

10 A GUIDE TO CELEBRATE PAUL BORN





WITH GRATITUDE.

The writing of this guide was a collaborative effort involving the Tamarack team, board, and partners.

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INTRODUCTION

Editor: Lisa Attygalle

Paul Born, Tamarack's co-founder and co-CEO, was the creator of Tamarack's signature 10 Guides. The guides each feature 10 Really Good Ideas, 10 Inspiring Stories, and 10 Useful Resources to help changemakers to catalyze the change they are seeking.

As a way to celebrate Paul and his retirement, we have created a 10 Guide to feature the things we've learned and loved about our times working with Paul.

Our hope is that this guide serves as a way for Paul—and each of you—to reflect and preserve Paul's vision of ending poverty in Canada, and legacy of emboldening community change efforts across the world.

Announcement: April 27, 2021

Tamarack Institute Co-Founder and Co-CEO Paul Born set to retire.

It is with mixed emotions that the board of the Tamarack Institute announces the retirement of our Co-Founder and Co-CEO, Paul Born. For over 20 years, Paul has nurtured and stewarded Tamarack from a nascent concept to a thriving organization with partnerships in over 350 communities in Canada. With Co-founder, Alan Broadbent, and dozens of staff, donors and partners, Paul has created a movement to eradicate poverty in Canada and create a platform for positive community change.

Paul's love and devotion to Tamarack has never faltered. Together with an amazing team, Paul grew the Institute into a 37,000-person learning community advancing the ideas of collective impact, community engagement, collaborative leadership, community innovation and evaluating community impact. Paul is also the Founder and Director of Vibrant Communities, which encompasses four campaigns: Cities Reducing Poverty, Cities Deepening Community, Communities Building Youth Futures and Community Climate Transitions. He is the author of four books, including two Canadian best sellers.



When Paul is not co-leading Tamarack, he is likely facilitating a meeting or cooking a meal for dozens of people in his beloved community of Kitchener-Waterloo. Paul believes in walking the talk and demonstrating daily through his actions that individuals can be changemakers, having the greatest impact when they work collaboratively for change. He has received numerous awards for his work. In 2013, he was named a Senior Fellow of Ashoka Canada, the largest global network of social entrepreneurs. In 2019, he was appointed to the Order of Canada and in 2020, Paul was honoured by the faculty of arts at the University of Waterloo with their Alumni Achievement Award.

It will come as no surprise for those who know Paul that while he will be retiring, he will not stop working or serving the Tamarack community. Paul has agreed to continue to teach, write and coach for several years on a part-time basis.

The first stage in Paul's transition to retirement will be a six-month sabbatical to write a new book. He will start his sabbatical one month after the new Co-CEO is hired. The board has formed a leadership team and we will work with Co-CEO Liz Weaver to recruit for this position. We are pleased that Liz will continue in her role as Co-CEO and bring her insights and passion to this next stage in Tamarack's development.

Although we do not want to see Paul step back, we know that this is the right time for him to chart a new path forward. He has worked hard to ensure that Tamarack is in excellent shape with a strong financial base, exceptional staff, a new and energized board and a new 10-year strategic vision and plan.

On behalf of all of us at Tamarack we want to extend our deepest appreciation for all the work that Paul has put into building this community. He has played a leadership role in creating a generous, impactful movement that is changing communities for the better. As a board we are excited and committed to carry this vision forward and ensure that Tamarack thrives for years to come.

We look forward to celebrating Paul and his achievements and contributions to Tamarack in the coming weeks and months.

Shauna Sylvester, Chair
Brock Carlton, Vice Chair
Board of Directors, Tamarack Institute





SECTION 1

10 REALLY GOOD IDEAS

Here are 10 high-impact ideas that Paul has shared with Tamarack staff, network, and partners over the years. While not an exhaustive list, this section presents a taste of the kind of wisdom Paul brings to every conversation, in the hopes of creating a better world for all. They're also ideas that have stuck with the recipient, and therefore have spread to their own work and circles of connections.

- 1 If what we were already doing was working, we would have ended poverty by now
- 2 Please don't start another program!
- 3 Stupid momentum is better than no momentum
- 4 The gift of attendance
- 5 Take time to get to know your colleagues, partners, neighbours, and everyone else you encounter on your journey
- 6 The question is more important than the answer
- 7 No data without stories and no stories without data
- 8 Judge a group of a community by the quality of their potlucks
- 9 Relationship building is always step #1
- 10 Hope for a better world

1

IF WHAT WE WERE ALREADY DOING WAS WORKING, WE WOULD HAVE ENDED POVERTY BY NOW

Contributed by Jill Zacharias

The first time I heard Paul say this, many years ago, it made so much sense. In a few words it simultaneously catalyzed the need to question the status quo and analyze why what we were already doing wasn't working, underscored a desire to think outside the box and explore new ideas and new ways of doing things, and articulated a clear vision of the end goal. Simple words, big impact.



