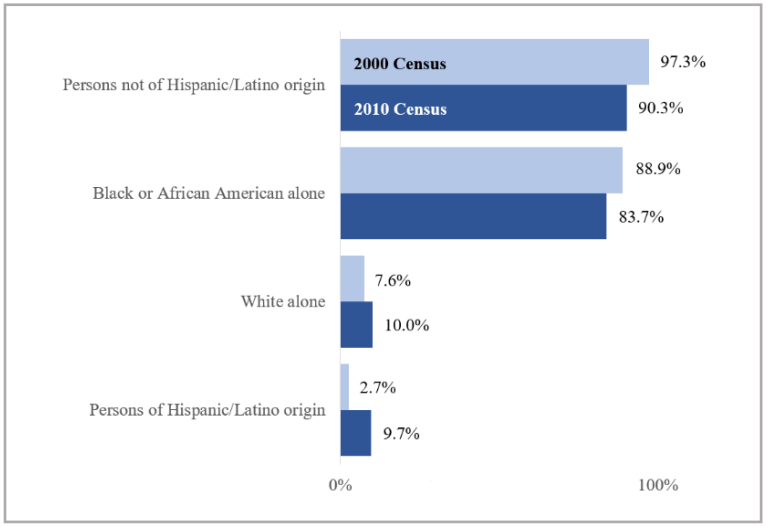

Figure 4. Race and Ethnicity of Tangelo Park Residents in 2000 and 2010

The leadership of the Tangelo Park Program has been mindful of and responsive to the changing demographics of the population in the neighborhood it serves. The percent change in racial and ethnic composition among Tangelo Park residents between 2000 and 2010 based on figures from the U.S. Census is reflected in Figure 5.

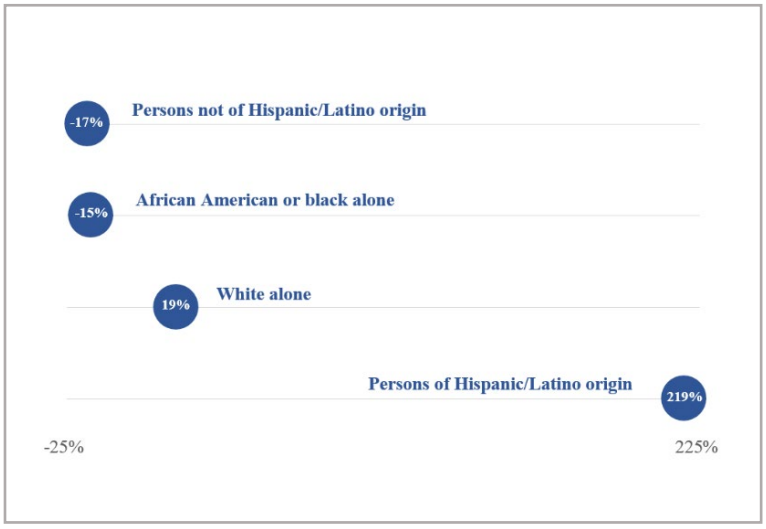

Figure 5. Percent Change in Race and Ethnicity of Tangelo Park Residents From 2000 to 2010

Tangelo Park has an aging population. As shown in Figure 6, between 2000 and 2010, the only population of Tangelo Park to increase in size was residents aged 65 years and older. Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2003), the proportion of Florida's population aged 65 and older is expected to surpass 26% by 2025. The aging demographic profile has informed the Tangelo Park Program's projections of how many preschool and high school students are expected to utilize the services and scholarship funds in the ensuing years.

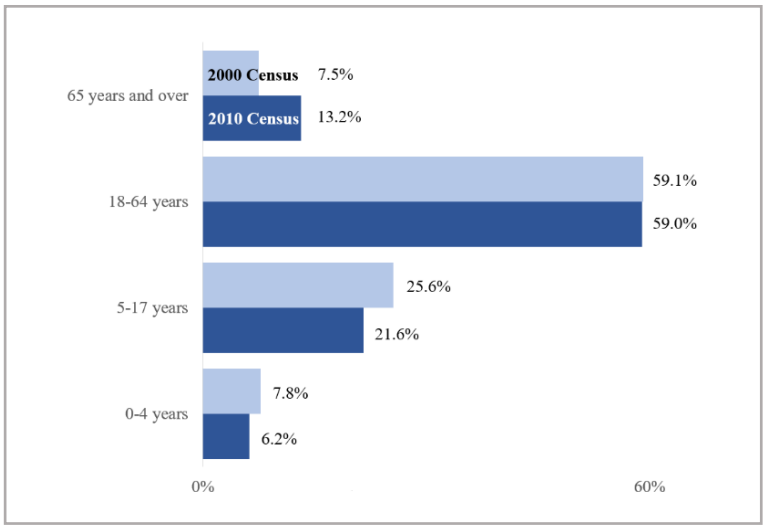

Figure 6. Age Distribution of Tangelo Park Residents in 2000 and 2010

The percent change in age among Tangelo Park residents between 2000 and 2010 based on figures from the U.S. Census is reflected in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Percent Change in Age Distribution of Tangelo Park Residents From 2000 to 2010

Intergenerational poverty in Tangelo Park has been a longstanding challenge to the social mobility of the neighborhood's residents, and a primary impetus for the creation of the Tangelo Park Program. Per Putnam (2000), when faced with inadequate physical or financial capital, social capital serves as a surrogate source of collateral for a neighborhood's occupants. As the

overall poverty rate in Tangelo Park rose from 13.9% in 2000 to 16.6% in 2010, the kindergarten readiness and high school graduation rates soared. Comparatively, in 2010, the poverty estimate for Orange County, Florida, was 16.3%. Per the U.S. Census, between 2000 and 2010, the percentage of all Tangelo Park residents living below the poverty line increased, most significantly for individuals with related children between the ages of five and 17 (Figure 8).

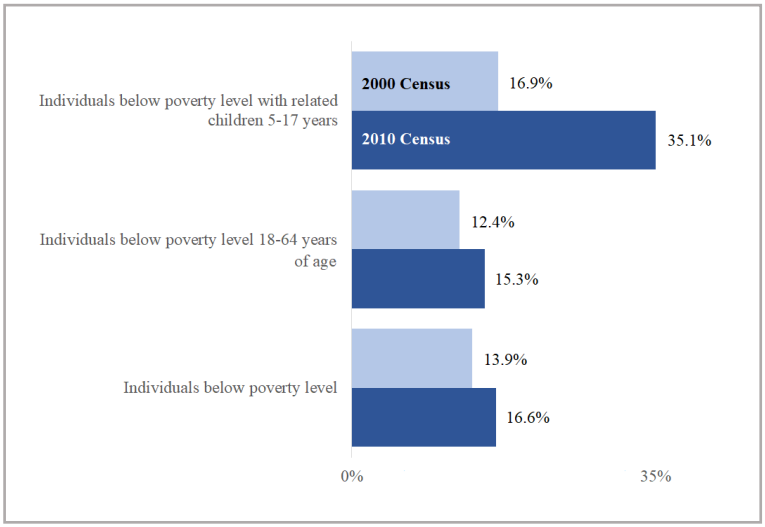

Figure 8. Tangelo Park Residents Living in Poverty in 2000 and 2010

Program Sustainability

Respected hotelier and business mogul Mr. Harris Rosen continues to carry out his decades-long commitment to the children and families of Orange County, Florida. Rosen's philanthropy – and reputation for being an entrepreneurial maverick – is nothing short of legendary, and his innovative practices have been life changing throughout Central Florida and beyond. Rosen's legacy is built on loyalty, and The Rosen Foundation is serving as a model for other like-minded businesses in the areas of employee wellness, community development, civic engagement, and education (Swenson, 2014).

The Tangelo Park Program has been described as transformational because of its joint focus on early childhood education and higher education (Alvarez, 2015). With the ongoing support of dedicated community partners, the program has become an exemplar of educational success branded as "two to twenty-two" (pre-school to postsecondary) in Tangelo Park. The impact neighborhood-wide has been remarkable, and the scope of Mr. Rosen's pioneering educational initiatives in metro Orlando continue to grow.

Mr. Rosen's nod towards responsible capitalism is much more than lip service or a veiled attempt to attract publicity. Estimates of his investment in The Tangelo Park Program total $14M (Fialkov, 2022). Florida ranks 41st in per pupil spending ($2,400 annually). Rosen's program costs roughly $7,400 per student per year. "If Rosen were his own state, he'd rank 10th" (Maxwell, 2019).

Mr. Rosen's civic commitment and prolific community-betterment ventures underscore his humility, gratitude, and sense of obligation to help others reach their potential. In a 2008 interview with the *Orlando Sentinel*, Mr. Rosen alluded to his disappointment that he had not yet convinced other affluent Central Florida entrepreneurs to follow his lead in creating much-needed opportunities for youngsters. "I don't think there's enough of a concern on the part of many in the United States for our disadvantaged neighborhoods. I think the vast majority of people believe if you kind of turn your back and don't look, it will evaporate. It doesn't." (Postal, 2008)

The Tangelo Park Program has had great success, in part, because of its simplicity and focus on community ties. The program's underlying force is one of hope (Alvarez, 2015). The program provides students with an awareness that college is attainable, and that a brighter future

awaits. The Tangelo Park Program is a reminder that education can serve as the foundation for both personal growth and community renewal.

Broadening Program Impact

Some in the Central Florida community have pondered, "While heartwarming, can it be replicated? Or is it the singular story of a singular figure willing to donate not only his money but also his time?" (Alvarez, 2015). Mr. Rosen envisions every underserved community having a program similar to the Tangelo Park Program, and when this comes to pass, the country will be changed for the better. In 2016, with evidence of the program's successful student outcomes and ability to positively impact community renewal and social capital, The Rosen Foundation selected a second economically disadvantaged Orlando neighborhood, Parramore, as the newest site for its "two to twenty-two" educational reform (Postal, 2018). Mr. Rosen noted that he has lost millions of dollars during the pandemic. His desire is to adopt even more communities but he cannot do so at this time.

The Orange County Public Schools Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) in the Parramore neighborhood opened its doors to nearly 1,000 students in 2017 (Postal, 2018). The institution is based on the community partnership school model designed to remove the social, economic, and health barriers that prevent students in underserved neighborhoods from receiving the best education possible. The new Parramore school is one of 5,000 community partnership schools in the United States (Dudenhoefer, 2017).

The new K-8 institution boasts an on-campus pediatrician and a Boys & Girls Club, and provides students an opportunity to attend school right in their neighborhood – as opposed to being bused to one of eight other schools in the area (Dudenhoefer, 2017). It is the first

traditional public school to open in Parramore since desegregation took hold in 1970, effectively scattering students among school buildings in adjacent neighborhoods (Postal, 2018).

ACE faces an uphill climb, as the Parramore neighborhood has been plagued by familiar urban ills including low-income, high-crime, and transiency for the past 50 years (Postal, 2018). Forty-seven percent of adults lack a high school diploma or equivalent, and 73% of minors live in poverty (Bridgespan, 2012). Nearly one-third of the children living within Parramore's borders lost a parent to either incarceration or death in the previous year (Billman, 2016). Parramore's urban decay was accelerated by placement of seven homeless shelters within its 1.4-square-miles, and the paving of a four-lane highway that divided its residential streets.

Rosen is sponsoring a preschool in this historically black community, and the promise of a college scholarship to all students who continue on and graduate from Jones High School (for which ACE is a feeder school). His is by no means the first ambitious initiative in recent years to focus on the youth in Parramore. For instance, the Parramore Kidz Zone (PKZ), a neighborhood-based education collaborative, has been operating in Parramore since 2016 (Bridgespan, 2012). PKZ has made progress in reducing neighborhood crime, improving standardized test scores, and building social capital. The revitalization of this neighborhood, however, will require additional resources and proven strategies, and is fortunate to have captured the attention of a dedicated philanthropist with an extensive track record of success.

After the Parramore program was announced, the University of Central Florida College of Medicine followed suit and agreed to offer full scholarships to any student attending ACE, graduating from Jones High School, and earning an undergraduate degree at the university (Weiss, 2018). With the financial backing of The Rosen Foundation, the new Parramore program seeks to address the area's most pressing educational and social concerns by using the

original model developed for the Tangelo Park Program. Culling the best practices from Tangelo Park will assist Parramore in designing a complement of childcare programs, parent effectiveness trainings, and post-secondary education opportunities at no cost to the community. The Parramore neighborhood is struggling to overcome many of the same social and economic challenges that originally beset Tangelo Park.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is organized into five sections: 1) research questions, 2) sample selection, 3) data collection, 4) data analysis, and 5) ethical considerations. Within each section, the methodology of this case study is provided in greater detail.

Overview

The Tangelo Park Program is an example of a place-based initiative with the dual aims of benefiting people and their neighborhood through front-line organizers. The program concentrates on improving circumstances for neighborhood residents through a compendium of early childhood education programs, post-secondary scholarships, parent involvement initiatives, and wraparound services.

This mixed methods case study of the Tangelo Park Program has been designed to align with the scientific method and sound research practice (O'Sullivan, Rassel, & Berner, 2008). This research describes the structure, performance, and leadership of the Tangelo Park Program throughout the first 25 years of its evolution; explores the characteristics, culture and conditions of the neighborhood and participants served; and examines how this public good has been leveraged to gain (and maintain) support for the program over the last quarter-century. It is framed by four research questions focused on the implementation and sustainability of a comprehensive educational program for urban youth within the context of building social capital in an economically disadvantaged neighborhood.

