



Bingham Fellows

The Bingham Fellows program was created as a result of the tenacity and dedication of Leadership Louisville alumni and the vision of Mary and Barry Bingham. From the first class in 1980, the Leadership Louisville experience gave participants a deeper understanding of particular community issues. They would be inspired or become passionate about an issue, and want to take action.

The Leadership Louisville Board of Directors recognized the potential for a new program that could bring these people together and challenge them to make more happen for the community.

The Bingham Fellows program was created in 1988 through a \$500,000 endowment from the Mary and Barry Bingham Sr. Fund. The Bingham family had owned several regional media properties, including The Courier-Journal and WHAS TV. Their foundation was created after the sale of their media holdings. Mr. Bingham was a founder of Leadership Louisville.

The Bingham Fellows as Social Entrepreneurs

The Bingham Fellows serve as examples of social entrepreneurship in the region. Social entrepreneurs act as change agents by:

- Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value),
- Recognizing and pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission,
- Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning,
- Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand.

Social entrepreneurs are people or organizations that have both a vision and the ability to assemble the resources required to implement that vision to address obvious social needs.

For nearly 20 years Bingham Fellows projects, including the homebuilding efforts in downtown Louisville and the building of a new community center, have demonstrated both imagination and practical gathering of critical resources that are needed to effect social change.

Here's a summary of how some of the Bingham Fellows projects have affected long-term, sustainable change in the Greater Louisville region:

Affordable Housing – 1989 – 1991 (Class of 1991)

The first Bingham Fellows team tackled an issue that was just starting to get local and national attention: growing concerns that the supply of affordable housing was not keeping pace with demand. A majority of low-income renters paid more than 50 percent of their income for housing. There were 8,715 families on the waiting list for assisted housing. In 1990, 11,071 families contacted the Department of Human Services' Family Assessment Center and Community Ministries seeking assistance for housing.

The goal of the first Bingham Fellows team was to make safe, decent, affordable housing more readily available. Strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of existing programs were examined. The group looked at ways to increase the supply of affordable housing for low-income families, whether they qualified for assistance or not. The Fellows began to understand the role of home ownership opportunities and how higher rates of home ownership could help neighborhoods.

Through the course of research, the class identified a number of public and private sector groups that play a role in the promotion and development of housing for low-income populations. The Fellows quickly saw that these disparate groups could have a greater impact if existing resources and efforts were better coordinated. In 1989, the Bingham Fellows unveiled a plan to form The Housing Partnership Inc., which brought together bankers, builders, government officials and civic leaders to build affordable housing. The Housing Partnership officially opened for business in November of 1990.

Today, The Housing Partnership is an entrepreneurial corporation that provides technical consultation and assistance for housing development using low-income and historic-investment tax credits, site management of land development and construction and assistance with collaborative financing of community development projects. Over the years, The Housing Partnership has been involved in a wide range of activities from the actual development or rehabilitation of thousands of housing units across Louisville to home-ownership counseling programs.

Changing the way we think about garbage – 1991 – 1992 (Class of 1992)

It's difficult to remember a time when recycling wasn't a part of our daily lives. But as recently as 1991, Louisville was facing literally a growing crisis in solid waste. Landfill space in the county and region was being exhausted. At the time, Louisville/Jefferson County was generating more than one million tons of waste a year and recycling less than 20,000 tons annually. As one solution, the Mayor's office proposed a \$20 million "garbage to steam" incinerator. The class put forth a comprehensive strategy for reducing the burden on area landfills through recycling, including recommendations for composting, used motor oil disposal, and recycling of newspapers, large appliances and tires. A timetable was set for the gradual reduction of the amounts of recyclable materials that were allowed to be dumped in landfills. The Fellows outlined a broadly focused educational campaign to provide information to schools, the business community, government and the community as a whole.

To implement the new regulations, the Bingham Fellows II helped to develop a board whose purpose was to direct the management of solid waste. The new solid waste authority, formed through state legislation, was the board of directors for the Louisville/Jefferson County Waste Management District, also known as the 109 Board. The Waste Management District is managed by the Board of Directors, appointed by the Mayor and staffed by the Louisville Metro Solid Waste Management Department.

The 109 Board has a wide range of powers and duties from the operation of waste-management facilities to the promulgation of regulations involving solid waste to the provision of collection programs. The Bingham Fellows not only succeeded in establishing a Waste Management Board in Jefferson County, but also were influential in pushing the state legislation that started these boards throughout the state. A member of the class, attorney Jonathan Goldberg, served on the Waste Management District's first board of directors.

