



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Maggie Hirko
970-419-8240

Poverty Expert to Discuss Best Practices of Successful Communities Audience to reflect on community responses to poverty

Beet Street's series *Life on a Shoestring: Perspectives on Stepping Out of Poverty* continues to showcase performances, presentations, community discussions, and diverse perspectives in its collaborative effort to initiate a community dialog on the issue of poverty in Fort Collins/Northern Colorado and the role each of us plays in guiding our community to a path of renewed economic self-sufficiency.

In its second major keynote event of the series, on Wednesday, March 5 at 7pm at the St. Joseph's School Gym, 127 North Howes Street in Fort Collins, Beet Street's featured speaker Philip DeVol will present his thoughts and the best practices of communities who are successful and systematically addressing poverty across the nation.

DeVol is a consultant with the **aha!** Process Inc., which is based in Texas, and co-author of *Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities*, a collaboration undertaken with Ruby K. Payne and Terie Dreussi-Smith. He is also co-author of *The Complete Guide to Elementary Student Assistance Programs* and has written *Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World* and *Building Your Resources for a Better Life*. DeVol has been consulting on poverty issues since 1997 and works with organizations to design/redesign programs to better serve people in poverty as well as with communities to systemically address issues.

Topics for the evening's agenda will include a broad definition of poverty, increasing awareness of the differences in economic cultures, how those differences affect opportunities for success, developing an action plan to improve services to the poor, and improving retention rates for new hires from welfare to work. His presentation will focus on success stories from around the country, and is based on the book *Bridges Out Of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities*. This presentation is designed for employers, community organizations, law enforcement,

counselors, health care and social service providers, and members of the community who are concerned with reducing the escalating rate of poverty in Fort Collins.

DeVol's keynote presentation is co-sponsored by the St. Joseph Christian Service & Justice Committee. Tickets for this event are \$10 and can be purchased at www.fctix.com or by calling 970-419-8240. The presentation will begin promptly at 7pm, with audience discussion and questions to follow.

The events that comprise the *Life on a Shoestring* series are taking place from February 19th through March 26th in locations throughout Fort Collins, Colorado. In addition to DeVol's keynote presentation, series highlights include a long-awaited production of *Nickel & Dimed* by OpenStage Theatre & Company, many authors and panel discussions. Fundraising events for the Larimer County Food Bank and Project Self-Sufficiency are also highlighted.

Details on events of the complete *Life on a Shoestring* schedule are posted on the web, <http://www.beetstreet.org/en/Shoestring-Calendar.html>

Beet Street (www.beetstreet.org) is an economic development initiative created by the Fort Collins Downtown Development Authority in 2007 to distinguish Old Town Fort Collins as a cultural destination that fosters, celebrates, and inspires human creativity through diverse cultural experiences and programming. Beet Street will create a collaborative learning community in Fort Collins, Colorado, where everyone of every age is welcome to share in discussion, reflection, and creative expression.

Full Bio for Philip DeVol

Philip DeVol has been training and consulting on poverty issues since 1997 and is co-author of *Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities*. He works with organizations to redesign programs to better serve people in poverty, as well as with communities to systemically address community sustainability. Philip is the author of *Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World: Building Your Resources for a Better Life*, a life-planning workbook for people in poverty that brings together three primary influences: Dr. Ruby K. Payne's work on the hidden rules of class, research on knowledge transfer, and the knowledge of participants living in poverty.

Philip works with many communities that apply Bridges Out of Poverty constructs. Bridges communities bring together people from all classes, political persuasions, and sectors to address all causes of poverty in a systemic way. Philip holds quarterly phone conferences with Bridges communities on a variety of topics to assist knowledge transfer between the many individuals, organizations, and communities that are adopting Bridges principles to their settings and developing new levels of expertise.

Philip has written a number of papers for **aha!** including "Using the Hidden Rules of Class to Build Sustainable Communities" and "Additive Model: the **aha!** Process Approach to Building Sustainable Communities." He also provides e-trainings and Web-based sessions on a number of topics.

In addition, Philip coordinates **aha!** Process's work with other organizations to effect innovative, high impact strategies for ending poverty and building communities where everyone can do well.

DeVol builds on his 19 years as director of an out-patient substance abuse treatment facility where he designed treatment programs and collaborative systems for school-based prevention, school-based intervention, and Ohio's first alternative school for recovering young people. The agency also developed specific treatment programs for women and adolescents, plus a substance abuse treatment program for a correctional facility. He is co-author of *The Complete Guide to Elementary Student Assistance Programs*, and consults for **aha!** Process, Inc.

He served his community as the coordinator of the Family and Children First Council where the directors of all the organizations that service families and children met to develop collaborative approaches to their work.

Publisher Synopsis of BRIDGES OUT OF POVERTY

Bridges Out of Poverty is a unique and powerful tool designed specifically for social, health, and legal services professionals. Based in part on Dr. Ruby K. Payne's myth shattering *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, *Bridges* reaches out to the millions of service providers and businesses whose daily work connects them with the lives of people in poverty. In a highly readable format you'll find case studies, detailed analysis, helpful charts and exercises, and specific solutions you and your organization can implement right now to:

- Redesign programs to better serve people you work with;
- Build skill sets for management to help guide employees;
- Upgrade training for front-line staff like receptionists, case workers, and managers;
- Improve treatment outcomes in health care and behavioral health care;
- Increase the likelihood of moving from welfare to work.

If your business, agency, or organization works with people from poverty, only a deeper understanding of their challenges—and strengths—will help you partner with them to create opportunities for success.