2

PLEASE DON'T START ANOTHER PROGRAM!

Contributed by Garry Loewen

In the early days of Vibrant Communities the concept of Comprehensive Community Initiatives was not well understood. Cities that were eager to find new approaches to reduce poverty would apply for the financial, coaching, and other supports that Tamarack had available. And then they would design their initiative. Often the initiatives did not start out as being very “comprehensive”. They were focused on one or two interventions — related to things like job preparation, or transportation, or any of a myriad of other issues.

All of them were good ideas, and undoubtedly would have made some difference in reducing poverty. But they couldn't reach the scale that Paul was looking for. “Look”, he would say, “your community is already running a hundred different programs to reduce poverty. Are you really going to move the needle in a big way by making it a hundred and one?” And then the discussion would shift to the really big ideas like working across sectors, collaboration, and collective impact.

3

STUPID MOMENTUM IS BETTER THAN NO MOMENTUM

Contributed by Mark Cabaj

In the year 2000, we were working on developing a second four-year campaign for Opportunities 2000—the prototypical poverty reduction effort in Waterloo Region (1996-2000) that ended up being foundational for Tamarack in general, and Vibrant Communities in particular. In the hopes that we might achieve even greater impact in the next four years, we decided to partner with a very generous and socially committed corporation with deep expertise in systems thinking and strategy development. We learned a great deal in that effort and it led to important upgrades in the approach.

However, it was also requiring a lot more time and effort from the leadership group and staff team than we ever anticipated, the result of which is that we neglected to ‘keep the wheels’ on the scores of partnerships we had with non-profit, public and private organizations.

At one leadership meeting, Paul voiced his ‘deep’ concern with the loss of momentum on the ground. One of the very experienced facilitators responded by saying that it might be the temporary price to pay to get to “the next level” of impact.

Without much thought, Paul responded, “I would rather have stupid momentum, than no momentum, because at least with momentum there is energy and motion that you can build on and redirect it.” Several of the leadership team members responded.

From that moment on, I have been keenly aware of the necessary tensions between thinking and action in larger scale change initiatives.



4 THE GIFT OF ATTENDANCE

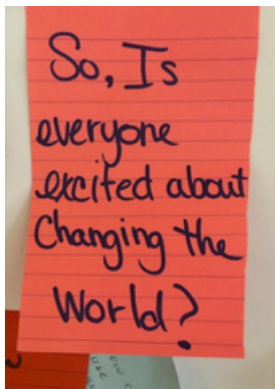
Contributed by Liz Weaver

For Paul, gathering together is central to who he is as a person. He believes strongly in making sure that everyone is welcome and nourished in mind, body and spirit. He has said that people who attend Tamarack events are giving us the gift of their time and spirit and that staff have to hold this gift carefully, nurture it and ensure that our practices lead to the co-generation of knowledge. There is reciprocity in gift giving — both the receiver and giver gain equally. This big idea, of preparing with intention for the gathering, being welcoming when folks arrive, inviting the mind, body and spirit into the event and then being grateful for the experience makes Tamarack events unique. They are places of deep exchange, creation of connections and building of spirit. The work of community change is challenging, Tamarack's approach to gathering is nurturing.

5 TAKE TIME TO GET TO KNOW YOUR COLLEAGES, PARTNERS, NEIGHBOURS, AND EVERYONE ELSE YOU ENCOUNTER ON YOUR JOURNEY

Contributed by Laura Schnurr

No matter how busy Paul is, he always takes the time to get to know people. He'll ask questions, share personal stories and anecdotes, and approach every new relationship with genuine curiosity. He'll interrupt a meeting to ask about the people in a family photo that he sees on a bookshelf in someone's background. His ability to connect with others is undoubtedly a key factor behind his success as a community changemaker, at the local and systemic levels. And just as importantly, it brings joy and helps one live a fulfilling life.



6 THE QUESTION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE ANSWER

Contributed by Lisa Attygalle

Paul always says that the questions people are asking are more important, and more interesting, than the answers. Questions help us to understand how people are thinking about a situation, what's on their minds, who they are considering, and how they are considering it.

