

# Editorial, 2/12: Building Prosperity for All

By The Journal Star editorial board Feb 12, 2016

Lincoln's low unemployment rate, a revitalized downtown dotted with construction cranes and a vibrant and growing retail shopping scene is certainly a rising tide.

But it's not lifting all the boats.

That's where Prosper Lincoln comes in, as more than 1,000 breakfast attendees learned last week.

Prosper Lincoln is a community-driven self-improvement project where volunteers will be encouraged to make an impact in three areas, early childhood development, employment skills and innovation. These focus areas were teased out of a process that began with Vital Signs, a community survey conducted in 2014 and 2015 to assess the weaknesses and strengths of Lincoln.

With the Lincoln Community Foundation serving as the lead agency, Prosper Lincoln and its partners aim to unleash the energy of the business community and public sector leaders to mobilize broader support for specific tasks targeting specific outcomes.

For example, one simple initiative mentioned at the breakfast is a monthly goal of clocking a cumulative 1 million minutes of reading to preschoolers, 15 minutes at a time. One million minutes over 30 days is 33,333 minutes a day. That's a smidge over 2,222 people per day reading 15 minutes each.

Invoking the image of a grandfather reading to a child in his lap, Library Director Pat Leach said, "It's such a sweet image, but don't let that sweetness blind you to the rock-solid evidence that 15 minutes per day makes a difference."

Similar common-sense initiatives, led by business sponsors and oversight committees, surrounding employment skills and innovation, will help lift other demographic groups.

Behind the leadership, direction and organization, though, will be a whole lot of volunteers – people donating time, money, thought and care. Some will be in a position to give much. Others maybe only those 15 minutes a couple times a month. You can learn more and see what you can share by visiting [prosperlincoln.org](http://prosperlincoln.org).

Look around. Read the reports. Check the statistics. Lincoln is experiencing a golden age of prosperity. But not everyone is enjoying its fruits. Prosper Lincoln is a way that business and public leaders hope to harness our community's strength to help those who need it.

And by bringing Lincoln's prosperity to a wider group of citizens, we actually bring an even greater measure of prosperity to the community as a whole.

The rising tide can lift all boats, but some of the boats just need a little building up. And we can all help.