Phyllis Fitzgerald, a member of the Bingham Fellows II, believes that the class raised awareness about solid-waste issues that led to serious policy changes in Jefferson County. Fitzgerald is also quick to point out that the class did not do it alone, but through communication and coordination with groups of environmentalists and concerned citizens they were able to enact change.

Inspiring New Leadership in Our Urban Neighborhoods – 1992 – 1993 (Class of 1993)

The Los Angeles riots of 1992 were a wake-up call to urban areas across the nation, particularly cities with large segments of the population living in poverty. So in 1993, the Leadership Louisville board challenged the Bingham Fellows III to “develop a creative and effective strategy to improve the quality of life in a socially and economically distressed neighborhood.”

After carefully considering which area of the city had the right mix of need and potential for change, the group selected the Smoketown and Shelby Park neighborhoods. Class member Laura Douglas explained, “We decided on those neighborhoods because they had a number of economic and social challenges, and the folks who lived in the neighborhood, based on past community activity, appeared to have the leadership capacity and the grassroots neighborhood organizations in place to sustain whatever it was we ended up doing with them.”

The team decided that the key was to collaborate with the people living in the neighborhoods, asking them what *they* felt their community needed, and asking for their involvement in making it happen. Residents played an active role in developing and implementing innovative programs.

The Bingham Fellows were among the first in the country to work directly with the public they intended to serve. In the words of Joe Gliessner, Bingham Fellows III class member and executive director of New Directions Housing Corporation, “It was a learning experience, getting close to neighbors and meeting with people who lived there, without trying to tell them what they needed. The thing I remember most was emphasizing the necessity of having anything that we proposed be something done **with** the neighborhood; as opposed to something that was done **for** or **to** the neighborhood.”

The residents of Smoketown/Shelby Park and the Bingham Fellows III succeeded in a wide range of projects and programs that undeniably contributed to the revitalization of a troubled part of downtown:

- Leadership training was an initial focus. About 30 Smoketown and Shelby Park residents received training in economics, regulatory issues and community development, and were introduced to a variety of resources, including financial support for some projects from Liberty National Bank (now Chase). The training was provided through the Louisville Community Design Center.
- Bingham Fellow and attorney Louis Waterman organized a “law school” for non-lawyers. These classes introduced community members to the basics of contract law, debtor/creditor law, property law and probate law.
- A subcommittee of that year’s class helped to secure funding for major improvements to a neighborhood public park. Today, Lampton Park maintains a baseball field, a basketball court, two horseshoe pits, a playground for small children, and a soccer field.
- Pilot programs involving after-school child care, tutorial services, and supervised recreation activities
- Development of community block-watch groups

But the most dramatic outcome from the Bingham Fellows team involved homebuilder Joe Pusateri, who believed that new housing in the area could be the core project of the group’s revitalization efforts. At that time in the early 1990s, no new houses had been built in the Smoketown area for over 50 years. As a home builder, Pusateri belonged to a group that organizes Homearama, an

annual showcase of new homes in a consolidated area that are totally furnished and available for the public to view. Through Pusateri's real estate network, the Bingham Fellows were able to secure a Homearama event for the Smoketown neighborhood.

Sixteen affordable housing units were constructed for the Homearama; 15 houses were market rate and one was donated to Habitat for Humanity. Providing this core of new homes along the Shelby Street corridor did much to improve the aesthetics of the area, but also proved that Smoketown was a viable area of investment for both home owners and business proprietors. Most of the new houses sold very quickly.

Pusateri explained, "Most of them were for-profit houses. That was what was important; if you go down to Smoketown and you build a house, will anybody actually buy it? The Homearama proved that somebody will buy them. To prove that you can do this and make a profit at it was very important because that's the only way that it would be sustainable."

In the words of Laura Douglas, "That Bingham Fellows class helped folks in Smoketown and people in the downtown business area form a genuine and fast friendship, which led to some remarkable developments in that community."

New Partnerships for Safe Neighborhoods – 1993 – 1994 (Class of 1994)

In 1994, the Bingham Fellows governing board selected crime prevention as the topic of study for the fourth group. After touring six at-risk neighborhoods, the Bingham Fellows IV decided to work again with the Smoketown neighborhood to continue building the relationships started by the previous team. At the time, Smoketown had some of the highest rates of crime and unemployment in the city.