Paul spends time coming up with just the right question. The wording is important. It is curated. It is considered. He will ask — what's arising for you now? What questions are you bringing into today? What questions are you leaving with?

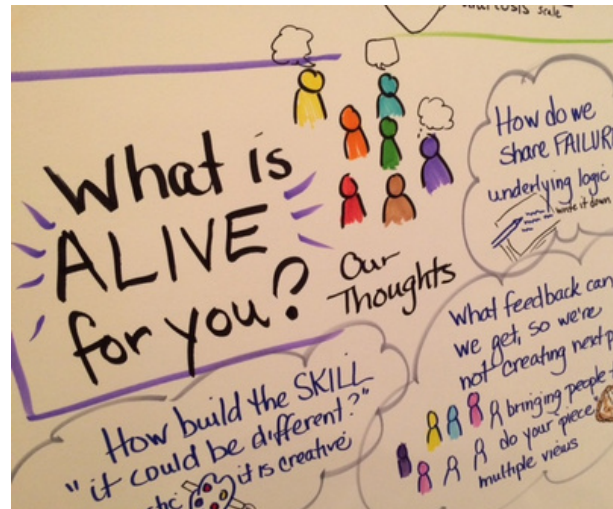
I often heard Paul saying to groups he was coaching, "I'm not here to answer your questions. I'm here to help you understand your questions, and help you to uncover the answer because it's likely already inside of you."



7 NO DATA WITHOUT STORIES AND NO STORIES WITHOUT DATA

Contributed by Nathalie Blanchet

As we launched Communities Building Youth Futures, Paul regularly reminded us that the data we captured in the first year would describe the many activities done to guide and support communities, but stories would reflect the shifts that communities had made along the way. Similarly, the stories we were hearing about behaviour changes of youth were inspirational, and we also needed to quantify these early outcomes across the initiative to tell a more impactful story.



8

JUDGE A GROUP OR A COMMUNITY BY THE QUALITY OF THEIR POTLUCKS

Contributed by Natasha Pei

Paul completely ruined potlucks for me (for the better). The more that people value and appreciate one another, the more effort they put into the food that they bring to gatherings. It's an unexpected indicator of the depth of community, but also very accurate. Paul taught me about the power of community, particularly my neighbourhood community. I have a completely different outlook on the types of communities I seek out and how I show up to my own communities.



9

RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING IS ALWAYS STEP #1

Contributed by Mary Pickering

I first “met” Paul through reading of his books – which I keep adjacent to my desk for continued reference. In particular, I loved the metaphor of bringing soup to a neighbour which is provided in Paul’s book “Deepening Community.” It teaches us how acts of connection require prior relationship building. First you have to know your neighbour well enough to figure out what kind of soup they want, Paul advises, then you need to be attuned to when they might be needing the soup, and finally, they have to trust you enough to accept the soup when you bring it.

I often quote this metaphor when I am talking about the process and importance of working towards relationship – like Paul overall, the surface meaning is simple and relatable, but the message it conveys is nuanced and wise. Thank you, Paul, for all your wisdom and your warm and witty delivery.



10 HOPE FOR A BETTER WORLD

Contributed by Kate Gunn

Over the time I have known Paul, I have come to think of him as a renaissance leader — a writer, a poet, a doer, a builder, an always curious idealist — in addition to being a gourmet chef! I think, however, that Paul's instinctive feel for timing and change has defined his many successes. I think he knows when to run with things, when to create, when to pivot and when to strategically change course. This is a rare gift.

I was deeply honoured to get a call from Paul one day in 2018 inviting me to join the inaugural national Board of Directors. Paul, I think, was well aware then of the need to leverage the energy and voices of leaders from across the country, and to position Tamarack in a new way as it moved into the next decade.

And his real super power? I believe that what Paul has offered to cities through Tamarack goes way beyond resources and tools and workshops. I think he has brought a message — and an experience — of hope and of joy. A sense that together we can tackle big challenges and create a better world for all.

As Arundhati Roy writes, “Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.” Thanks, Paul, for helping us hear her breathing!

Contributed by Natasha Pei

I've learned a lot about building momentum, motivating communities and the importance of helping community leaders change their narratives from hopelessness to hope. Some of the big ideas I loved learning from Paul, that have had a profound impact on the poverty reduction movement have included: Changing the conversation from poverty alleviation to poverty reduction or elimination; flipping the poverty rate on its head and looking at the amount of people the system is working for and appreciating what's going well; and using data to drive decision-making. The poverty reduction movement has gained a lot from Paul's commitment to hope and the strengths-based approach.





