Promoting Economic Transition in Coal Communities: A Case Study
Schmidt Futures Foundation
Alliance for the American Dream

American Dream Ideas Challenge:
Raise the incomes of 10,000 households by 10% by 2020

University of Utah’s Coal Country Strike Team one of four winners
Arizona State University
Ohio State University
University of Wisconsin

Strike Team awarded $900,000 from Schmidt Futures
+ $500,000 appropriation from Legislature
Other Measures of Economic Distress

1. Unemployment
2. Out-migration
3. Poverty
4. Housing
5. Opioid crisis

Employment Change, 2008-2017

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Utah’s Coal Country

Employment Change, Q1 2009–Q1 2019

U.S. +13%  
Utah +28%  
Utah’s Coal Country -12%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
### Utah Coal Country

#### Other Measures of Economic Distress

1. Unemployment
2. Out-migration
3. Poverty
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5. Opioid crisis

#### August 2019 Unemployment Rates

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<th>U.S.</th>
<th>Utah</th>
<th>Utah’s Coal Country</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
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Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services

#### Opioid Prescriptions per 100 Residents, 2017

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<td>Opioid Prescription Rate</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>63.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carbon</td>
<td>154.1</td>
<td>80.2</td>
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<td>Emery</td>
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Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control; 2017 data
Utah Coal Country Assets/Strike Team Initiatives

**Assets**
- Great Location
- Exceptional Broadband
- Spectacular Natural Beauty
- Iconic Mining Town
- Public University

**Initiatives**
- Workforce Training/Jobs: Silicon Slopes East+
- Tourism Infrastructure: Red Rock Gateway
- Housing Revitalization: Hearth & Home
- Economic Development Support: Custom Incentives
Custom Incentives

• Provide long-term economic projections for the region
  • Baseline
  • Best Case
  • Worst Case
• Research regionalized economic incentives
  • Incentivize rural (EDTIF)
  • Small business
  • Home-grown entrepreneurs
  • Amenities/quality of life/arts
  • Vision support and leadership development
  • Support residents (e.g. income tax credit)
  • Main St. retail
  • Capital investment, incl. Main St. beautification
Opportunity Zone

- Several ongoing discussions around property on Ridge Road being used for industrial
- Loveless Ash Vacuums expansion
- A number of solar deals that could potentially be in the OZ
- Negotiations with federal agencies (EDA, USDA) about creating specific grant programs for the county’s OZ
Strike Team Momentum

Major Milestones

☑️ $900k awarded by Schmidt Futures
   Nationally recognized conference award

☑️ $500k appropriation
   Utah legislative support

☑️ Business commitments
   Over two dozen business supporters

☑️ Engaged community
   Support from approximately 70 elected officials, business leaders, and community/technical advisors

☑️ Utah Congressional Delegation
   Meeting in Washington, DC with Sens. Romney and Lee

☑️ Valued partnerships

Current Supporters

- Silicon Slopes
- U Health University of Utah
- Salt Lake Chamber
- Blacksmith International
- Ivory Homes
- Utah Governor’s Office of Economic Development
- City Creek Center
- Zions Bank
- MarketStar
- Chamber Rural Workforce Network
- LSI
- qualtrics
- UAMMI
- Pluralsight
- Inside Sales.com
- Clyde Companies
- Domo
- R&R Partners
- Deseret Management Corporation
- Department of Workforce Services
- U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)
- Utah Community Builders
- Deseret Management Corporation
- Utah Governor’s Office of Economic Development
Progress in Other Interventions

**Silicon Slopes East+**
- Workforce training: technical, creative/entrepreneurial, healthcare, tourism/service, manufacturing
- Encourage digital entrepreneurship

**Red Rock Gateway**
- Tourism Development Fund
- Increase signage, beautify Main St., etc.

**Hearth & Home**
- Provide research on the effects of low-income housing in rural areas