1. How did the program build social capital in the form of community buy-in and ownership among the neighborhood's residents?

2. How did the program's assets-based approach develop community stakeholders' self-interest and collective interest?
3. In what ways has the Tangelo Park Program contributed to student- and neighborhood-level outcomes with regard to high school graduation and neighborhood safety?
4. What are the best practices that have emerged from the program over the past 25 years that may be replicable or transferrable?

Sample Selection

Stakeholders were identified with the assistance of a gatekeeper. Per Hatch (2002), gatekeepers are used to assist qualitative researchers in gaining access to and developing trust with the community of study. The identified gatekeeper, Dr. Charles Dziuban, serves on the Tangelo Park Program Advisory Board and represents UCF in a supporting role with the Rosen Foundation, Tangelo Park Program, and Rosen Parramore PS8 Foundation. Given his long-standing relationship with the Tangelo Park Program and its stakeholders, Dr. Dziuban was instrumental in connecting this study's researcher with individuals who could speak to the program's ideation, development, operation, and enhancement.

Upon the researcher being granted approval for the interview protocol by Valdosta State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), the gatekeeper contacted the prospective stakeholders to request their participation in this study (Appendix A). Dr. Dziuban provided the initial set of 12 Tangelo Park Program stakeholders willing to serve as interviewees for this study. He introduced the researcher of this study with these key stakeholders via email, and then she followed up with them individually to schedule a convenient time for their one-on-one interviews. At the conclusion of each of these interviews, the researcher requested that the

participants introduce her to another party involved with the Tangelo Park Program. She corresponded with these additional stakeholders about their interest in being interviewed for this study.

Employing this snowball sampling technique provided the researcher with a broader and perhaps more diverse set of stakeholders who are knowledgeable about the program's development and administration (Bamberger, Rugh, & Mabry, 2006). This approach generated a cross-section of informants who spoke candidly about the characteristics of the program, its participants, and their community ties (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004). In total, 16 stakeholders were interviewed between fall 2020 and summer 2021.

Dr. Dziuban and the researcher engaged in a meaningful dialogue about the stakeholders necessary for this study. Participants for this study were purposefully chosen among the key stakeholders involved in the early implementation of the Tangelo Park Program because they had witnessed changes in social capital. The initial group of informants included Mr. Harris Rosen, benefactor of the Tangelo Park Program; student beneficiaries of the program; the former principal of Tangelo Park Elementary; representatives from the program's community partners; Tangelo Park Program and Rosen Hotels employees/consultants; and members of the Tangelo Park Program Advisory Board, including Tangelo Park YMCA Family Center, Tangelo Park Baptist Church, Tangelo Park Civic Association, UCF, and Orange County Sheriff's Office.

The in-depth interviews required active listening on the part of the researcher. It was essential for the researcher to develop rapport with the interviewees and conduct herself in a manner that is congruent with the prevailing standards for social behavior for each group of respondents (Chambliss & Schutt, 2013). In order to engage in a purposeful conversation with

the interviewees, the researcher was flexible in the order and content of questions from one respondent to another. The series of interview questions is presented in Appendix B.

The artful process of interpreting, reflecting, and refining qualitative data captured the interrelated meaning behind the respondents' attitudes, beliefs, and actions. "The case must be contemporary and the investigator must have direct access to the people involved" (O'Sullivan, Rassel, & Berner, 2008, p. 40). A hallmark of a quality, comprehensive case study is the inclusion of complementary sources of information. This allows the researcher to corroborate information gleaned from one source with information obtained from a credible secondary or tertiary source. Another advantage of case studies is their ability to merge information from a diverse set of stakeholders about why and how things happened across an entire program; not just individual components. It was incumbent on the researcher to strike a balance between depth and breadth without sacrificing contextual information. The researcher is not affiliated with the program; thus, she was largely insulated from the organization's biases.

Data Collection

Social capital is difficult to measure (empirically) with a high degree of validity. Attempts at measuring this type of capital are imperfect because the construct is inherently abstract, intangible, and multidimensional (Cavaye, 2004; Grootaert & van Bastelaer, 2001). Compounding the problem is that it is nearly impossible for research subjects to separate source, form, and consequences (Claridge, 2004). There is no consensus on how to measure the informal social networks that breed resources, innovation, and opportunities because the phenomenon is operationalized differently across studies. Furthermore, Claridge (2004) maintains that it cannot be directly measured; therefore, a proxy or indicator must be used. This

poses an additional challenge insofar as many indicators of community connectedness are, in fact, interdependent.

"Social capital involves value judgements rather than absolute truths" (Cavaye, 2004, p. 11). Using traditional measures of performance to measure this asset is unsuitable. Its dynamic nature cannot be dissected in simple terms of cause and effect, or investment and return. Measuring this construct involves the assessment and interpretation of relatively ill-defined outcomes accompanying community change over an extended period of time.

A variety of tools and methods have been developed to measure social capital in the United States and abroad, including the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, Global Social Capital Survey, Putnam's Social Capital Index Instrument, and The Barometer of Social Capital (see also Aspen Institute, 1996; and Putnam, 2000). Yet, according to Cavaye (2004), there is no universal index or taxonomy for assessing this phenomenon. The primary unresolved issues surrounding the measurement of this construct include: 1) understanding the limitations of evaluation and measurement; 2) the practical mechanics of gaining community feedback; 3) benchmarking incremental change; 4) managing and interpreting qualitative information, and 5) the act of measurement can affect the stock of capital being assessed.

Where possible, it is important to divorce the community intervention from the countless other factors capable of generating change within a community. For instance, "In the evaluation of the impact of Learning Communities in Victoria, community members were asked to isolate the influence of Learning Community activities from other influences on community networks and contacts" (Cavaye, 2014, p. 15). In alignment with Cavaye's recommendation, the stakeholder interview questions framing this case study of the Tangelo Park Program are specific

to the program's development, impacts, and social characteristics. The questions were designed to target the uniqueness of the Tangelo Park Program and its community ownership.

Taken together, the stakeholder interview questions meet the key characteristics of comprehensiveness, rigor, continuity, flexibility, and specificity. "Given this diversity and complexity, it is not a matter of discovering ideal indicators of social capital. It is a matter of using imperfect descriptions and indicators, and developing a confidence to work with inherent imperfections and uncertainty" (Cavaye, 2004, p. 20). Within the context of the Tangelo Park Program, the questions surrounding the study of this place-based initiative explore social ties, community resiliency, economic and environmental health, and sustainable well-being. They provide a platform for continued action, informed decision-making, and insight on commonly identified values (Falk, 2000). A selection of the questions used in this study includes:

- In your opinion, what were the primary social challenges facing the Tangelo Park neighborhood at the time this program was introduced?
- How have you worked to build trust with the residents of Tangelo Park? Were there any factors that limited your ability to build trust, and if so, how did this alter your initial approach?
- In what ways has the Tangelo Park Program fostered a sense of community buy in and pride?
- How would you describe the changes you have witnessed in this neighborhood related to student success and hopefulness for the future?

Several sources of evidence (archival records, stakeholder interviews, high school graduation rates, and neighborhood crime statistics) have allowed for the triangulation of data. This is believed to be advantageous because it enables the researcher to address a

broader range of historical, attitudinal, and behavioral issues from program leaders, participants, and community members (Kohlbacher, 2006). Through one-on-one stakeholder interviews with divergent voices, the researcher strived to uncover the nuances of the participants' stories, views, and actions within the context of their experiences, thereby acquiring a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon being researched (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Ridder, 2017). The interview questions and protocol were designed to be culturally sensitive and evoke analytically-rich data (Galletta, 2012). Per Stake (2000), a case study should be designed to uncover the values – in both voice and content – of the people involved within the case.

The convergence of sources provided a sound framework for data analysis (Creswell, 1998). The most significant source of information for this case study is the semi-structured interviews. As a result of the COVID-19 protocols put in place by Valdosta State University's IRB, and the Tangelo Park Program, none of the conversations were permitted to take place face-to-face. All 16 stakeholder interviews were conducted via Zoom or telephone, per the participants' preferred communication platform.

The informed consent was read aloud to the participants and verbal consent was obtained prior to the start of the approved question line (Appendix C). The conversations lasted between 35 and 90 minutes. The researcher used a small digital recorder to capture the conversations, thereby ensuring data collection was accurate and unobtrusive (Chambliss & Schutt, 2013). The files were downloaded to a laptop computer and saved to the cloud, for the exclusive use of the researcher.

An additional data source for this study is program records. This resource was made available by representatives from the Rosen Foundation and the Tangelo Park Program. Program

records were used to complement the interviewees' accounts of the program's impetus and early implementation, community collaboration and buy-in, neighborhood dynamics and participation, student success and completion, program modifications, sustainability, and replication.

The student-level outcome of interest is the graduation rate of Tangelo Park Program high school seniors in comparison to the state of Florida for the time period 2004 to 2020. The data for each academic year under consideration (2004-2020) were compiled by Orange County Public Schools. The researcher calculated the change in graduation rates over time for Tangelo Park seniors and the state of Florida as a whole.

The neighborhood-level outcome of interest is neighborhood safety. The researcher calculated the change in crime rates from 1994 to 2020 – for a selection of person and property crimes – within the boundary of Tangelo Park using data compiled by the Tangelo Park Program courtesy of the Orange County Sheriff's Office. In addition to this objective measure of neighborhood safety, the stakeholder interviews have informed the ways in which the Tangelo Park Program contributed to a change in fear of crime.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the qualitative data was performed using the inductive or exploratory approach. This approach ". . . allows themes and topics to emerge from the data themselves" (Chambliss & Schutt, 2013, p. 200). The researcher followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) step-by-step guidelines for thematic analysis of qualitative data. These steps include: 1) familiarizing oneself with the data, 2) developing initial codes, 3) searching for themes, 4) reviewing potential themes, 5) defining and naming themes, and 6) producing the report. Using thematic analysis, the researcher uncovered commonalities and trends, and offered recommendations based on the qualitative data collected or reviewed during her research.

Data on participants' graduation status were analyzed longitudinally from 2004 to 2020. The program participants' graduation rate for this timeframe was compared to the statewide graduation rate. Outcome data were not collected during the first 10 years of the program. Initially, Mr. Rosen shied away from collecting data; he approached the Tangelo Park Program as a feel-good trial.

Data on select person and property crimes in the neighborhood were analyzed longitudinally from the Tangelo Park Program's launch in 1994 to 2020. This data, in conjunction with the stakeholder interviews, provided a more thorough understanding of changes in neighborhood safety. The researcher has presented the data in a meaningful way so it is useable, actionable, and purposeful.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher worked with Dr. Dziuban to secure formal approval for this case study from the Tangelo Park Program Advisory Board. This is the program's governing body, and all research proposals must be granted permission – in-person or through correspondence – prior to research being undertaken.

Verbal consent was obtained from all stakeholders prior to the start of the question line. Stakeholders were informed that their participation in this research is voluntary, and that declining to participate will not adversely impact their relationship with the Tangelo Park Program. Stakeholders were advised that they have the right to withdraw their consent at any time, and that participation in this research involves minimal risk to them.

All hard copy data, including interview transcripts and copies of program records, have been kept in a locked storage cabinet in the researcher's home office. All electronic files were

stored on a password-protected laptop computer, and the cloud backup is also secure via a password.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

Overview

This case study of the Tangelo Park Program is largely informed by the 16 one-on-one interviews conducted with program stakeholders. With an emphasis on commonalities, themes, outliers, opinions, and recommendations, the details gleaned from the stakeholders are presented in this chapter using a storytelling approach.

The roadmap to Chapter 4 begins with the historical context of Tangelo Park designed to provide a deeper understanding of the neighborhood's social ills at the time this program was introduced. Next, the reader is acquainted with Mr. Harris Rosen and his initial vision for an urban educational scholarship program. The implementation and enhancement of the Tangelo Park Program are examined in detail. After that, the subtleties of building and sustaining social capital in Tangelo Park are examined. Evidence of neighborhood transformation is reinforced by the data showing marked improvement in high school graduation rates and a reduction in crime. Lastly, exploring the sustainability and replication of the Tangelo Park Program is of major consequence to this study. Reflections on the impact of COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter on the neighborhood's residents are also summarized herein.

Several of the interviewees have been involved with the Tangelo Park Program for more than two decades. Per one stakeholder, it is the community's enthusiasm for the program, community leadership, civic commitment, and Mr. Rosen himself that have sustained her involvement for the past 24 years. One stakeholder recalled hearing about the early childhood component of Mr. Rosen's vision, and immediately expressing interest in becoming involved.

The interviewees for this study represent a cross-section of program stakeholders: the Tangelo Park Program benefactor, Tangelo Park Program volunteers, Tangelo Park Program Advisory Board members, Tangelo Park Program scholarship recipients, and Tangelo Park Program and Rosen Hotels employees/consultants (Figure 9). The roles of the 16 interviewees who participated in this study provided the researcher with a variety of perspectives. Most of these stakeholders have been involved with the program in different capacities over the last two decades, and have served the Tangelo Park Program and the neighborhood in a variety of official and unofficial roles since the program's launch in 1994.