SECTION 2

10 INSPIRING STORIES

This section showcases 10 stories from Paul’s work in communities across Canada and internationally that demonstrate how Paul approaches community change—how he is committed to a vision of ending poverty, how he motivates people, and how he brings care and joy to all he does.

- 1 Witnessing Paul realizing his vision
- 2 The Power of Saying “No”
- 3 Generosity
- 4 Make it your own
- 5 Make it fun (and invite lots of people)!
- 6 The Whole of the Person
- 7 The Gift of Sharing...Especially Food
- 8 The importance of honouring place
- 9 Paul’s «joie de vivre»
- 10 Hope for a better world

1 **WITNESSING PAUL REALIZING HIS VISION**

Contributed by Sunshine Chen

Paul was always incredibly generous with his time and advice as I was starting out on my own after leaving the City of Waterloo.

Our paths had first crossed when I was invited to join the Leadership Waterloo Region curriculum committee that Paul was heading up. After our work had wrapped there, Paul would regularly make time to meet with me to offer advice and explore opportunities and ideas on how I could grow my new business. At the time, in his day job, Paul was leading the work at Opportunities Waterloo Region, the evolution of the Opportunities 2000 project, whose mission was to end poverty in the Community by the year 2000.

So I went to meet with him at one of these regular meetings and much to my surprise, Paul was a bit out of sorts. He wasn't his usually focused self and seemed quite distracted. I remember after we exchanged hellos, he looked at me and said, "Listen, I just got this phone call out of the blue. It was a major investor and philanthropist in Canada who told me that he had been keeping an eye on the work I've been doing with Opportunities 2000 and Opportunities Waterloo Region.

We had a great conversation and this person then asked directly, "Hey, Paul. If we could free you up from your day job and you could do anything, pursue anything that you would want to make a difference in the world... what would that be?" Sunshine, I have to tell you, since that phone call, I've been in a state of crisis wrestling with this to try and come up with an answer to his question!"

A few weeks later, we met up again. This time, we were on one of Paul's famous walking meetings when I asked, "So, have you come up with an answer to the question of 'if you could do anything to make a difference in the world, what would that be?'"

"I have, and I even have a name for it. It's going to be called Tamarack..."

What a gift it has been to witness Paul grow Tamarack from that idea 20 years ago into this organization that has touched and impacted so many across Canada and beyond. I can't even express what an honour and privilege it was for me to be invited to be on the Board of Tamarack. What Paul has shared with us about engaging communities, empowering neighbourhoods, transforming cities, taking care of one another, and re-imagining possibilities for all of us together as a country has only set the foundation upon which I hope all of us will continue to build and grow. Thank-you Paul... for Everything.

2 THE POWER OF SAYING “NO”

Contributed by Sylvia Cheuy

When I was first getting to know Paul, he would share stories about the early days of Tamarack and the work of Opportunities 2000 (the Waterloo precursor to Vibrant Communities – Communities Ending Poverty). One story that always stayed with me, was the one he shared about a donor who approached him wanting to make a significant investment in the work. Most people would have readily accepted the generous donation with a hearty thank you! Not Paul.

Instead, he asked the donor to contribute a day of his time to come to Waterloo and learn more about the work and meet people whose lives were being changed on their journey to prosperity. Not surprisingly, that donor was SO impressed, that he became a significant, volunteer and investor in the early work of Tamarack. Ultimately, Paul’s courage to decline a significant donation led to the securing of a far greater, multi-year investment for the work. It also cultivated a powerful early champion who played an important role in building credibility for Paul’s innovative approach to reducing poverty and attracted other powerful industry and community leaders to also contribute their time, talent, and resources.



3

GENEROSITY

Contributed by Shauna Sylvester

I have the pleasure of spending a weekend each year with Paul and a group of other social entrepreneurs in a beautiful Ontario get away. I always look forward to the time in our agenda when we go for walks, when I know I will get some one-on-one time with Paul. We've been doing this for almost 20 years and I learn so much from these strolls. It's a time to think big and reflect deeply on our personal journeys. I've loved the way our conversations meander but inevitably end up centering on food, family and community.

Paul is an extremely generous soul and cares passionately about weaving strong bonds between people, often using food as his glue. He's a wonderful cook and continually steps up to share his skills with his community. I was so touched when he offered to come out to my wedding to help coordinate our reception dinner. Thank you Paul for all you do to build people and communities up! You are a natural optimist who a master relationship builder.