The class decided that anti-crime programming would be the focus. As the Fellows explored the situation in Smoketown and neighborhoods with similar characteristics, they came to realize that crime was a symptom of deeper problems. A connection between quality of life and criminal behavior kept surfacing. Realities such as a lack of educational or career opportunities to general upkeep of the buildings in the area were seen to exacerbate lawless behavior. In the hopes of reducing crime levels in Smoketown for the long term, the class began searching for a project that could have lasting impact.

During the course of community meetings with Smoketown residents, someone mentioned that the Presbyterian Community Center (PCC) had many broken windows and that vandalism was a common occurrence. Urban research indicates that broken windows and the prevalence of vandalism can intensify petty crime in neighborhoods and may lead to more serious criminal transgressions. Both the class and residents thought a small investment in fixing the broken windows would help curb vandalism in the area.

When class member and Wyatt Tarrant & Combs attorney Grover Potts made a site visit to PCC to assess the situation, he was taken aback by what he found. In his own words, "This was around the time that the Serbs were sacking Sarajevo, and I guarantee that there were facilities in Sarajevo that were under attack that were in better shape than the PCC was." Potts worked with one of his clients, a Louisville manufacturer of Plexiglas, to obtain enough materials to fix the broken windows.

Potts realized that the PCC could serve as catalyst for the kind of change the Bingham Fellows were hoping to stimulate. He saw the PCC as a cornerstone of Smoketown that could provide essential services and support for residents while simultaneously helping to reduce crime in the area. However, he felt the original structure – a decaying, three-floor warehouse building that lacked accessibility for the handicapped – would have to be replaced. Potts made his case to the group: "I got the class to support establishing a new building for the PCC because it was like the hub of a spoke. It provided social, economic, health-related and physical activities for children and seniors; it was the place where anybody with a problem would find some relief, whether they got their electricity cut off, or needed clothing or needed food."¹

The main issue in building a new community center was money. A study to determine the feasibility of raising enough cash to build a new center was very promising. Potts became integral to the fundraising campaign. While the Bingham Fellows class was considering a new facility for the PCC, the Mayor's office was also examining the possibility of building a new community center in the Smoketown area. Potts went to the mayor and convinced him that it would be cost-effective to build on the work that the Bingham Fellows were already doing. The mayor agreed and turned over \$1 million to support the effort. Potts secured a gift of \$1 million from the Brown Foundation, as well as other gifts, both large and small, for a grand total of \$4 million.

It was important to the class and the community that as many people as possible from the Smoketown area, be employed in the construction of the new PCC. The initial goal was to employ minority contractors for at least 30 percent of the project. Including the general contractor, supporting contractors, and apprentices, well over 50 percent of the people employed in the construction of the building were minorities. To class members one of the largest success of the project was providing opportunities for area residents to develop skills that would allow for better

employment opportunities. The project architect was also African-American, and he employed elements of traditional African design in the new structure. The four corners of the building resemble Afro-centric huts that help convey a village-like atmosphere.

While the new building was under construction, the Bingham Fellows contributed to the range of new programs for the PCC while providing needed support to current programming. Services offered through the PCC included meals for children, a wide range of educational and tutoring programs, and physical activities for both children and adults. But more informally the PCC was revitalized as a gathering place for the community, a place to meet socially and to organize community-based initiatives.

The new Presbyterian Community Center opened officially in July 2002. Grover Potts takes justifiable pride in what the Bingham Fellows accomplished: "I try to tell everybody that one person can do a lot if you are committed to doing it. I've been involved for over 14 years with the PCC and that's what it takes, not only dedication but you have to be in for the long haul. So I try to charge up these folks who are learning to go out, find something, grab hold of it, get passionate and you can accomplish anything you want."

Improving Louisville's relationship with the rest of Kentucky – 1995 – 1996 (Class of 1996)

Historically, Louisville has not had a good relationship with Kentucky's rural communities. The late Dr. Thomas Clark, a prominent state historian, summed up the problem as one of both misunderstanding and lack of outreach: "Louisville needs to do some courting in the rest of the state. Large numbers of Kentuckians have no idea what Louisville has to offer. Tell the state what Louisville is, and those old things of the past will no longer exist." In the spirit of improved intrastate relations, the governing board of the Bingham Fellows V chose to address this longstanding division. The Fellows were charged with the task of developing contacts and implementing programs to build stronger ties and to help extinguish any negative feelings.