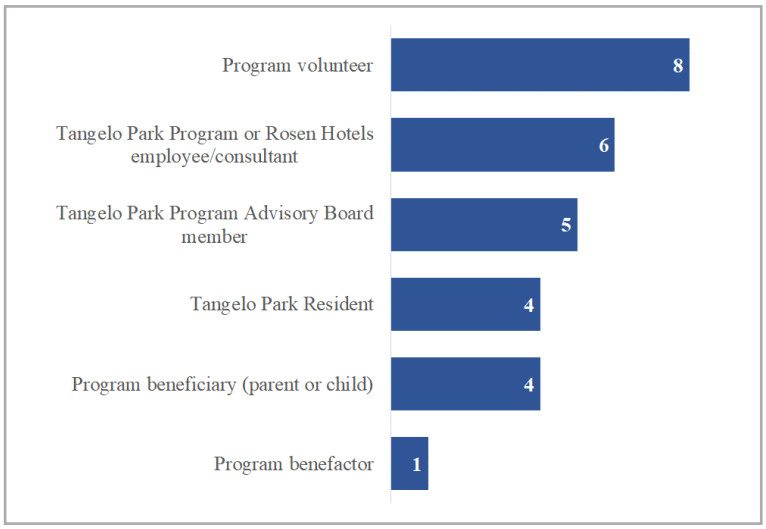

Figure 9. Self-Reported Role(s) of Each Interviewee

Historical Context of Tangelo Park

Addressing Social Ills in an Urban Neighborhood

The stakeholders were asked to identify the primary challenges facing Tangelo Park at the time this program was introduced in 1994. All 16 interviewees shared that the neighborhood was devoid of hope while brimming with social unrest. Opportunities for upward mobility among the residents were scarce.

Tangelo Park was described as a "hotbed of criminal activity, illicit drug sales, and violent crime." Other social ills facing the neighborhood included a declining graduation rate, little to no parental involvement, and transiency. One of the younger interviewees grew up in Tangelo Park and she recalled drug dealing occurring in plain sight on the street corner. One long-time resident shared, "We were looked upon as being crime-infested," and negative publicity was abundant. This perception was inflamed by the fact that Tangelo Park was a majority black community situated within a predominantly Caucasian geographic area. One decades-long homeowner and Tangelo Park home daycare provider spoke of the violence that plagued Tangelo Park at the time this program was introduced. She described Tangelo Park as an "African village" where the residents – across generations – reared the neighborhood's children.

Furthermore, student turnover at Tangelo Park Elementary was very high in the early 1990s. Per one former school district administrator, the student turnover rate (defined as students who left the school), at its peak, reached 95%. This level of prolonged instability was reflected in the school's inferior test scores, and it negatively impacted morale among the elementary school faculty. By all accounts, the Tangelo Park neighborhood was confronting the same social and economic challenges experienced by an inner city.

One of the preschool program employees noted that at the time the Tangelo Park Program was introduced, all teachers were required to vacate the elementary school campus by 4 p.m. "for our safety." The principal of Tangelo Park Elementary at that time implemented this policy to safeguard the employees, as their well-being was thought to be in greater jeopardy after dark. The school principal used to be called to Tangelo Park Elementary two to three times per month to meet the police in response to a burglary on campus.

A central figure in the neighborhood shared that Tangelo Park needed a voice; it was lacking the attention of local government. He described trying to help his neighborhood reap some of the benefits and resources being afforded to other marginalized neighborhoods. He was part of a movement to unite the residents of Tangelo Park. "We had marches through the streets." He stressed that the community's (official and unofficial) leaders were not going to allow criminals to ruin this "unexpected gift" from Mr. Rosen. The community had pride but needed something of merit to rally around, and the Tangelo Park Program symbolized, unequivocally, a turning point for the residents.

Harris Rosen and the Origin of the Tangelo Park Program

Defining a Vision and Charting the Course

Mr. Rosen explained that in the early 1990s he decided it was time to thank his creator and give back by assisting those who needed a helping hand. Education was at the heart of what Mr. Rosen envisioned, and this prompted him to call his friends – Sarah Sprinkel, an early childhood expert, and Bill Spoone, a former high school principal – "for advice." These conversations led to the ideation of a program that provides free preschool for every two-, three-, and four-year-old, and a full-ride scholarship for public college or trade school in the state of Florida.

Mr. Rosen needed to find the right neighborhood for the program he and his colleagues conceived of, so he contacted former Orange County Commissioner Mable Butler and asked her to help him select a community. Ms. Butler introduced him to Dr. Robert Allen, the principal of Tangelo Park Elementary at that time, and shortly thereafter the Tangelo Park neighborhood was "adopted" by Mr. Rosen.

Dr. Allen wished to build a full-service school, and the Tangelo Park Program helped him accomplish this ambitious goal. Mr. Rosen and his colleagues relied on Dr. Allen's influence to unify the neighborhood. There was plenty of skepticism early on, and some of the residents voiced their concerns that Mr. Rosen may try to buy Tangelo Park properties to build another hotel. Dr. Allen held a series of meetings with parents at Tangelo Park Elementary School to allay their fears, and he invited Mr. Rosen to speak to the residents at the school and neighborhood church to explain the tenets of the proposed program.

One stakeholder explained that it was necessary to "demystify the generosity." The residents wanted to understand, "Who is this multi-millionaire and why is he trying to do good for our children?" As the parents began to digest the specifics of the program their concerns shifted to longevity. They had seen other initiatives come and go, and questioned whether this new program would fizzle out after just a few years. Mr. Rosen reiterated that the Tangelo Park Program would continue in perpetuity. Mr. Rosen has proclaimed on multiple occasions that the program's funding will draw to a close when Tangelo Park becomes a gated community.

Mr. Rosen presented the concept of the Tangelo Park Program to the community's residents, and to his surprise, their reception was lackluster. Evidently, the residents were under the impression that the program would begin that academic year with the preschool-age students exclusively. Once he clarified that the program would begin that year with scholarships for graduating seniors, "the place went crazy," and inspired his decades-long relationship with the neighborhood. This organic sequence of events produced instantaneous buy-in.

Implementation and Enhancement of the Program

Paving the Way With In-Home Preschools

Kindergarteners were coming to school unprepared; they didn't even know the primary colors. There was no preschool in Tangelo Park at the time this program was introduced, although the number of preschool-age residents approximated 50. Parents were dependent on Head Start or 4C, and were initially reluctant to leave either of these established programs for the Tangelo Park in-home preschools. Mr. Rosen asked the head of the neighborhood association if she could arrange for him to meet with the homeowners who would be interested in creating (at his expense) a preschool in their homes for up to six children. It was requested that homeowners make a three-year commitment to become a preschool provider. Mr. Rosen paid for the interested homeowners to become certified caregivers, and he provided money for toys and supplies.

One interviewee noted that the compensation offered by Mr. Rosen was greater than what she was earning as an employee of the local school district. She liked the idea of "working for herself" and decided to become a preschool provider. She recalled that the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) canvassed her home to help her prepare the space to start a home daycare. She spoke of Mr. Rosen's dedication and concern for the neighborhood's children. On one occasion her air conditioning went out and Mr. Rosen sent engineers (from his hotel) to her home to assess the problem. They ended up purchasing and installing a new air conditioning unit in her home so she could continue serving the children without interruption.

Per Mr. Rosen, the program launched in 1994 with two preschool providers and 10 children. It grew to 10 providers and 60 children. He never dreamed that the number of youths to be served would grow so large to make a standalone preschool a reality in August 2019. From

the outset, the in-home preschools focused on meeting students' social, emotional, and academic needs.

The residents soon began to identify the Tangelo Park Program as a game changer that could offer the young residents of Tangelo Park a proper start to their academic journey. In fact, several interviewees shared that today's Tangelo Park kindergarteners enter elementary school with "superior readiness skills." A collateral benefit of this program is that free childcare and college scholarships offered parents their own opportunity to return to school or take on additional work hours.

Bridging the Gap From Preschool to College

Numerous individuals described Mr. Rosen as "very hands-on" and "approachable." He quickly became a recognizable presence in the neighborhood, often seen on the Tangelo Park Elementary School campus. Mr. Rosen would speak at the elementary honor roll assemblies and the graduation ceremonies for the preschool students. He would pronounce that this event is the first of many graduations to come. Mr. Rosen even presents the Tangelo Park students their college scholarships during an annual awards program for graduating seniors.

Several stakeholders recounted an event that occurred at the elementary school in the program's inaugural year. At the fall assembly, Mr. Rosen asked how many students wanted to go to college, and not a single hand went up. He was invited back for the end-of-year assembly and asked the same question, and virtually every hand went up. Within three years of the program's launch, Tangelo Park Elementary rose from a D to an A school (based on the statewide standardized assessment).

Parents were informed that a designated guidance counselor at Dr. Phillips High School would work with the students and their families to help them complete the required financial aid

forms. Some of the parents had reservations early on about providing the information needed to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Beginning in 1996, a mandatory meeting was added for all seniors and their parents. Every fall, the high school guidance counselor facilitates this meeting designed to provide details about the program, its benefits, requirements, and benefactor.

It came to the attention of the program's leaders that some families were falsifying a Tangelo Park address in order to be eligible for the college scholarship. To curb this behavior, it is now a requirement that students spend their junior and senior years of high school as residents of Tangelo Park in order to qualify for the award. Furthermore, the students' parents/guardians must maintain primary residence in Tangelo Park during the student's time in college.

Developing Informed and Involved Parents

Dr. Smalley was invited to attend the program's advisory board meetings and it quickly became clear to her how she could contribute to the Tangelo Park Program. Her mission was to encourage parents to became more involved in their children's education through a series of in-person parent leadership trainings. The workshop she developed was offered two to three times per year between 1999 and 2002. (The Rosen Foundation covered Dr. Smalley's release time from UCF for one three-credit course per semester.) Approximately 24 agencies/entities attended the parent leadership trainings. The representatives of these agencies/entities were the "movers and shakers of Tangelo Park," and they would share information about the workshop with their community networks.

Dr. Smalley was given the latitude to create the content and structure of the workshop as she saw fit to meet the parents' needs and help them overcome existing barriers. The curriculum and materials were reviewed by the program's advisory committee and a taskforce prior to being

finalized. She started with a community needs assessment. Dr. Smalley organized a focus group with parents in the neighborhood to secure their trust and better understand their needs. "Our mothers and grandmothers would participate at the schools but our dads were absent. It was open to parents and grandparents, and sometimes an auntie." The workshop was designed to keep fathers, in particular, engaged for all six two-hour training sessions. School was "not an inviting place" for them, per one interviewee.

The organizers made an effort to eliminate all possible excuses for missing the training sessions. Children were fed dinner, provided homework assistance, and cared for at the training location (the Tangelo Park YMCA). Dr. Smalley facilitated five content-heavy sessions, and on the sixth night of the training series, the parents graduated. Dr. Smalley made in-person visits to the parents' homes, upon request. The parents were given her phone number, and even after graduation (from the workshop) they would call her with questions or concerns related to parenting. Several stakeholders observed how the parents began to rally around each other and develop relationships with their contemporaries.

The parenting workshop proved to be an empowering engagement. One resident reflected, "We saw fathers become more active in the PTA and SAC." Dr. Smalley's research showed that student academic achievement increased, as did the high school graduation rate (Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001). Enhanced parent involvement included better quality interactions with teachers, working with their children at home, and greater time spent on campus. The parents learned strategies to "eloquently negotiate" a squabble or relationship rife with conflict. After the workshop, they were more adept at working with their children's teachers to advocate for their success: academic and non-academic.

Community Policing in Both Name and Practice

Tangelo Park Elementary School has a designated School Resource Officer (SRO). The Rosen Preschool shares a campus with Tangelo Park Elementary, and during school hours the preschool is under Orange County Sheriff's Office jurisdiction. The Rosen Foundation pays for off-duty patrols to monitor the site between 4 and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Tangelo Park Elementary SRO works closely with Yolanda Grant, Rosen Tangelo Park Preschool Executive Director. The SRO has coordinated fire drills and active shooter trainings, and integrated the preschool campus-specific lockdown protocols into the elementary school's emergency response plan. He conducts an annual training with the Rosen Tangelo Park Preschool staff (basic first aid and tourniquets were added to the training in 2020).

Dispelling fear and suspicion of the police – especially among children in a minority community – requires positive interactions with law enforcement. Per one stakeholder, it was necessary to "change the outlook of how the residents were taught to perceive the police." The SRO assigned to Tangelo Park Elementary has tried to combat this distrust by joining the students for story time on Fridays. He helps the students celebrate their birthdays, and mentors students identified as "at risk." Engaging with the police in positive ways using the community policing model has helped humanize the officers over the years.

At least one interviewee expressed that there was some anti law-enforcement sentiment among the neighborhood's residents. Not surprisingly, it is a thorny task trying to establish trust one day and conduct an investigation, serve a warrant, or arrest a resident the next day. One interviewee described it as "an impossible situation," noting that even a justified arrest can build resentment toward the police. It was shared that people have learned not to come to the school

with the intention of creating a disruption. They are well aware that this behavior will not be tolerated, and will likely result in an arrest.