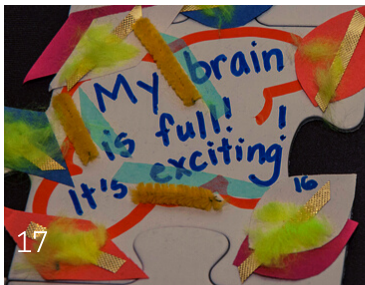
4

MAKE IT YOUR OWN

Contributed by Lisa Attygalle

When I was starting out at Tamarack and beginning to teach workshops, Paul was adamant that I needed to do the work to figure out what I could teach. He didn't want to provide a whole bunch of PowerPoints and for me to learn the content. He wanted me to take time to understand what I know—what experiences I've had and what wisdom is already there to share—and then figure out how to connect that with what people are wanting to learn.

To me this is inspiring for two main reasons. Firstly, it prioritizes authenticity. Paul taught me that to be a good teacher you need to embody the content. You need to care about what you're teaching and why. And secondly, is Paul's belief in each person he is mentoring. He validates. He empowers, He encourages.



5 MAKE IT FUN (AND INVITE LOTS OF PEOPLE)!

Contributed by Lori Hewson

One of my favourite experiences with Paul was the community-building 'Kitchen Party' in Fort McMurray that helped launch what eventually became the Social Prosperity Wood Buffalo initiative. We'd never experienced anything like it before and it was immediately engaging and left everyone feeling hope and pride in the community. I learned so much about facilitating a large meeting from Paul that day and am still grateful for the faith he had in me to support the process.



6

THE WHOLE OF THE PERSON

Contributed by Justin Williams

Paul demonstrates continuously at the core of every community is people. He doesn't just see the whole of the community, but instead breaks down the core of the persons that make up that community. This is clear when he talks about the assets of neighbours coming together, when he asks questions (and really listens), and it is clear when he interacts with the team.

My first few weeks at Tamarack were difficult. Our team was in flux; I was going to through a professional shift; and I wasn't sure that I was being valuable to the organization. Paul just kept asking questions. He wanted to understand how I saw the work, my thought processes, and how I was feeling. It was new. It was difficult. And, it was one of the most significant professional moments for me. We shifted, so that I could maximize my role in the team and take ownership of my development.

Over the past 4 years, Paul has become a professional and personal mentor. One of the biggest parts of that mentorship for me has been seeing how Paul repeats this process across our team: understanding people, finding their gifts, and helping them to share them.



7

THE GIFT OF SHARING...ESPECIALLY FOOD

Contributed by Sunshine Chen

Paul was hot and sweaty, his cheeks were rosy red, and his face was beaming with the most gigantic smile as he ran in and out of the kitchen of the Queen Street Commons at The Working Centre in Downtown Kitchener. Even though there were lots of people helping him, he was simultaneously the chef, the host, the greeter, the waiter, and the server to a room full of people from all walks of the city: politicians, community leaders, students, municipal staff, homeless persons, people looking for some decent food. They had all come together to enjoy a meal prepared by Paul with the help of some volunteers in support of and for the enjoyment of people who were in need of a good meal.

As he moved around the room, he gave out hugs, laughed, and exclaimed, "Have you tried the veggie curry? Are you enjoying yourselves? Oh, you must have some of this dessert!" It was obvious he had worked hard cooking for a good part of the day; but as he leaned on a column beside the kitchen and took a moment to soak in all the activity surrounding him, the smells of the food, the sound of music from the performers and the buzz of conversations and people enjoying themselves in the room, you could feel the joy radiating from him.

If you don't know Paul, here's some things Paul loves: Paul loves food. Paul loves people. Paul loves a gathering. Paul loves helping people in the community. So, an evening of people gathering to enjoy food together and help each other out as a community...well I don't know if you believe in Heaven; but if you had seen the look in Paul's eyes in that moment that he paused to take in the room, I believe it was a glimpse into Paul's Heaven.

Thank-you, Paul, for sharing all of your gifts with us.



8

THE IMPORTANCE OF HONOURING PLACE

Contributed by Sylvia Cheuy

Paul has always understood the importance of place in the work of Community Change. To be effective, local community change strategies need to be rooted in – and leverage – the unique assets, characteristics, and history of that community. To emphasize the power of place, one of the rituals that was often part of the curriculum of Tamarack’s early learning events was the stone ritual. All participants were asked to bring a stone to the event from their home community. As the event opened, participants came up one by one and placed their stone in a special container that stayed in our event space. At the close of the event, participants then had an opportunity again, to come up and choose a stone from the event to bring back home as a memento of the people they met and the community we had created together.

