



Metro-York's pace picks up

LARRY MILLER

Article Last Updated: 03/30/2008 12:55:20 AM EDT

Time flies when you're making progress!

As chairman of the Board of Directors of YorkCounts -- York County's community-wide quality-of-life coalition -- I wanted to take this opportunity to update readers on the progress that has been made since the public announcement last Nov. 15 of YorkCounts' Metro-York recommendations. I also want to extend an invitation to our annual summit, but more on that later.

This update comes at the urging of folks who have told us that they are interested in what's happening. We've been keeping volunteers and others posted through monthly newsletters and press releases on specific topics, as well as our Web site (yorkcounts.org), but here's an attempt to summarize, in one report, everything that has happened to date.

Perhaps the most buzz since the press conference last fall surrounded the Metro-York recommendations for "attacking the root problem" that schools can't succeed in an environment of concentrated poverty. The menu of specific ideas included a "student exchange" program, magnet schools and a middle-class charter school in the City of York. I'm pleased to say that an Educational Opportunities

committee has formed and is meeting regularly. This group heard from some bright students from all corners of the county in February and from Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Gerald Zahorchak in March.

A task force to establish a York County Schools Consortium has already formed, and it is meeting regularly. York College of Pennsylvania has agreed to host this consortium.

The Office of Workforce Development has officially been established within the York County Economic Development Corp. An advisory committee co-chaired by YCEDC head Darrell Auterson and community leader Leo Cooper will help to guide the OWD in its range of activities -- both in connecting employers with job seekers and in connecting potential employees with the people who can hire them.

Dave Meckley and Carl Anderson -- one longtime York volunteer leader and one York native who has returned to the area -- are heading up efforts related to police consolidation. They are working to identify a national-level consulting firm that can determine the feasibility of a combined metropolitan York police force, and we are told by state officials that money is available to fund studies like these.

YorkCounts made a presentation in February to the York County Planning Commission, whose members indicated their willingness to involve YorkCounts volunteers in various projects.

Advertisement

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™



One might wonder -- why more committees? It's important to emphasize again that when YorkCounts issued the Metro-York recommendations, they were just that -- recommendations. It's not within our power to mandate anything, nor would we have done so. We wanted to put forth a blueprint that could be used by the community in ways the community found to be appropriate and necessary. These groups are the means by which the community will refine and ultimately implement any of the recommendations, in full or in part. The volunteers who comprise YorkCounts are proud to have a hand in this process. But in the end, community change is up to you and up to all of us.

This work will continue as YorkCounts prepares for our annual summit, and you're invited. It's scheduled for April 17 from 9 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. at the Yorktowne Hotel in downtown York.

Speakers will include Terrence Roberts, who was one of the Little Rock Nine -- the first African-American students to integrate Little Rock (Ark.) Central High School in 1957 -- as well as Midshipman Zerbin Singleton, who has overcome extraordinary life challenges toward becoming Brigade Commander in the senior class at the United States Naval Academy. Both Dr. Roberts and Midshipman Singleton will have amazing stories to share under the theme, "Educational Opportunities for All."

Registration is required to attend; e-mail Angela Decker at adecker2@ycp.edu or call 815-6632

to register. We hope we can "count you in."

Larry J. Miller is the chair man of the Board of Directors of YorkCounts.

Advertisement

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™