A Framework for Notable Leadership

Multiple interviewees communicated that the Tangelo Park Program operates with virtually no bureaucracy. It has a very informal organizational structure, and nearly everyone involved is a volunteer (with the exception of preschool providers). The program's advisory board meetings were described as "town halls." Although they are open to the public, attendees are asked to RSVP so the meeting agenda accurately reflects the matters to be addressed that month. The meeting location rotates throughout the community: the elementary school, high school, church, YMCA, etc. The program's leaders strive to keep it within the neighborhood so transportation is not a hardship for the community members who wish to attend. Each group presents a monthly report on its developments and milestones. If a problem needs resolving, it is discussed openly in what was described as "a collegial forum."

Building and Sustaining Social Capital

Collaboration as an Impetus for Trust-Building

It was explained that efforts to cultivate social capital began with the community's leaders and a host of community partners, both secular and non-secular. The community partners were instrumental in fostering a sense of hope among a group of people who had little to no hope. Per one interviewee, the Tangelo Park Program is "a wonderful marriage of groups of people who are trying to focus on the same thing . . . trying to make life better for those who are less fortunate." Another stakeholder reiterated that the program's partners embraced the Tangelo Park Program because they recognized the truly remarkable opportunities it presented for children to achieve higher learning.

Collaboration with four community pillars (YMCA, Tangelo Baptist Church, Tangelo Park Elementary School, and Tangelo Park Civic Association) was pivotal in uniting the neighborhood around the Tangelo Park Program. All of these neighborhood institutions were champions of this program and would share their respective calendars to ensure their meetings did not overlap. Lockheed Martin, UCF, and Rosen Hotels donated computers for placement at the YMCA and the preschool providers' homes.

Forging Credibility, Reliability, and Intimacy

One stakeholder recalled that, initially, residents were rightfully skeptical. But the proof is in the pudding, and the simplest way to build trust is by following through on what has been promised. There was no complicated formula involved in reaching out to the neighborhood's residents. One stakeholder acknowledged, "We couldn't afford to have any enemies." A willingness to accept strangers was regarded as the foundation for forging new relationships irrespective of skin color, language, and country of origin. "One of the things about my culture is they are going to watch you for a while; pay attention to what you say and what you do." Seeing is believing, expressed one stakeholder, and Mr. Rosen is laidback and trustworthy.

Mr. Rosen has missed fewer than five advisory board meetings since the program's launch. He was commended for never imposing an agenda of the community. Instead, Mr. Rosen worked with the community's identified needs to establish a program designed to have the greatest impact. Visibility was deemed to be a critical element in fostering trust and establishing relationships within the neighborhood. Several stakeholders speculated that Tangelo Park being a well-defined/bounded neighborhood contributed to the role social capital played in the success of the Tangelo Park Program. The neighborhood consists of single-family homes; no apartments or duplexes. There is only one way in and one way out.

Fostering Purposeful Relationships

Several stakeholders shared that their relationships with the residents of Tangelo Park have only become stronger and more meaningful over time. Early on, their interactions with the residents were casual, and aligned with the fundamentals of building trust by being honest and upfront. These stakeholders attended Cub Scout meetings, church picnics, and PTA meetings to become a familiar face among the residents. One stakeholder (a non-resident of Tangelo Park) noted that, over the years, the residents became part of her extended family. She attended weddings and baby showers, funerals, and Super Bowl parties in Tangelo Park.

The stakeholders told similar accounts of how the residents banded together to improve their neighborhood. For instance, to expel drug dealers from Tangelo Park, the residents patrolled the streets night after night, and marched in lockstep as they sang hymns. Residents petitioned to have bus stops moved to other areas within the neighborhood that were safer for pedestrian traffic. They organized community cookouts and neighborhood cleanups. They drove each other to doctor's appointments, tended to a community garden, volunteered at their polling location on election day, and stood at crosswalks to supervise children.

Dr. Dziuban posited a "holistic three body capital model" which illustrates the logical relationships among human capital, social capital, and economic capital. Building a sense of community is something that happened rather organically according to the program's stakeholders. Residents offered multiple examples of how neighbors would assist one another – especially the seniors – in times of need. They watched each other's children, mowed each other's lawns, took out each other's garbage cans, and shared homegrown vegetables. Per one resident, "I can speak for myself and my neighbor. If we have a little extra we don't hesitate to

share." She explained that there is an unspoken reciprocity among neighbors, and people are comfortable asking for help.

Parent interactions at sports events, church gatherings, and meetings of the Neighborhood Center for Families (housed on the Tangelo Park Elementary School campus) were fundamental to the building of informal networks. The Neighborhood Center for Families provided counseling, a Registered Nurse who made house calls, and site visits for excessive school absences. In addition to the Tangelo Park Program, the community members would discuss opportunities for senior citizens, job fairs, and resources for home improvement projects.

The Tangelo Park Advisory Board was critical to building trust within the community as the program was unveiled. Multiple Tangelo Park Advisory Board members have previously lived or currently live in the community. They have an intimate understanding of the residents, their struggles, and the neighborhood dynamics. It was acknowledged that Mr. Rosen had the forethought to appoint individuals to the board who were trusted residents of Tangelo Park. One employee of Rosen Hotels & Resorts emphasized the importance of having an open forum for sharing and collaborating, especially during the program's early days. Implementing the Tangelo Park Program in the 1990's required "bridging the tribal knowledge" between residents and external stakeholders.

In the program's quest to build social capital, advisory board members Dr. Dziuban and Mrs. Bush made a point of being present at community events. Preschool providers recommended that the advisory board members walk around the neighborhood after the meetings to get a genuine feel for the community and its character. In the early years of the Tangelo Park Program, Dr. Dziuban and Mrs. Bush would show up at neighborhood events to get to know the community leaders and other residents, and they served on various committees in the

neighborhood. One long-term resident fondly recalled that her children referred to Dr. Dziuban as “Uncle Chuck.”

Preschool providers had their homeowner’s insurance cancelled because they were operating a home-based business. Mr. Rosen worked to have this statewide regulation changed so they could retrain their insured status. He partnered with local contractors to retrofit the homes of the mothers who were eligible to become preschool providers. One resident expressed her appreciation for Mr. Rosen offering the homeowners an unparalleled opportunity to start their own business: “He never missed a paycheck.”

Several stakeholders spoke glowingly of Patti Jo Houle, an individual who has worked with several generations of children in Tangelo Park. She represents another “known entity” in the neighborhood, supervising the Tangelo Park preschools for 25 years. Traversing the gap of distrust really took root when the parents saw the kindness and affection their children bestowed onto the program’s leaders. Per one interviewee, “These people have become my family. This is a community I love. I know their hopes and joys and struggles.” A longtime resident was very proud to share that over the span of many decades she actively participated in nearly every aspect of community life. She was formerly a Neighborhood Watch Chairperson, YMCA volunteer, and PTA mom.

Per one resident, “Neighbors are like family.” She currently resides eight houses down from her childhood home in Tangelo Park. During one of the more recent hurricanes, neighbors grilled side-by-side. “You can’t save it once the power goes out so you might as well share it before it spoils,” pronounced one resident. The residents provided prepared meals to one another, and helped each other gather debris in the wake of the storm. The YMCA and church

held food giveaways and organized activities to keep the children occupied while there was an extended power outage.

It was communicated that if a neighbor's family member passes away, someone will drop off food to their home because they know the grieving relatives need sustenance. The same holds true for clothing and shoe donations. One resident commented, "Somebody in the neighborhood will gladly wear the clothes your child has outgrown." Residents vary greatly in their technological savviness. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, parents helped one another and their children with distance learning.

Prior to the launch of the Tangelo Park Program, the neighborhood's youth were eligible to attend one of three high schools in the county. It was decided that the students from Tangelo Park Elementary should all matriculate to the same middle and high schools. Doing so would help build a cohort-feel and neighborhood spirit. Orange County Public Schools agreed to this change in school assignment, thereby ensuring that all Tangelo Park Elementary graduates would attend Southwest Middle School and Dr. Phillips High School.

Social Capital Igniting Academic Success

The program's focus on the "whole child" and making sure parents were "plugged in" to resources was important to building community trust. Students were provided referrals and access to wraparound student support services: behavior therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, etc., to address their developmental needs. The guidance counselor at Dr. Phillips High School, Mrs. Juanita Reed, played a key role in providing timely and accurate information about the program to students, parents, and teachers. Mrs. Reed knew every student, their siblings, and their residence. The parents entrusted her to make decisions that were in the best interest of their children. She was easily accessible and her relationship with the students was far-reaching. She

worked individually with the students to identify and reach their post-secondary goals, and stayed in touch with them long after they graduated high school and college, as they blossomed into professionals in their chosen field.

"The reason the average Title I [free and reduced lunch] African American student does not finish college is because of money. That's the number one reason," according to one interviewee who served as the former Superintendent of Schools for one of the largest districts in California. The Tangelo Park Program covers all things financial. The program's other components, what one stakeholder identified as "academics and social adjustment" are covered by the designated counselor that loops (from year to year) with the students from ninth grade through college completion. The counselor-to-student ratio is key to the awesome graduation rate.

The Tangelo Park students are active in school and extracurricular functions, especially at the YMCA (which was sometimes at capacity before its untimely closure in 2021 stemming from COVID-19). Program leaders attended swim meets, soccer games, and basketball tournaments. Most of the coaches and mentors in the neighborhood have had a personal affiliation with the Tangelo Park Program at one point in time. Either they were residents, previous scholarship recipients, or had a child that benefited from the program. Activities at the church were plentiful, and included a thriving brotherhood and programming for youth known as Young Boys in Action. The Orlando Magic distributed tickets to home games, and former Orange County Sheriff Kevin Barry and officers would take children shopping for Christmas gifts.

At first Mr. Rosen shied away from collecting data; he approached the Tangelo Park Program as a feel-good trial. (For its first three years, the Tangelo Park Program was officially designated a pilot program.) Per one stakeholder, he didn't want to be perceived as thumping his

chest. As it became increasingly clear that the program was moving the needle on high school graduation, Dr. Dziuban, Mrs. Bush, and Mrs. Reed began working systematically with the school district to maintain a record of Tangelo Park Program graduates. They started to track persistence and completion rates of these students at their four-year institution as well. Mrs. Reed was instrumental in helping retrace the academic pathway of students served by the program beginning in 1994.

Several stakeholders were compelled by the data, and used the preliminary figures on student scholarship and completion to kick off a very compelling narrative. After all, the Tangelo Park Program yields lofty high school and college graduation rates for any ethnic group, let alone African American students who have historically underperformed in comparison to their Caucasian peers. This program offers minority students an opportunity for higher education that isn't anchored by being an athletic star. The younger children of the neighborhood can envision the opportunities ahead of them, and are less drawn to the easy, unlawful way to make a few dollars.

One interviewee familiar with the high school students shared that the Tangelo Park students are challenging themselves to take more honors, advanced placement, and dual enrollment courses. The students are keenly aware that the Tangelo Park Program scholarship awaits them upon graduation from high school, and this has actually become an impetus for them to excel and secure merit-based scholarships. Their high school counselor actively encourages them to apply for competitive scholarships. The students know that the Tangelo Park Program will cover their unmet need, such as books and housing. Additionally, some of the students are participating in Horizons Scholars – an innovative mentoring program – beginning in eighth grade. (The program is a partnership between Valencia College and Take Stock in Children.)

Upon successful completion of Horizons Scholars, students are eligible for a two-year college scholarship.

Sustaining Social Capital Throughout the Decades

Many of the neighborhood's original African American residents have passed away, and their children have since sold their parents' homes. The scholarship program has become a selling point when marketing homes in the neighborhood. "Property values are up, crime is down and families are moving into the community rather than fleeing it" (Billman, 2016, p. 27). Present-day Tangelo Park is much more diverse than it was in the 1990s, and the stakeholders are of the opinion that the neighborhood's long-time residents are receptive to the newcomers. "Our children are growing up in a diverse world, and it is a good thing."

The community's demographics have shifted from predominantly African American to heavily Hispanic. The neighborhood's leaders have been proactive in staving off the possibility of estrangement between the new and established residents. Although the newer residents have different cultural values and mores, they too represent a marginalized group experiencing similar struggles to their African American counterparts. The stakeholders spoke about the community's demographic transformation from a shared refrain, such as "If this community wins, everybody wins." Per another stakeholder, "This is not a zero-sum game."

Faculty and administrators at Tangelo Park Elementary and Dr. Phillips High School have been very helpful in "messaging to this population." They have consistently served as cheerleaders for the program and many of them can communicate in both English and Spanish. The interviewees indicated that current residents have been intentional in their efforts to acquaint their new neighbors with the Tangelo Park Program. This includes reaching out to the

neighborhood's Hispanic church and adding one of its members to the Tangelo Park Advisory Board.

A few of the interviewees pointed out that the community has remained cohesive even though the Hispanic residents aren't quite as involved as their predecessors. Another interviewee noted that although the demographics have changed, "Color didn't seem to matter much in the neighborhood." Tangelo Park is the "only neighborhood I've been in where people care about others people's children as much as they do their own."

Several interviewees revealed that a good portion of the Hispanic residents who have moved into the community prefer that their children are cared for by their grandma or aunt. However, if a relative is unavailable, they gravitate toward the centralized preschool option. There is an obvious convenience to dropping one's children off at the elementary school and preschool co-located on the same campus. One interviewee explained that the "model has shifted" insofar as approximately 90% of the preschool age children currently attend the Rosen Preschool. There are no substantive differences in curriculum or pedagogy, it is simply a difference in the learning environment (physical space).