I remember one particular event where we had asked participants to bring a stone from home, to host the stone ceremony the event’s opening. On Day 2 of our 3.5-day event, one participant approached us to ask why she had been asked to bring a stone from home which reminded us that we’d completely overlooked the ceremony.

We quickly created a special place in the venue and, made an announcement asking all participants to place their stone there before going to break. Imagine our surprise when we saw the same person open her bag and pulled out a HUGE rock that looked as if it weighed at least 5 lbs! The team had quite a chuckle during that evening’s debrief imagining how that poor participant lugged her heavy bag around for days. Needless to say, we made sure not to forget to include the closing part of the stone ceremony as this event wound to a close!



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9 PAUL'S «JOIE DE VIVRE»

Contributed by Lyse Brunet

When I first met Paul in my office at Centraide of Greater Montreal, he seemed like a UFO to me. I didn't know anything about Paul. I didn't know anything about the Tamarack Institute and what led Paul to create it. But as sometimes happens in life, there was a moment of grace. Paul wanted what I wanted at exactly the same time. And I took my team on the Vibrant Communities adventure with the St. Michel neighborhood of Montreal. What I found most appealing about Paul was his «joie de vivre» and his belief in solidarity and better days. It's amazing how authenticity and commitment can be attractive!



10 A COMPELLING VISION OF THE FUTURE

Contributed by Brock Carlton

Paul and I came to know each other while I was CEO at FCM. We built a relationship and through Paul I built an understanding of the role of municipal government in poverty reduction. Paul and I wrote one of the books of 10 - a book of 10 for the actions municipal governments can take to fight poverty. Naheed Nenshi, Mayor of Calgary said it was one of the most helpful publications he had seen from FCM.

Paul came to be a key voice in an FCM 2019 study projecting the pressures and expectations on Canadian communities in 2040. His coherent thoughts and insights on the changes we will see in the next 20 years was evocative and compelling enough that we brought Paul to the plenary stage at FCM's 2018 Annual Conference where Paul, David Coletto, CEO of Abacus Data, and I debated our different views of the future. Paul took great joy in the fact that the room of 1,000 municipal leaders chose Paul's as the most compelling vision of the future.

And now I take great joy in helping Paul through this transition as a friend and Tamarack Board member. Paul, you have made Canadian communities better places to live; you have changed our country. Thank you.

SECTION 3

Deepening Community
FINDING JOY TOGETHER
IN CHAOTIC TIMES
Paul Born
Foreword by Peter Block

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Community Conversations
Mediating the Tensions, Skills, and Powers of Community Organizers, Government, Business, and People
SECOND EDITION
PAUL BORN

Community Conversations
Mediating the Tensions, Skills, and Powers of Community Organizers, Government, Business, and People
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10 USEFUL RESOURCES

Paul has created many, many resources to support communities in their change-making efforts. These resources are the kind that offer breakthrough moments for people. They change the way we think and sit at the forefront of bookshelves to inspire action.

- 1 Community Conversations
- 2 Deepening Community
- 3 Top 100 Exercise
- 4 Community Change Institutes
- 5 "Tell Me More" Exercise
- 6 Pilot Project Junkies
- 7 Possible
- 8 Our Community Can Change
- 9 Tamarack 10 Guides
- 10 How to Develop a Common Agenda for Collective Impact

1 COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Contributed by Adaoma Patterson

This book is both an inspiration and a reference book. It brought to life the possibility that we can solve our biggest community issues through the simple act of conversation.

I met Paul many years ago when we began work on poverty reduction. In deciding how to understand what poverty meant in our community and engaging people in conversations, we turned to his book 'Community Conversations.' That book was so helpful in moving a big and diverse group of stakeholders forward, able to articulate a collective vision. At various conferences and events, Paul was always engaging in conversations that challenged assumptions, asked wicked questions, and generated ideas; he also told stories that resonated with the head and heart. I remember the wonderful meals. Paul always ensured the food at every event was one to remember and that contributed to good conversation. I learned much from participating in Tamarack's numerous events because they create space for us to have powerful conversations and meaningful connections. Paul, thank you for illustrating the power of conversation, for leading, teaching and sharing.