Early on, the Fellows realized that little would be accomplished by sitting in a conference room in Louisville. They decided to divide into teams based on geography. People with connections in a specific area would volunteer to lead each team. They used their contacts in each region and called people to set up meetings with an agenda of establishing relationships, opening lines of dialogue and discussing issues. The outreach teams visited with local leaders in both the public and private sector in Ashland, Owensboro, Hazard, Henderson, Morehead and Paducah, among others. In areas that class members could not visit, local leaders were sent surveys to gauge their feelings about Louisville.

As a result of the meetings and surveys, the Bingham Fellows began to realize that the much-discussed "bad blood" between Louisville and the rest of the state might be more hype than reality. Class member Karl Schmitt explained, "What we found consistently as we went out and talked to people and met with groups was, 'Hey guys, don't take us so seriously; we're only kidding most of the time when we throw these barbs at Louisville. You need a little thicker skin over there.' And that was nice to hear, and in fact most people had a very high regard for Louisville and have a certain sense of pride in Louisville as the largest city in the state, the home of the Kentucky Derby. The prevailing feelings were that Louisville was a city that represents the state very well, and that was nice to hear as well."

One of the most successful projects of the Bingham Fellows V was to connect the city with family farms by promoting and organizing farmers' markets in Louisville. In their many meetings around the state and across the river in Indiana, the group discovered a common thread in the concerns of small farmers. In the words of Marilee Miller, Bingham Fellow and president of Anchorage Press Plays, "The primary message was that they were losing urban outlets for selling what they grew. At that time, the larger grocery stores felt that the small farmer's crop was not dependable enough to allot sales space and was too much trouble." Miller and the members of her group established a loose network of family farmers, helped them to market and promote their products, and identified several new locations for neighborhood farmers' markets in Louisville.

At first some of the farmers were skeptical. But as the groups talked and discussed ideas, feelings of mistrust were surmounted. Charles Hambley, of Conrad-Hambley Farms, Corydon, Ind., explained, "As a farmer who is very independent I initially had reservations about city people imposing their views and requirements on markets I had helped develop. Now more than 10 years later, I look back and can hardly believe the success of so many farmers markets in the Louisville area. Our personal income has tripled in that 10 years due in large part to [the Bingham Fellows] graduates."

Working with the small farmers and promoting neighborhood fresh markets was not the only successful program of the Bingham Fellows V. A program called Leadership Partners was established in which delegations of leaders from around Kentucky came to Louisville meet with a diverse group of Louisvillians to brainstorm about issues affecting the state and to further develop personal relationship.

The group also came up with several recommendations for improving relations with other communities in the state. One idea was the establishment of a Louisville Metro Office of State Relations and Promotions to promote positive and constructive relations between Jefferson County and the citizens of Kentucky. Another recommendation was to develop multimedia materials to communicate the resources of Louisville. While these proposals were met with initial enthusiasm, no existing organization adopted the ideas and made them happen.

The overarching theme for Bingham Fellows V focused on communication. Through the work of the class, rural Kentucky residents realized that Louisville citizens care what the rest of the state thinks. Karl Schmitt summed up: "There was an incredible level of honesty and innocence, and a spirit about what we were doing. There was no agenda here; we just simply wanted to say that we have this 200-year history between Louisville and the rest of Kentucky, and we are a group of people who are simply trying to make contact, to listen to what you have to say. It was very meaningful, and many times very touching."

Maintaining and Developing World Class Arts in Louisville - 1997

Louisville is home to a variety of exemplary arts organizations and venues, from the performing arts such as the Kentucky Opera, Louisville Ballet and Louisville Orchestra to the talented artisans and craftsmen found at Glassworks and many local galleries. The Bingham Fellows VI, who assembled in 1997, were charged with the task of examining how the community could support artists and arts organizations that were already here while concurrently attracting or developing new opportunities for the arts to flourish in Louisville.

As part of their research, the Fellows decided to assemble arts leaders to discuss their common challenges and opportunities. They were surprised to learn that the meeting they assembled was one of the first times that directors and organizers of the city's leading arts organizations had been in the same room. Many in the group found this lack of communication among the key players a major weakness for the arts community.