The stakeholders voiced complementary strategies for building trust within Tangelo Park. However, "Asking the residents what they need instead of dictating our best intentions to them" was consistently affirmed as the best approach to implementing a new program in an underserved community. The stakeholders offered similar accounts on how they helped build and sustain social capital in the neighborhood over several decades.

- You build trust by being trustworthy; keeping your word; promising only what you can deliver

- I kept my mouth shut and listened intently
- Respect the community; do not impose your will
- Listen to the parents and teachers; understand their concerns
- Define clear expectations, policies, and procedures
- Social bonds are inherently valuable; they do not need to be monetized
- I followed Mr. Rosen's example and commitment to the community
- I made sure I was hearing what the community was saying
- Reflect on what you've learned to make sure it's correct
- Follow through on everything you have committed
- I did not go in as a representative of an organization; I just went in as an individual
- It can be destroyed by one misstep; trust is very fragile

Figure 10 rank-orders the most commonly identified strategies to building trust, per the stakeholders.

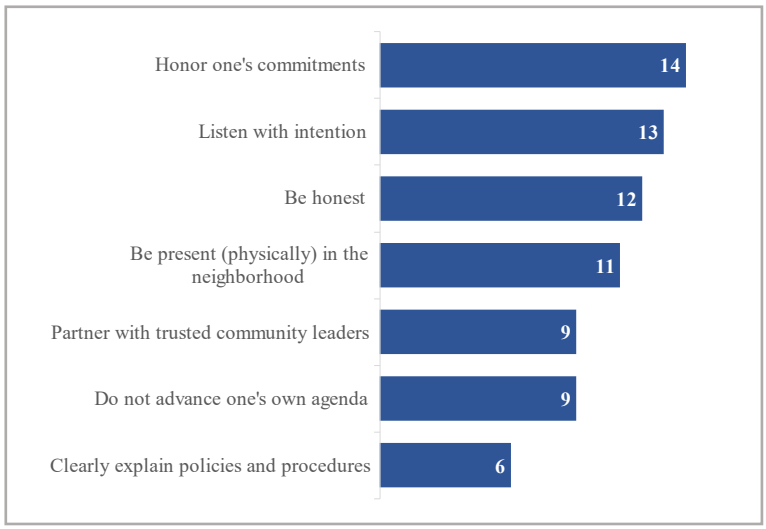

Figure 10. Stakeholder Responses Regarding Strategies to Build Trust

Evidence of Neighborhood Transformation

Bolstering an Intergenerational Sense of Community

The Tangelo Park Program has fostered a tremendous sense of pride among the neighborhood's residents. National recognition of this program as an educational model has proliferated in recent years. When asked about community buy-in and pride, several stakeholders commended Tangelo Park for its "family feel." The tangible benefits of an increase in pride as identified by the stakeholders include a decrease in crime, residents taking better care of their property, neighbors expressing concern for neighbors, and children recognizing their potential for academic success. These changes were not all experienced swiftly, but over the course of two decades.

Residents looking out for one another has become the tenor of Tangelo Park. In this extended family network, the "golden scholars" (senior citizens) keep an eye on each other and the neighborhood's youth. One stakeholder shared that the retirees know when the children are supposed to be in school and will confront school-age children who are off-campus during school hours.

One longstanding stakeholder summed up the first 25 years of the Tangelo Park Program in very simple terms: "Thirty years ago the community had no hope, and today, hope springs eternal." Residents began regularly attending the program's advisory board meetings and volunteering at the preschool and elementary school. "The children are the conduit; that's what brings the parents together." The children in this neighborhood are of different races and backgrounds, but that has no bearing on their interactions and friendships. "People are congenial, even as the demographics have fluctuated," noted one resident.

Several residents expressed their gratitude for the Tangelo Park neighborhood and the opportunities provided by Mr. Rosen. "I don't have to look elsewhere for childcare, extracurriculars, festivities. Everything I need is right here." One interviewee moved to Tangelo Park with the understanding that finding a way to pay for her child's college is not a consideration. She relocated here knowing that her son would have access to a quality preschool and every opportunity to attend college when he is ready. This realization has truly changed the dialogue about college being within reach, and the timing of this conversation within the family unit. It has prompted parents to have discussions about academic success and college preparedness with their young children.

An intergenerational approach has been integral to the program's successful launch and continued success. There is a genuine sense of giving back. Some of the scholarship recipients return to volunteer even if they no longer reside in Tangelo Park. One interviewee shared that two children who were recently enrolled in the Tangelo Park Preschool are the offspring of two women who attended college on the scholarship.

The granddaughter of one of the program's original in-home preschool providers decided to join the preschool staff. One stakeholder's daughter spoke about three generations of her family that have directly benefited from the Tangelo Park Program. Her daughter and grandson had their bachelor's degrees covered by the Tangelo Park Program scholarship. Her great-grandchildren also attended preschool in Tangelo Park and are on track to graduate from Dr. Phillips High School.

Enhancing the Physical Environment

Desirability of the neighborhood has improved beyond measure. "People don't cringe when you mention Tangelo anymore," stated one interviewee. She echoed her neighbors'

sentiments that the program itself has been a blessing and has changed the faith of this community. One stakeholder cautioned that it will take "continued vigilance" to keep the neighborhood desirable.

After the Tangelo Park Program launched, home renovations in the neighborhood became commonplace, and included greenery and other landscaping projects. The Tangelo Park Civic Association began a "yard of the month" contest. One resident shared that there is very little debris on the streets. She attributed this to the Silver Sneakers, a group of senior citizens that walks the neighborhood in the early morning hours with bags and picks, doing their part to keep the neighborhood litter-free.

Common areas such as bus stops have also been enhanced. One interviewee remarked that even renters are encouraged to become more involved and maintain their property. We didn't have sidewalks in this neighborhood when I was a kid, shared one resident and youth sports coach. Speedbumps have since been installed for the safety of the children and pedestrians, and an attractive sign graces the neighborhood entrance.

High School Graduation as the Expectation

Mr. Rosen is spending less money on scholarships now than in the program's early years. This has been attributed, in part, to the students' internalization of attending college as their desired post-graduation pathway. They are selecting their colleges of choice and applying for merit-based scholarships at these institutions. The mindset of students and parents has been transformed; there is an expectation that these young adults will attend college upon graduating from high school.

Longitudinal data compiled by the Tangelo Park Program courtesy of the Orange County School District illustrates the uptick in the high school graduation rate among Tangelo Park

seniors between 2004 (88%) and 2020 (100%). (Outcome data were not collected during the first 10 years of the program.) As shown in Figure 11, in recent years, the graduation rate for Tangelo Park seniors has hovered at 100%. It is important to note that the graduation rate statewide also increased markedly between 2004 and 2020.

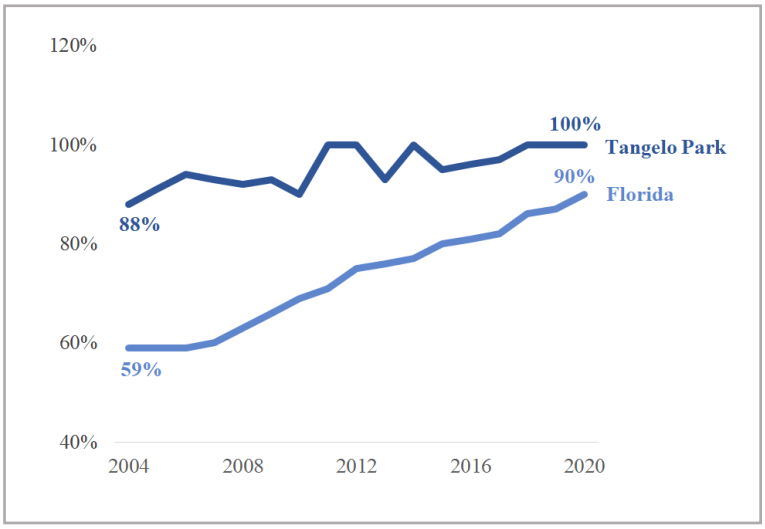

Figure 11. Longitudinal Comparison of Tangelo Park and Florida High School Graduation Rates

A Collateral Benefit: Reduction in Crime

Several stakeholders were in agreement that they had to mindfully change the perception of the neighborhood in order to usher in a better image of Tangelo Park. One resident recounted, "The neighborhood took back its neighborhood." The residents fought to make the community safe and more desirable. While "crime surrounds Tangelo Park; it is not in Tangelo Park. The newer homes in Tangelo Park do not have bars on the windows."

One interviewee pointed out that the neighborhood's decrease in crime and increase in feelings of safety were actually unanticipated benefits of the Tangelo Park Program. He shared that discussions about a reduction in crime were not at the forefront when this program was developed. Crimes against persons, property, and society decreased precipitously between 1993

and 2020, per the residents' accounts and based on longitudinal data compiled by the Tangelo Park Program courtesy of the Orange County Sheriff's Office (Figure 12).

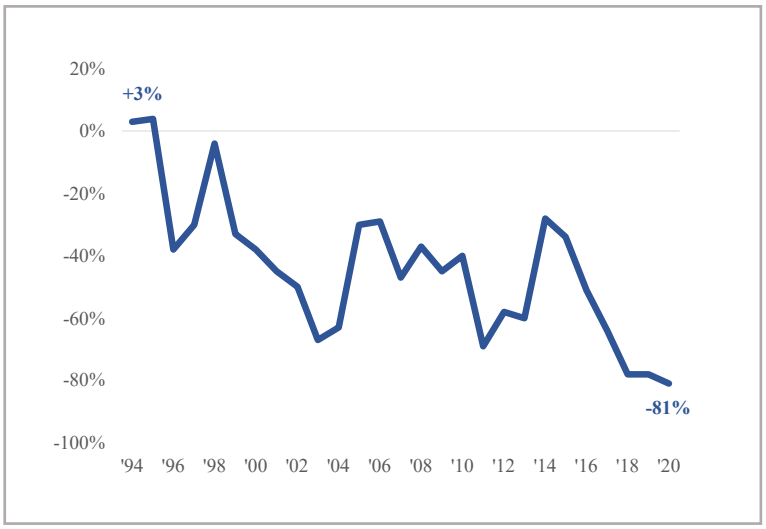

Figure 12. Tangelo Park Crime Rate for 1994 Through 2020 (Standardized by 1993 Figures)

Sustainability and Replication

The stakeholders recounted a variety of reasons they believe the Tangelo Park Program has not been widely replicated by any number of organizations and foundations that have shown interest in the ground-breaking initiative. When asked to share why the Tangelo Park Program model has yet to be adopted in other communities beyond Orlando, several themes emerged.

- Donors want immediate gratification insofar as they write a check and can expect it to yield a quick return
- It is not a "slick" program like the Harlem Children's Zone
- This is very different than Promise Neighborhoods and comparable models; we don't have seven tiers of board members and assistants between residents and stakeholders

- The people with the resources think this holistic model – from preschool to higher education – sounds too cumbersome
- Tangelo Park Program is not branded for national television, as it is the very essence of grassroots programming
- It requires the sustained goodwill of a philanthropist or foundation, and this seems unmanageable to most benefactors
- Philanthropists have a lot of money but not a lot of time, and this program is much more labor intensive than just disbursing scholarship funds

In June 2021, it was announced that Travel + Leisure Charitable Foundation would be financing a new scholarship program for students residing in Eatonville, FL, based on the model established by the Tangelo Park Program (Postal, 2021). In 2019, the President and CEO of Travel + Leisure Co., Mr. Michael Brown, attended one of Mr. Rosen's presentations about the Tangelo Park Program and was inspired to make a similar commitment to a community in need of assistance. He settled on Eatonville, an Orlando suburb founded by freed slaves, and ". . . the first town in the country to be incorporated and run by Black residents" (Postal, 2021). The scholarships are being made available to students who attend Hungerford Elementary School and later graduate from Edgewater, Evans, or Wekiva High Schools. This privately funded program covers the tuition costs of attending a public college, university, or technical school in Florida. The scholarships also cover related costs such as books and accommodations (Brown, 2022). The program kicked off during the 2021-2022 academic year with 27 scholarships for eligible graduates. The Travel + Leisure Foundation can fund up to 200 students per year (Brown, 2022).

Misalignment of Mission and Scope

Mr. Rosen has spoken with some of the country's largest foundations, wealthiest individuals, and representatives of numerous professional sports teams who have the financial resources to replicate this model. The model, per several stakeholders, is not complicated, and stands alone without the intrusion of bureaucracy. Mr. Rosen funds this program with his own capital, which ensures there are no outside stipulations; no government hoops or regulations. Mr. Rosen is firm about replication being taken on privately. "The government cannot be involved whatsoever; the private sector has to get off its ass and do the right thing."

Per one longstanding advisory board member, "We have been visited by a lot of organizations that ask all kinds of questions and have good intentions when they go back, but it does not materialize." The program's leaders have approached the NFL and NBA, and were politely dismissed. This stakeholder surmised that if every franchise of the league were to sponsor a community in their hometown, we could begin to rebuild the country. He emphasized that the Tangelo Park Program makes sense from a philanthropic point of view. It lifts people out of poverty, advances a skilled workforce, and amplifies the customer base. It can "literally add billions of the dollars to the economy," and augment the economic trajectory of the nation. One stakeholder emphasized that college debt and healthcare costs are ruining the American dream for millions of people. "With multiple Tangelo Park Programs across the country we would turn that around."