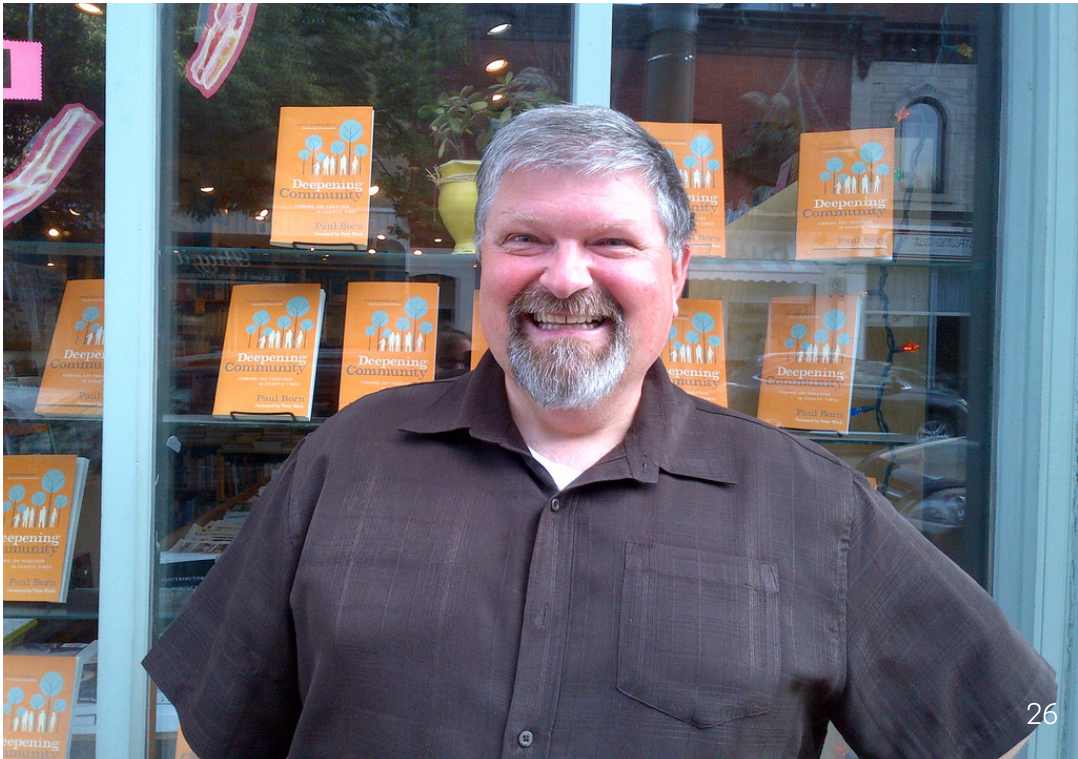


2 DEEPENING COMMUNITY

Contributed by Liz Weaver

I was able to read through many iterations of this book as it went through multiple edits. The early versions gave me insights into what Paul experienced across his life and how these events were so formative to his thinking. Many of us can point to one or two experiences in our lives that transcend us.

For Paul, growing up in a Mennonite community in British Columbia, was impactful. Connection to the land, connection to people, fraternity and co-working, entrepreneurialism and relentless ambition have been drivers for Paul. Deepening Community also expresses Paul's deep belief that community connections are critical to the health and wellbeing of our world. During this time of acrimony and great divide, deep community connections are required. Paul's writing of this book was prophetic.



3 TOP 100 EXERCISE

Contributed by Natasha Pei

The Top 100 Exercise asks you to consider the top 100 people and organizations in your community that could help you realize the change you want to see. The Top 100 exercise is versatile and relatively easy to do with a significant impact for communities building their engagements, re-engaging, or bringing more of the 'right' people to the leadership table. Communities can facilitate the exercise themselves and it can be done by as few or as many people as necessary. The '100' figure is also a good balance of pushing communities to be ambitious, but doable. The exercise seems to act as a really great early 'win' to help build the spirit of communities developing or renewing a plan.

4 COMMUNITY CHANGE INSTITUTES

Tamarack's signature annual learning event, the Community Change Institute (CCI), was a five-day gathering to inspire and renew community changemakers. The first CCI took place in 2005 at the Ignatius Jesuit Centre in Guelph. Interest ran high and registration overflowed, so Tamarack arranged off-site accommodations and buses to carry people back and forth. "We wanted to produce events that gave people the very best experience," Paul says. "There was a sense that the people coming to our events were going to contribute to the wellbeing of the Institute."

The CCI was held annually in this format for 10 years welcoming approximately 3,625 people and building a network of changemakers across Canada, the US, and internationally. The CCI spawned Tamarack partnerships and relationships at a global scale informing Inspiring Communities in New Zealand who sent delegates to the first CCI to Collaboration for Impact in Australia, and most recently the Place Matters initiative in the UK.