As a result of this initial gathering, the fledgling Arts and Cultural Attractions Council (ACA) was bolstered by the attention that the Bingham Fellows brought to the issue. The purpose of the ACA is to help regional arts groups work together to identify common goals and pursue projects and events that accomplish their common objectives. In 1999, the ACA became affiliated with Greater Louisville Inc. and became one of Greater Louisville Inc.'s Business Networks, which further accelerated the progress of the organization.

Raising Healthy Kids and Developing a Productive Workforce - 1999

In 1999, the Bingham Fellows studied the well-being of the community's youth. The class emphasized preparing the next generation to fulfill leadership positions. Sharon Potter, class member explained, "There are more obstacles to youth succeeding today than in the past, so it's everyone's responsibility to help the youth achieve their potential. After all, they are the future doctors, lawyers, teachers, architects, political leaders, artists, etc., who will determine whether or not Louisville thrives in the future."

As a result of the Bingham Fellows' work that year, Potter was asked to chair the Leadership Council of a program called Success by 6. Success by 6 is a public/private partnership, sponsored by the Metro United Way, committed to ensuring that every child in the community is healthy, safe, nurtured, and ready to succeed in school by age six.

Building stronger ties with Southern Indiana - 2000

Michael N. Harreld, then-regional president of PNC Bank and Leadership Louisville board chair, inspired a closer look by the Bingham Fellows on Louisville's relationship with southern Indiana. Debate on the two proposed Ohio River bridges was heating up on both sides of the river, with no existing group or organization in a position to promote a regional agenda.

The Bingham Fellows traveled to Northern Kentucky to examine how the counties and cities in that region were able to cooperate so effectively to unite geographic boundaries. Upon returning to Louisville, core members of the group, led by Donna Vissing, a graduate of both Leadership Louisville and Leadership Southern Indiana, formed the Regional Leadership Coalition (RLC).

The RLC's mission was to build ties throughout the area with the goal of creating a cohesive region that might be more competitive economically. Bingham Fellow Joe Gliessner credited that year's class with helping to build support for the merger of city and county governments in Louisville and Jefferson County: "It really led to a sense of a broader community... the whole discussion of merger seemed to be minuscule in comparison to traffic patterns and building bridges. Broadening the discussion in that way added an element that made merger seem so much more palatable and inevitable."

Today, the RLC has evolved into a partnership between Greater Louisville Inc. and the newly formed One Southern Indiana. Accelerating the progress of the Ohio River Bridges project remains a major RLC priority.

Imagine Greater Louisville - 2002

In 2002, the Bingham Fellows were charged with bringing a fresh unified community spirit to the new regional city of Louisville Metro. Residents had passed the merged government referendum after more than 40 years of dissent and debate. Rather than looking at what the problems were facing the new government, the Fellows decided to take a different, more positive path. Using the technique of “appreciative inquiry” under the direction of Ohio State professor Dr. Chet Bowling, the Fellows launched a community dialogue to create energy and excitement in the newly merged city and county. Rather than focus on what problems had to be solved, the Bingham Fellows asked a diverse cross section of residents “What makes Louisville great?”

A series of interviews with a cross section of residents revealed citizens and business to help guide their efforts. The group also conducted a public meeting to receive comments on the on a range of topics, including education, the arts and government. The message that stuck with Karen Cost “was what a truly great place Louisville is and that the image that we need to foster and cultivate is that this is an incredible place to live, to work, to raise your family, and to have fun. We have lots of advantages and we need to communicate those more.”

The research methods and data collected from the 2002 Bingham Fellows team helped form the foundation for the new Louisville branding initiative launched in 2006 by Greater Louisville Inc.

IDEAL Louisville: The New Model of Leadership - 2005

The 2005 Bingham Fellows class was asked to research the changing face of leadership in the community. Several concerns generated this topic. Many of Louisville's current generation of leaders were heading into retirement, prompting concern about who the next generation of leaders would be. The area's expanding regional focus afforded new leadership opportunities, but many talented individuals with the ability to assume leadership roles either had not been given the chance or were simply unaware of the opportunity.

The class evaluated the old model of leadership, which was effective but exclusionary, historically allowing only privileged groups to participate. The new model presented five leadership principles critical for achieving the "IDEAL" Louisville.

- Inclusiveness
- Diversity
- Effectiveness
- Action-orientation
- Leadership

The goal was to establish a guiding set of principles that would lead to a broadening of the city's leadership base to include people from all areas of the community, creating a common vision and ways to move that vision forward.