It was shared that the Tangelo Park Program model is simply "not the foundation way." Foundations are willing to give up money but not power. They have agendas and boards, and issue calls for proposals. Foundations are keen on funding broad-based programs throughout the country for a few consecutive years with the understanding that these initiatives will sustain

themselves once the foundation dollars have been exhausted. This philosophy not does coincide with the long-term adoption necessary to transform a single neighborhood.

The longevity of the Tangelo Park Program is a tough act to follow. The program does not have an end date or a finite number of students who will be served. Several interviewees contemplated if the multi-generational commitment is part of the reluctance of philanthropic organizations to replicate the program. The stakeholders have observed that the initial funding commitment is oftentimes not the concern, but the notion of sustained funding seems burdensome for some philanthropists and foundations.

One stakeholder shared that they scared a few people away by using the word "perpetuity" when detailing the Tangelo Park Program. She indicated that they now use the phrase "until no longer needed" in their discussions with interested parties. Another talking point is to draw attention to the fact that reliance on the "scholarship safety net" will decrease over time as students are awarded more merit-based scholarships for their individual academic accomplishments.

The children in this neighborhood receive services regardless of their parent's employment status. This decision by Mr. Rosen reinforces the notion that children should not be disqualified for their parent's lack of motivation. Apparently, this programmatic decree has soured some people on replication because they wanted to include more stringent requirements for parental responsibility and accountability.

Figure 13 rank-orders the most commonly identified barriers to replicating the Tangelo Park Program, per the stakeholders.

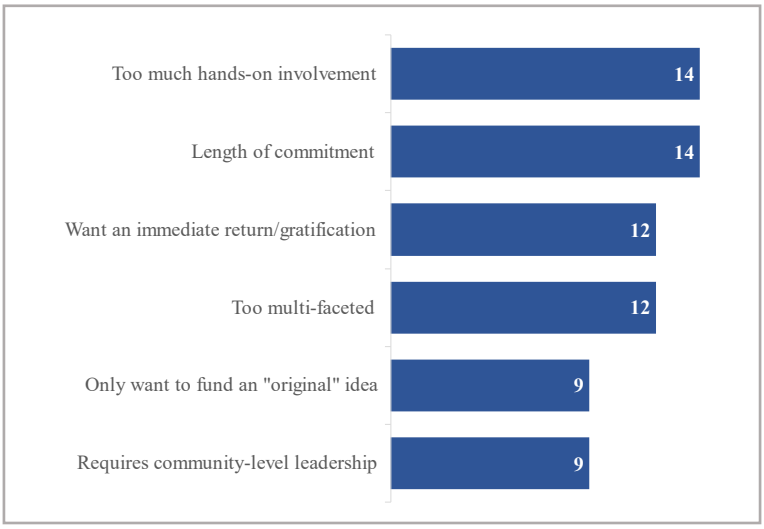

Figure 13. Stakeholder Responses Regarding Barriers to Program Replication

A Model Worthy of Replication: The Sum of Its Parts

All of the interviewees identified the Tangelo Park Program as a model for the country. They were confident that the transformation that defines Tangelo Park could be accomplished in hundreds of other communities. Doing so "could finally level the playing field so everyone would have an opportunity for an education." One respondent has witnessed Tangelo Park residents "bootstrap themselves out of poverty." A few of the interviewees remarked that they hope to live long enough to see other communities experience a positive change of this magnitude. Per one interviewee, "Can you imagine if every underserved community in the United States of America had a Tangelo Park Program? Crime would evaporate, and high school and college graduation rates would soar."

Mr. Rosen adheres to the "KISS (Keep It Simply Student)" and "PPPPPP (Prior Planning Prevents Piss Poor Performance)" principles in his dealings, as evidenced by the administration of the Tangelo Park Program for nearly three decades. Several stakeholders touched on the importance of not expecting immediate returns when introducing a program of this kind.: "Be

patient . . . it took nearly 20 years for Mr. Rosen to wholeheartedly acknowledge that this model is worthy of replication." Two stakeholders would like to promote the idea of distributing a newsletter at least annually to showcase the program's outcomes, partnerships, milestones, etc.

One respondent contemplated, "What is integral for replication?" For instance, what if Mr. Rosen didn't attend the advisory board meetings or refrained from being involved in the program's administration? This stakeholder felt that it is impossible to parse Mr. Rosen's influence and commodify these interactions. Similarly, one stakeholder pondered if the money and results alone would be enough to build trust over the years. Would it make any difference if Mr. Rosen didn't show his face (regularly) in the neighborhood? "Is this the 'x factor' of the whole program?"

One stakeholder acknowledged that although the Tangelo Park Program delivers impressive results, we don't know how each component impacts the overall success of the program. He questioned, "How much of the Tangelo Park Program is more than the sum of its parts?" It is difficult to isolate a single program component longitudinally. It is extremely rare, in his opinion, to have a program focused on the whole child. Singular aspects of the Tangelo Park Program are on display throughout the country: tuition stipends, early childhood education, parent leadership training, etc., but this program ties them all together. The Tangelo Park Program has built an infrastructure linking the two educational pillars: pre-K and college. The return-on-investment study conducted by Dr. Lochner demonstrated the program's impact on society. The calculations are impressive and persuasive.

One stakeholder was of the opinion that Purpose Built Communities could serve as the convener for future Tangelo Park Programs. Purpose Built Communities is a national non-profit founded by Tom Cousins, Warren Buffett, and Julian Robertson focused on community

redevelopment. This interviewee spoke about the West Lakes Partnership between LIFT Orlando and Purpose Build Communities, which is "essentially using the Tangelo Park Program model." He noted that the West Lakes Partnership has a resident-led advisory board, early learning center, and Boys & Girls Club. The college scholarship component of the Tangelo Park Program is the missing piece from this strategic partnership.

Race as a Blockade to Replication

Per one resident, "Mr. Rosen is not the only person to come along with a program designed to help us black folks. This is the only program that has sort of tried to address the needs of black folks from the black folks' perspective. Harris had an idea that every black person in this country, if given the opportunity, could achieve as much as every other person in this country."

One scholarship recipient turned community volunteer shared, "Can I be honest?" I don't feel like people trust the urban areas. I don't feel like people want to see the urban areas succeed. I think they want to keep us down; to keep us in our place." Another resident echoed, "We were just a bunch of black folks. You don't have many people willing to take the heat. And he [Mr. Rosen] has taken the heat to try to help black folks. He has taken a lot of heat for pouring his resources into this community. He's helping my people."

The importance of cultural sensitivity cannot be overstated, per every stakeholder who spoke about replication of the Tangelo Park Program. Replication will require a philanthropist willing to take a chance on a community; to invest in an underserved community. It will also require customization to "Meet people where they are; understand their plight; appreciate their communication style."

Not All Philanthropists Are Created Equal

"Mr. Rosen is available. He does not miss a meeting. Harris has put himself – not just his money – into this neighborhood. That's the difference; it's the 'care.' It is the heart of the man, the heart of the people, and the heart of the organization that were the genesis for the success of the Tangelo Park Program. That's why you don't see it replicated."

The stakeholders mentioned over and over that this community has the unyielding patronage of Mr. Rosen. He's charismatic, energetic, and well-connected. Mr. Rosen's involvement makes the Tangelo Park Program very special, but some of the interviewees wondered if it could be viewed as an impediment for other philanthropists. The stakeholders reiterated that giving generously is part of Mr. Rosen's constitution. He doesn't do it for glory or fame, unlike many of the benefactors in a similar position.

There was consensus that most philanthropists are inclined to give to a cause that doesn't require hands-on involvement. Giving money to the United Way or endowing a scholarship at the local college, for instance, is an easy sell. The Tangelo Park Program, in contrast, requires an ongoing commitment, and leaders who are eager to become fixtures in the community. The human connection is the hallmark of The Tangelo Park Program and reinforces what sustained philanthropy is all about.

Social Capital-Building as the Precursor to Replication

Replication in another community cannot occur without securing the buy-in of residents, community institutions, and community stakeholders. Per one respondent, the Tangelo Park Program was successful, in part, because the neighborhood "was ripe for Mr. Rosen's partnership." An initiative like the Tangelo Park Program needs a quarterback organization, per

Dr. Dziuban. The neighborhood requires community-level leadership and social bonds to secure solidarity within its borders.

Early on, the Tangelo Park Program was able to identify several trusted residents with an established presence in the community, and many of the original leaders remain actively involved with the program more than two decades later. The neighborhood's "unofficial mayor" (and longtime resident) Mr. Sam Butler has proudly served as one of the program's well-respected thought leaders. There is also tremendous value in establishing a liaison between the local school district and the neighborhood preschool. In Tangelo Park, Mrs. Patti Jo Houle was praised for developing a decades-long rapport with the parents and grandparents in the neighborhood.

Tangelo Park is not an inner-city locale, and may have more community and school support than other neighborhoods of a similar composition. Tangelo Park was seen as a prime location for this program because the neighborhood feeds into a quality high school (Dr. Phillips High School), whereas other low-income, high-minority neighborhoods are more likely to feed into an inferior high school.

Being a "bedroom community" without public housing put Tangelo Park in an advantageous position to adopt a program of this kind. Multiple stakeholders indicated that having a Boys & Girls Club or YMCA in the neighborhood is critical. These organizations provide youth with a safe place to congregate and participate in after-school and summer programming that supports their academic, physical, and social-emotional development. "We've got our own school and recreational complex right in the neighborhood. In some ways, we are self-contained."

Strategies for Eliminating Barriers to Replication

"We have a template; the template is simple; it is transferrable to nearly any community," according to Dr. Dziuban. Interested parties have been encouraged to start small and scale the program after initial success. The program's leaders recognize that the program components may need to be tailored to the unique dynamics of each community. "It will take on different forms in different neighborhoods." The replicated programs in other neighborhoods would operate independently of the Tangelo Park Program.

The program's leaders are also aware that although the components are simple, sometimes the logistics are not. The program's leaders have offered to provide technical assistance "every step of the way" to many organizations over the years that have expressed interest in imitating the program. These services would be volunteered (the costs would be absorbed by the Rosen Foundation).

One stakeholder described how the program's leaders have presented interested parties with a "menu of options" to make replication seem more doable in their communities. The program's leaders have provided information, shared the impacts, and planted the seed in hopes of encouraging people to come away with ideas about how they can make the framework their own. Several interviewees echoed the same sentiment: philanthropists want to fund a program that is their own (original) masterpiece. "Another billionaire isn't going to fund Harris Rosen's brainchild," per one respondent. One advisory board member acknowledged that people want to put their name on what they are funding. "So, we've told them, fine, go ahead and put your name on it. Don't let that be the hang up."

Impacts of COVID-19

The stakeholders were asked how COVID-19 has impacted Tangelo Park, and whether the residents were any more or less vulnerable to the pandemic in comparison to other communities resembling Tangelo Park. A few of the respondents shared how the pandemic has impacted the Tangelo Park Program, specifically. In March 2020, the Rosen Tangelo Park Preschool closed in response to COVID-19 when Orange County Public Schools mandated a district-wide campus closure. Given that it is co-located on the Tangelo Park Elementary campus, the preschool is required to follow the guidelines of Orange County Public Schools. COVID-19 communications from the school district were delivered in English, Spanish, and Creole.

The home-based preschools were able to continue operating (without interruption) because of their "independent status." A few families asked to transition back to the home-based preschools during the pandemic to minimize the interruption to their children's learning, socialization, and normal weekday routine. At the height of COVID-19, the preschool providers had trouble securing cleaning supplies and "taking due care" to sanitize common areas. The Rosen Foundation stepped in to provide cleaning supplies, children's masks, and other necessities to continue normal operations. The home-based preschools followed the guidelines of Orange County Public Schools, Florida Department of Children and Families, and Rosen Hotels & Resorts.

The closure of schools was viewed as a detriment to the neighborhood's children. One mother shared, regrettably, that the children cannot and did not succeed in a forced online learning environment. Some parents were ill-equipped to help their children with remote learning, and these students were further disadvantaged.

Several stakeholders expressed how much they have missed the in-person interactions that typically occur before, during, and after the Tangelo Park Program advisory board meetings. COVID-19 necessitated that the meetings take place virtually for the safety of all involved. "Breaking bread together" each month is a strength of the program, and the informal conversations that bookend the meetings are key to maintaining relationships and introducing new residents to the program and its leadership.

One stakeholder indicated that many Tangelo Park residents work in the hospitality industry, and a good portion of these individuals either lost their jobs completely or had their hours reduced in the first six months of the pandemic. Although getting laid off can obviously be a very stressful situation, having access to resources and free childcare made it easier to find and maintain a new job. Everyone in the neighborhood qualifies for year-round preschool, regardless of income and whether they rent or own their home.

Per one stakeholder, the pandemic was the lynchpin for the Tangelo Park YMCA closing its doors for good in spring 2021. The recreational complex had been a long-standing hub for community gatherings and summer programs, fitness classes, and social events for youth, adults, and seniors.

Tangelo Park has many multi-generational families living under one roof. Some of the stakeholders were fearful for the health of their elderly relatives, citing the impossibility of keeping children and grandchildren masked and physically distanced in the same home. One resident commented that although social distancing was tough for all, it was especially difficult for the neighborhood's elderly residents. No community-wide events were held, and people were encouraged to refrain from congregating. Thus, opportunities to socialize became largely

non-existent. Using technology to stay in touch (and entertained) was crucial during this time, but this luxury was not available to all residents of Tangelo Park.

One resident felt his Tangelo Park neighbors were even more susceptible to COVID-19 than those in affluent neighborhoods. He candidly expressed that the community's residents are trying to follow the advice of medical experts but that the powerful are capitalizing on the pandemic to "get rid of as many of us as it can." In underserved areas, accessing information about testing sites, vaccination clinics, and appointment registration was limited.

One resident spoke about the silver lining of COVID-19; namely, that it has forced residents to reflect and get their lives in order. She has reevaluated her health, started walking more, and even purchased a bicycle. Given that there were few other socially distanced activities available at the time, neighbors began walking and cycling in groups.

Impacts of Black Lives Matter

The interviewees were asked to share the ways in which Black Lives Matter (BLM) and national protests against racism are impacting Tangelo Park. One interviewee acknowledged that BLM has elevated the country to a contemporary consciousness, and contributed to unprecedented feelings of empowerment among residents of underserved communities. More specifically, he shared that for many Americans, BLM has led to the realization that our country was founded on prejudicial and racist ideas, and shed light on the stark reality that the majority of our founding fathers owned slaves.

Several of the respondents agreed that, at the local level, BLM has been a positive force in Tangelo Park because the residents are coming together to make sure their voice is heard. They are being proactive in "protecting our children of color." One resident emphasized that this

movement has encouraged her to "get out the vote" and discuss with her neighbors the importance of completing the U.S. Census questionnaire because representation matters.

Some of the respondents were fearful of the nationwide demands to defund the police. Nearly all of the stakeholders were of the opinion that Tangelo Park residents have a good relationship with local law enforcement, and that its presence is appreciated. For example, the School Resource Officer assigned to Tangelo Park Elementary stops by the preschool regularly to read to the students and participate in their birthday festivities.

The introduction of a community policing approach in Tangelo Park has also contributed to positive relationships among residents and between residents and law enforcement. Per the interviewees, interactions with the police are not as confrontational as they are in other neighborhoods because the residents are known to the officers, and vice versa. This familiarity with one another is beneficial when officers try to deescalate a situation or heated encounter between residents.

One stakeholder remarked that the depiction of rampant police brutality nationwide is a mischaracterization. He has noticed a rise in anti-police sentiment that has further complicated the job of law enforcement. The profile of white officers as inherent racists leaves no accounting for human error in an extremely stressful and oftentimes dangerous line of work. It was shared that this inescapable reality gets lost in the discourse, making for a particularly disheartening chapter among police officers who have built their entire careers on service to the community.

One of the neighborhood's more senior residents made clear that when protections are denied to one, they are denied to all. "We cannot legislate morality. I can't tell you what to think or how to think. If you have hate in your heart I'm probably not going to be able to do much about that." He continued, "Racism is probably going to be with us as long as we are here.

It's only when we manifest those things and start to hurt other people that it really becomes a problem."

This same resident paraphrased the following quote by First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev: "We will take America without firing a shot. We do not have to invade the U.S. We will destroy you from within." According to this stakeholder, the notion that "we will self-destruct" is precisely the direction the United States is headed.

One of the residents – a woman in her 40s – posited that the theme underlying interminable racism is fear. A fear of black men is the genesis of the newsworthy overreaction by white officers, which in turn has fatal consequences for this segment of the population. This resident acknowledged that in her youth she was taught to trust the police. She is more afraid of law enforcement now because "her antenna is up." She has had to explain to black children that they cannot say and do the same things as their Caucasian friends and classmates when they are stopped by the police. Her instructions to black children – especially teenagers – are "Comply with the police; make sure you answer the officer's questions in a polite voice. Make sure your hands aren't in your pockets. One wrong move can end your life."

Chapter V

CONCLUSION

This chapter will conclude the study by summarizing the key research questions, findings and implications, limitations, and opportunities for future research.

Project Summary

The Tangelo Park Program is an exemplar of a place-based initiative with the dual aims of benefiting people and their neighborhood through front-line organizers. The program concentrates on improving circumstances for neighborhood residents through a compendium of early childhood education programs, post-secondary scholarships, parent involvement initiatives, and wraparound services.

This mixed methods case study focused on the implementation and sustainability of a comprehensive educational program for urban youth within the context of building social capital in an economically disadvantaged neighborhood. This research described the structure, performance, and leadership of the Tangelo Park Program throughout the first 25 years of its evolution; explored the characteristics, culture and conditions of the neighborhood and participants served; and examined how social capital has been leveraged to gain (and maintain) support for the program over the last quarter-century.

Numerous studies have investigated the impact of place-based educational reforms on the academic outcomes (K-12 and college-level) and personal growth of program participants. Like its predecessors, this study explored high school and college completion rates, as well as neighborhood crime statistics. This study, however, is unique insofar as it is the first of its kind to examine the Tangelo Park Program through the lens of social capital. Through a series of one-

on-one stakeholder interviews and extant program records review, the researcher sought to address four central questions.

1. How did the program build social capital in the form of community buy-in and ownership among the neighborhood's residents?
2. How did the program's assets-based approach develop community stakeholders' self-interest and collective interest?
3. In what ways has the Tangelo Park Program contributed to student- and neighborhood-level outcomes with regard to high school graduation and neighborhood safety?
4. What are the best practices that have emerged from the program over the past 25 years that may be replicable or transferrable?

Findings and Implications

Approach to Data Collection

The stakeholders for this study were identified with the assistance of a gatekeeper, Dr. Dziuban. Gatekeepers are used to assist qualitative researchers in gaining access to and developing trust with the community of study (Hatch, 2002). Dr. Dziuban purposefully chose key stakeholders involved in the early implementation of the Tangelo Park Program because they had witnessed changes in social capital. Employing the snowball sampling technique provided the researcher with a broader and perhaps more diverse set of stakeholders who could speak to the program's ideation, development, operation, and enhancement.

An additional data source for this study was program records. This resource was made available by representatives from the Rosen Foundation and the Tangelo Park Program. Program records were used to complement the interviewees' accounts of the program's impetus and early

implementation, community collaboration, neighborhood dynamics and participation, student success and completion, and program modifications, sustainability, and replication.

Research Questions

- Research Question #1: How did the program build social capital in the form of community buy-in and ownership among the neighborhood's residents?

Social capital is a form of non-monetary currency that stems from the very structure of social relationships (Coleman, 1990). This public good represents an underutilized yet embedded resource for low-income urban neighborhoods. Social capital and human capital are regarded as interrelated mechanisms necessary for the promotion of socio-economic advancement. Evidence suggests that both forms of capital have a positive (oftentimes cumulative) effect on poverty reduction and economic status, and improvements in the human condition. When social and human capital are harnessed in an effective manner, they convert into productive activity and performance. Not only are these commodities long-term predictors of self-sufficiency and upward mobility in disadvantaged areas, their presence is crucial to the viability of policy decisions designed to improve economic opportunity.

The most common themes that emerged from the discussions about building social capital are to behave in a trustworthy manner, follow through on one's promises, listen intently, be present in the neighborhood, and respect the will of the community. It was explained that efforts to cultivate social capital in Tangelo Park began with the community's leaders and a host of community partners, both secular and non-secular. The community partners were instrumental in fostering a sense of hope among a group of people who had little to no hope after a prolonged period of instability, crime, rampant drug dealing, and underperforming schools.

The stakeholders voiced complementary strategies for building trust within Tangelo Park. "Asking the residents what they need instead of dictating our best intentions to them" was universally acknowledged as the wisest approach when implementing a new program in an underserved community. Mr. Rosen was commended for never imposing an agenda on the neighborhood. Instead, he worked with the community's identified needs to establish a program designed to have the greatest impact.

The Tangelo Park Advisory Board played an important role in building trust within the community. Multiple advisory members have previously lived or currently live in the community; thus, they have an astute awareness of the neighborhood's attributes and challenges. Providing this open forum for sharing and collaborating, especially during the program's early days, was key to forging cooperation and a shared vision.

The stakeholder interviews revealed that social capital in Tangelo Park did not decline during the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, as residents attempted to manage the crisis in their homes and in their neighborhood, they became a mobilizing force. Young and old residents alike reported a heightened sense of mindfulness about the well-being of one's neighbors.

In the face of uncertainty during the pandemic, residents shared food and resources, assisted one another with basic chores like bringing in trashcans, and provided technical support to each other's children who were adjusting to virtual schooling. Although community-wide events were not held during the height of the pandemic, and people were encouraged to refrain from congregating, neighbors began walking and cycling in groups, for both socialization and exercise in their attempts to stay mentally and physically fit. This sequence of events illustrates how people cope, and even thrive, when confronted with challenging and oppressive circumstances. The residents of Tangelo Park once again showed

their character as they harnessed optimism, amplified mutual bonds, and resolved problems in a time of crisis.

- Research Question #2: How did the program's assets-based approach develop community stakeholders' self-interest and collective interest?

The program has impacted Tangelo Park across generational lines, proving that hopefulness for a brighter future has the potential to radically transform the condition of an entire community. As a community becomes increasingly multicultural, and the problems it faces even more multidimensional, engaging families as partners in their children's education necessitates the advancement of intentional and culturally-responsive programs and practices.

This program has effectively strengthened relationships within the neighborhood, and between neighborhood residents and outside stakeholders. Neighborhood residents' efforts to build community and devise comprehensive solutions have been nurtured through a collective identity, values, and social norms. Although the Tangelo Park Program speaks to one's self-interest, its collateral impact is its ability to promote personal networks, trusting relationships, and street-level social consciousness. The stakeholders interviewed for this study were in agreement that the Tangelo Park Program has encouraged the prosocial behaviors of partnership-building and cooperation.

The stakeholders told similar accounts of how the residents banded together to improve their neighborhood. For instance, to expel drug dealers from Tangelo Park, the residents patrolled the streets every evening, and marched in lockstep as they sang hymns. Residents petitioned to have bus stops moved to other areas within the neighborhood that were safer for pedestrian traffic. The tangible benefits of a community-wide increase in pride (as identified by the stakeholders) include a reduction in crime, residents maintaining their property and common

areas, neighbors showing concern for each other, and children internalizing their potential for academic success. These changes were not all experienced swiftly, but over the course of two decades.

- Research Question #3: In what ways has the Tangelo Park Program contributed to student- and neighborhood-level outcomes with regard to high school graduation and neighborhood safety?

Singular aspects of the Tangelo Park Program are on display throughout the country in the form of tuition stipends, early childhood education, parent leadership training, etc. The Tangelo Park Program, meanwhile, focuses on the whole child, whereby the school, family, and community join forces to create an environment designed to foster student success, upward mobility, and civic engagement (Barnes, 1998).

The Tangelo Park Program has also had a positive impact on crime rates, residents' sense of safety, property values, and transiency rates in Tangelo Park. Crimes against persons, property, and society decreased precipitously between 1993 and 2020. In his most recent analysis, Dr. Lochner calculated the return on investment as $7 for every $1 spent on the Tangelo Park Program. The 24-year investment of $12,807,800 has yielded a return of $89,654,600 (The Tangelo Park and Parramore Programs, 2020). Approximately two-thirds of the funds have been spent on the early childhood program and one-third has been dispersed as scholarships. The Tangelo Park Program has improved the odds of college success for its participants from 9:1 against to 3:1 in favor (Dziuban, 2023).

The grade point average of students has steadily increased, and between 2014 and 2017 the GPA of Tangelo Park Program students averaged 3.03. In contrast, during the program's first four years (2004-2007), the GPA of Tangelo Park Program students averaged 2.56. Since

the launch of the Tangelo Park Program, the high school graduation rate has reached the upper 90% range. In 2018, 100% of Tangelo Park seniors received a high school diploma.

According to program records, 79% of scholarship recipients who enrolled in a bachelor's degree program earned their degree, and the same is true for 91% of those who pursued a graduate degree. The number of degrees expected without the Tangelo Park Program is 55, while the number of degrees awarded totals 301 (Dziuban, 2023). Several stakeholders reiterated the importance of not expecting immediate returns when introducing a program of this kind. "Be patient . . . it took nearly 20 years for Mr. Rosen to wholeheartedly acknowledge that this model is worthy of replication."

- Research Question #4: What are the best practices that have emerged from the program over the past 25 years that may be replicable or transferrable?

Replication of the Tangelo Park Program cannot occur without first securing the buy-in of the neighborhood's residents, community institutions, and community stakeholders. The neighborhood under consideration must have some degree of indigenous leadership and social bonds to propagate solidarity within its borders. Residents need to feel empowered and valued, and assured that they have a voice in addressing complex challenges that extend beyond classroom walls. In the case of Tangelo Park, stakeholders noted that this occurred rather organically. The same may not hold true for other neighborhoods.

The stakeholders were in agreement that respecting the determination of the community must be intentional and thoughtful at every phase, from program ideation to implementation and revision. Program leaders have a duty to take the pulse of the community, recognize its concerns and objectives, and work in tandem to develop a shared vision that addresses the needs of at-risk youth. Similarly, per every stakeholder who spoke about replication of the Tangelo Park

Program, the importance of cultural sensitivity cannot be overstated. Replication will require a philanthropist willing to invest in an underserved community; to take a chance on its residents. It will also require customization to "Meet people where they are; understand their plight; appreciate their communication style."