The Fellows identified two means of developing this more-inclusive leadership framework. First, the group would organize the Louisville Road Show to connect with groups throughout Louisville and the region as a whole as a way to establish a community vision, to communicate and refine objectives, and to move toward implementation of those objectives. Second, a web-based portal would be developed to facilitate connections among a broader range of leaders, enabling them to address significant community issues. The idea for the web portal emerged after the Fellows realized that a traditional "mapping" of the community's leadership would be incomplete and ineffective. Class member attorney John Reed explained, "No static mapping process would not allow people to identify themselves as leaders on specific issues or allow them a way to find each other."

As a result of the Bingham Fellows recommendations, the Leadership Louisville Center decided to pursue a new social networking website to connect all alumni. Called LeadersOnline, the new website will debut in February 2008. The Road Show concept is a tool that can be used for future Bingham Fellows classes.

Add It Up to support the new Math and Science - 2007

The 2007 Bingham Fellows created activities and opportunities to engage the community in support of the \$25 million GE-Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) Math and Science Initiative. The Bingham Fellows received a \$50,000 grant from the UPS Foundation to provide seed money for their projects. They chose to use Greater Louisville Inc.'s Add It Up! slogan to brand their public advocacy campaign.

The Bingham Fellows spread the word that math/science is critical for individual achievement and the success of our future workforce. They emphasized the sense of urgency – as a crisis that needs immediate attention. They leveraged their connections to bring the topic to the attention of the business community.

One Bingham Fellows team sent an informational e-mail to all Louisville-based employees of Fifth Third Bank and Humana, as well as other participating employers, inviting them to complete a survey containing questions designed to build awareness of the need to develop more college-bound math and science students. The e-mail and survey highlighted information on the GE-JCPS Math/Science Initiative. T-shirts and visors were provided to the first few hundred individuals who completed the survey. Overall, 7,730 people opened the survey and 5,794 people completed the survey. The survey is now a feature of the www.addituplouisville.com website.

Another team decided to promote how science impacts everyday life with signs at local coffee shops saying "This coffee brought to you by chemistry."

The Bingham Fellows ended the program year with the Add it Up Challenge! weekend which was designed to call the community's attention to the importance of math and science education. Over the weekend the Bingham Fellows held the Add It Up! 5k Run downtown and took over the Louisville Bats' Game later that evening. Overall, their projects resulted in approximately 18.5 million impressions.

The Bingham Fellows activities have been documented in a community leadership toolkit that public school systems in other cities, such as Cincinnati and Atlanta, can use to support the GE education grants.

Strong Regional Partnerships: Creating the landscape of the future Catalysts for Community Change - 2008

Thinking and Acting Regionally

The Bingham Fellows Class of 2008 was charged with raising awareness of the importance of thinking and acting regionally and to ultimately host a regional leadership summit or conference. They first convened in January 2008 and immediately began exploring the concept and importance of regionalism. Their initial focus was on coming to terms with “regionalism” and “regional thinking”. The Fellows conducted a tremendous amount of research through listening sessions with area development district staff, chambers of commerce, leadership groups, educators and business leaders in communities across Kentucky. Their program days, February through July, also introduced them to regional successes locally, statewide and nationally.

Their research and exploration was followed by brainstorming sessions and meetings with classmates within and outside of program days to determine how to successfully execute a regional leadership summit. The class reached consensus on partnering with Wired65 (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development) to host a regional summit, *Beyond Boundaries: Building our 21st Century Community*. Wired65 is 26-county initiative focused on developing talent to support the regional economy. Funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, its goal is to forge partnerships and fund programs that respond to specific regional needs and to build a structure for long-term regional engagement.

The Bingham Fellows determined their work would meet four objectives. These objectives fit with Wired65’s intention to build a 21st Century region:

- Awareness and urgency which will build a case for the importance of regional thinking and activities.
- Connecting people to provide a forum for relationship building to encourage future regionally-minded action.
- Sustainability to formalize a process to foster increased regional thinking and acting in subsequent years.
- Education of regional leaders to provide opportunities to learn from one another ways to take advantage of regional thinking.

Beyond Boundaries: Building our 21st Century Community

The partnership between the Bingham Fellows and Wired65 resulted in the first ever 26-county regional summit. Consultants shared findings from the economic and human capital assessment and put forth recommendations to lay the foundation for the Wired65 initiative goals and investments. In addition, regional leaders provided input on action recommendations and were encouraged to continue their involvement as the Wired65 initiative moves forward post-summit.