Interested parties have been urged to start small and scale the program after initial success. The Tangelo Park Program's leaders recognize that the components may need to be tailored to the uniqueness of each community, and they have presented a "menu of options" to make replication an easier lift. The program's leaders have offered to provide technical assistance (free of charge) to any organization/foundation looking to imitate the program in their hometown. Those inquiring about replication have been advised to "make it their own" by branding their customized version of the Tangelo Park Program.

Mr. Rosen's enduring involvement in the Tangelo Park Program is distinctive, and some stakeholders questioned whether it could be viewed as an impediment for other philanthropists. One respondent explained that it is impossible to parse Mr. Rosen's influence and commodify his neighborhood-level interactions.

Transforming a single neighborhood demands uninterrupted loyalty and a funding stream without an expiration date. There was consensus that most philanthropists would prefer to give to a cause that doesn't require active, sustained involvement in the neighborhood being served. The Tangelo Park Program, in stark contrast, requires an ongoing commitment, and leaders who desire to become fixtures in the community. This human connection is the cornerstone of the Tangelo Park Program and represents the most fundamental aspect of philanthropy.

The stakeholders have also observed that the initial funding commitment is oftentimes not the concern, but the notion of funding a program in perpetuity seems onerous for some

philanthropists and foundations. Yet even among organizations whose resources are abundant, replication has not taken flight. Tangelo Park Program leaders have spoken with representatives from the NFL and NBA about replicating the program in the cities where the professional sports teams are located, but these initial meetings did not pique the interest of the sports leagues nor generate additional inquiries.

The Tangelo Park Program is the embodiment of opportunity, and its very existence serves to eradicate social inequity. The program's stakeholders asserted that the transformation that defines Tangelo Park could be accomplished in hundreds of other communities. Doing so "could finally level the playing field so everyone would have an opportunity for an education." The Tangelo Park Program has become a nationally-recognized model for educational success celebrated as "two to twenty-two" (pre-school to postsecondary). The impact neighborhood-wide has been remarkable, and the scope of Mr. Rosen's ground-breaking educational initiatives in metro Orlando continues to grow.

Limitations and Key Assumptions

This research was conducted during a 100-year pandemic. As originally proposed, the stakeholder interviews were to be conducted face-to-face at the participant's location of choice in Orlando, FL. As a result of social distancing protocols enacted in response to COVID-19, the researcher was not permitted by her institution to conduct the interviews in person. Instead, all 16 interviews were held via Zoom or telephone. Not all interviewees elected to turn on their cameras, so a few of the conversations were audio-only. It is possible that the virtual format adversely impacted the researcher's ability to develop the anticipated level of rapport and intimacy with the interviewees, thereby limiting their candor and the subtlety of the dialogue.

The researcher is a Caucasian female unaffiliated with the Tangelo Park Program or Rosen Hotels & Resorts. Therefore, she was largely insulated from the organization's biases. Her status as an outsider with no ties to the neighborhood could have helped or hindered the interviewees' perception of her trustworthiness and their inclination to provide straightforward responses to her questions.

Employing the snowball sampling technique as a complement to the initial slate of interviewees identified by Dr. Dziuban resulted in the researcher interviewing a total of 16 program stakeholders who have been involved with the program in various capacities, such as resident, volunteer, scholarship recipient, and advisory board member. Most of these interviewees have had a leadership role (formal or informal) and several decades of longevity with the program. Nine of the interviewees were female; seven were male. Nearly three-quarters of the interviewees were at least 50 years of age. Thus, the findings from these 16 interviews may not be representative of the array of opinions, experiences, and insights of those who have helped usher in this program or maintain it for nearly three decades. The discoveries from this series of interviews may not be replicable or generalizable to other populations or settings.

Tangelo Park is not an inner-city locale, and may have more community and school support than other neighborhoods of a similar composition. Being a "bedroom community" without public housing or a gang presence put Tangelo Park in an advantageous position to adopt a program of this kind. Shared beliefs helped neighborhood residents shape the social, economic, and political landscape of their community. Another distressed community looking to adopt the Tangelo Park Program may face a more difficult climb in establishing community buy-in and building social capital.

Social capital is fundamentally difficult to measure with any degree of validity. Although there are instruments designed for the empirical measurement of social capital, there is no universally recognized index or taxonomy for assessing this construct. All of these instruments rely on the use of proxy indicators, and " . . . social capital indicators differ both geographically and sectorally" (Grootaert & van Bastelaer, 2001, p. 9). Measuring this paradigm involves the assessment and interpretation of relatively ill-defined outcomes accompanying community change over an extended period of time. The stakeholder interview questions used in this study met the key characteristics of comprehensiveness, rigor, continuity, flexibility, and specificity. While the stakeholder interview questions provide a platform for continued action and informed decision-making, they are imperfect because social capital – by its very nature – is abstract, intangible, and multidimensional (Cavaye, 2004; Falk, 2000).

Directions for Future Research

There are numerous avenues for future research that concentrate on the nexus of social capital and neighborhood-level educational programs focused on the whole child. Research that further explores how place-based initiatives both depend on and augment social ties, community resiliency, and economic and environmental health may yield important contributions to the existing framework.

Using a variation of this study's interview questions to get at the root of social capital-building at the neighborhood-level would be a valuable addition to the literature. Although a variety of tools exist to measure social capital, they are packaged as surveys and assessments. One-on-one interviews, however, capture a depth and breadth of opinions, experiences, and insights of individuals with firsthand knowledge of one or more facets of a program. In this context, program stakeholders are in a position to converse – with an informed awareness –

about community connectedness and social networks. This degree of nuance is unobtainable through traditional surveying methods.

There is no consensus on the most fitting approach to measuring social capital. Per Grootaert and van Bastelaer (2001), methodological diversity is both an advantage and disadvantage of research on this construct. These authors contend that the undeniable contextual nature of social capital suggests " . . . it is unlikely that it will ever be possible to identify a few 'best' indicators that can be used everywhere" (p. 9). Notwithstanding, future research of place-based educational initiatives may look to the use of a neighborhood trust index to measure structural and cognitive social capital.

Wraparound scholarship programs such as Harlem Children's Zone and other Promise Neighborhoods are potential sites for a replication of the current study. An exploration of how these programs worked within their individual neighborhoods to build social capital could identify commonalities and effective practices in developing and scaling civic infrastructure. Efforts at building social networks and organizational scaffolding are not a one-size-fits-all endeavor. Unearthing how this was accomplished in communities facing distinctive challenges – such as gang activity – and whose demographics differ from Tangelo Park could expand the knowledge base.

What sets the Harlem Children's Zone and Tangelo Park Program apart from their less successful counterparts is their intention to build pathways from poverty to opportunity, and their unwavering focus on cradle-to-career support within the neighborhood. Future research could explore how programs focused on the whole child versus a singular aspect of youth development have the capacity to move the needle on community transformation. The outcomes associated with closing the achievement gap have been most favorable among programs whose services

span preschool to early adulthood. These cradle-to-career initiatives are deeply connected to their respective communities and better positioned to be responsive to local challenges. They become defacto change agents in the lives of children and adolescents.

The impact of racial homogeneity on the development of social capital as it pertains to place-based educational programs warrants further exploration. Does a sense of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual trust engender a willingness among residents to intervene and take action on neighborhood disorder? Taking into account the impact of neighborhood-level leadership and partnerships with community-based organizations (e.g., YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, etc.) is another layer worthy of analysis.

Mr. Rosen is firm about replication being taken on privately. He feels strongly about the Tangelo Park Program operating without the intrusion, stipulations, and regulations of bureaucracy. A consideration for future research is investigating the extent to which the attempts of public-private partnerships to build social capital are congruent with those of a privately funded initiative such as the Tangelo Park Program.

Determining the influence and importance of a program's philanthropist being an active and stable figure in the neighborhood of interest is another area for future inquiry. Visibility was deemed to be a critical element in fostering trust and establishing relationships with Tangelo Park residents. Mr. Rosen has missed fewer than five advisory board meetings since the program's launch in 1994. He was described as "a unique force of nature." It is unknown if the program would have achieved its remarkable outcomes and become entrenched in the fabric of Tangelo Park if not for its affable, ardent benefactor. This is an important consideration not only for future research, but for communities looking to replicate the Tangelo Park Program.

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Appendix A

Institutional Review Board Approval

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
For the Protection of Human Research Participants

PROTOCOL EXEMPTION REPORT

Protocol Number: 04058-2020 **Responsible Researcher:** Blake J. Urbach

Supervising Faculty: Dr. James LaPlant

Project Title: *The Tangelo Park Program: A Historical Case Study of the Program's First 25 Years Through the Lens of Social Capital.*

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DETERMINATION:

This research protocol is **Exempt** from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight under Exemption **Category 2**. Your research study may begin immediately. If the nature of the research project changes such that exemption criteria may no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator (irb@valdosta.edu) before continuing your research.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- *Upon completion of this research study all data (email correspondence, survey data, participant name lists, etc.) must be securely maintained (locked file cabinet, password protected computer, etc.) and accessible only by the researcher for a minimum of 3 years.*
- *Exempt protocol guidelines prohibit the collection and/or sharing of audio/video recordings. Recorded interviews are permitted under the guidelines for the sole purpose of creating an accurate transcript. The recordings must be permanently deleted from all devices immediately upon creation of each transcript.*

☒ ***If this box is checked, please submit any documents you revise to the IRB Administrator at irb@valdosta.edu to ensure an updated record of your exemption.***

Elizabeth Ann Olphie *07.23.2020*
Elizabeth Ann Olphie, IRB Administrator

Thank you for submitting an IRB application.
Please direct questions to irb@valdosta.edu or 229-253-2947.

Revised: 06.02.16

Appendix B

Stakeholder Interview Question Line

1. In what capacity do you currently serve as a volunteer for the Tangelo Park Program, and what are your primary duties?

2. Have you previously served in a different capacity with this organization? If so, please describe your earlier role.

3. For how many years have you been a volunteer in this capacity(ies)?

4. What spurred your initial involvement with the Tangelo Park Program?

5. Is there a mechanism in place for volunteers to share their contributions, experiences, ideas, and best practices borne out of their involvement with the organization?

6. In your opinion, what were the primary social challenges facing the Tangelo Park neighborhood at the time this program was introduced?

7. Describe the nature of your interactions with the residents of Tangelo Park. How has your relationship with the residents evolved over time?

8. How have you worked to build trust with the residents of Tangelo Park? Were there any factors that limited your ability to build trust, and if so, how did this alter your initial approach?

9. Can you speak to the ways in which other organizations – collaborators of the Tangelo Park Program – worked to build trust among the neighborhood's residents?

10. In what ways has the Tangelo Park Program fostered a sense of community buy-in and pride?

11. The concept of "bridging" social capital refers to people of different backgrounds and interests spending time together. As the demographic composition of the Tangelo Park neighborhood has shifted over the years, in what ways have residents engaged in bridging social capital?

12. How would you describe the changes you have witnessed in this neighborhood related to residents becoming aware of and utilizing the resources available to them?

13. How would you describe the changes you have witnessed in this neighborhood related to neighbors helping one another in times of need?

14. How would you describe the changes you have witnessed in this neighborhood related to residents taking an active role in neighborhood revitalization?

15. How would you describe the changes you have witnessed in this neighborhood related to a sense of optimism about the direction of the Tangelo Park neighborhood?

16. How would you describe the changes you have witnessed in this neighborhood related to neighborhood quality and desirability (noise, graffiti, litter, greenery, etc.)?

17. How would you describe the changes you have witnessed in this neighborhood related to crime and a sense of security?

18. How would you describe the changes you have witnessed in this neighborhood related to positive youth development?

19. How would you describe the changes you have witnessed in this neighborhood related to student success and hopefulness for the future?

20. Why has the Tangelo Park Program model not yet spread throughout the state or nation? What are the obstacles preventing other communities from replicating this program?

21. How has COVID-19 impacted Tangelo Park? Are the residents better positioned or just as vulnerable to this pandemic in comparison to other communities resembling Tangelo Park?

22. Is Black Lives Matter and national protests against racism having an effect in Tangelo Park? If so, do you view this impact as positive, negative, or neutral?

Appendix C

Informed Consent for Stakeholder Interviews

You are being asked to participate in an interview as part of a research study entitled "The Tangelo Park Program: A Historical Case Study of the Program's First 25 Years Through the Lens of Social Capital," which is being conducted by Blake Urbach, a doctoral student in the Department of Public Administration at Valdosta State University. The purpose of this study is to describe the structure, performance, and leadership of the Tangelo Park Program throughout its 25-year evolution; explore the characteristics, culture and conditions of the neighborhood and participants served; and examine how social capital has been leveraged to gain support for the program for the last quarter-century. You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help inform the neighborhoods, philanthropists, corporate donors, and community partners interested in exploring the creation of a wide-ranging urban educational reform through the building of social capital.

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. Participation should take approximately 45 minutes. The interviews will be audio and/or video recorded in order to accurately capture your concerns, opinions, and ideas. Once the recordings have been transcribed, the recordings will be destroyed. No one, including the researcher, will be able to associate your responses with your identity. Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, to stop responding at any time, or to skip any questions that you do not want to answer. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. Your participation in the interview will serve as your voluntary agreement to participate in this research project and your certification that you are 18 years of age or older.

Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of this research should be directed to Blake Urbach at bjurbach@valdosta.edu. This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-253-2947 or irb@valdosta.edu.