5 "TELL ME MORE" EXERCISE

Contributed by Lisa Attygalle

For Paul, fostering connection between learners is as important as what you have to teach them. Each person is bringing their ‘stuff’ to a workshop. Some people have a story to share, some people are feeling nervous, and some are keeners. Help people to understand themselves and each other and create spaces of empathy.

Paul’s favourite exercise is “Tell Me More”. You ask people to form groups of three with people they don’t know—this is important! One person starts as the storyteller, one is the person who says, “Tell me more”, and the third person holds the space. (Paul will comment here that this basically means you listen and just take a break.)

Paul shares: For the person telling the story — this will be marvelous! You get 5 minutes of uninterrupted time to share. For the person saying “Tell me more” — just like there’s a thousand ways to say “I love you” there’s a thousand ways to say, “Tell me more”. Be curious, but don’t try to be helpful. Don’t jump in with your own thoughts or advice. Your turn will come.

When people finish sharing, it is then that they are ready to listen.



6 PILOT PROJECT JUNKIES

Contributed by Mark Cabaj

I think Paul has written a lot of very important things over a long period of time. Many will share more recent and obvious ones, like Community Conversations and Deepening Communities, so I won't mention those. One of my favourites, for example, was a short article he did many years ago when we were both busy in the field of Community Economic Development, called Pilot Project Junkies. He made the point that our impact was much-smaller-than-it-needed-to-be because we focused too much on programs and pilots rather than thinking much bigger about the kinds of systemic changes required. It was so well written, so to the point and so cleverly framed and it sent an electric shock across the network of our colleagues and helped me snap out of my pilot project stupour!



7 POSSIBLE

In a special printed edition of Engage! Magazine in 2015, Paul contributed a feature editorial titled 'Possible'. Building upon a New York Times quote—"But we know for sure that these are days when the improbable can become the inevitable" — Paul wrote that Possible is a call to action and an act of faith.

"To make the changes required to reach our possible future, we need the knowledge and skills to deepen community, collaborate across sectors, measure and evaluate community change, foster citizen engagement, and support place-based innovation. We need to learn to change together. We believe that true community change occurs when citizens and organizations adopt a new way of thinking and working together; at the core is adopting an asset-based approach to change and thinking together about what is possible if we work in collaboration. The very "prospect of the possible" is the actual miracle: Our collective belief in the possible is the force that drives us to work with others to innovate, release, accept, and make things better for each other. This is how the improbable becomes the inevitable."

Paul brought this message of Possible to every community he worked with.

8

OUR COMMUNITY CAN CHANGE

Contributed by Sylvia Cheuy

Paul wrote this paper in 2016. It is a powerful one because it highlights the value — and necessity — of uniting different sectors and perspectives around a powerful vision and plan for change. I experienced the power and impact of Paul's approach first-hand when he facilitated a 2-day session with 55 diverse leaders from my own community. It was the first time these leaders could ever remember coming together, in the same room, to envision a powerful future together.

It also laid the groundwork that launched Headwaters Communities in Action and introduced me to the work of the Tamarack Institute. The paper provided a framework for community change practitioners that affirmed the value of the experience and knowledge that many changemakers brought to this work, while also introducing the importance of other, complementary practices. The paper is also foundational because it planted the seed that led to the articulation of the five interconnected practices of community change that are at the heart of the Learning Centre's Theory of Change.



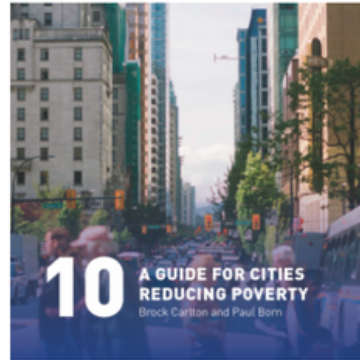
9 TAMARACK 10 GUIDES

The 10 guides are a way of understanding an issue and engaging with ideas and practices to help you or your community take action on that issue.

10 Guides have covered a number of topics at Tamarack from including the voices of people with lived and living experience to helping communities navigate their way out of the Covid Pandemic.

10 Guides are always co-created together with community members and field builders. We convene people together to engage in discussion about the issues and hear what communities are doing on the ground so that we can lift up these stories for others to learn from.

Paul's determination in the development of 10 Guides has been instrumental in community change. 10 Guides often rank as the number one downloaded resource from the Tamarack website so we know that Tamarack learners appreciate them as well.



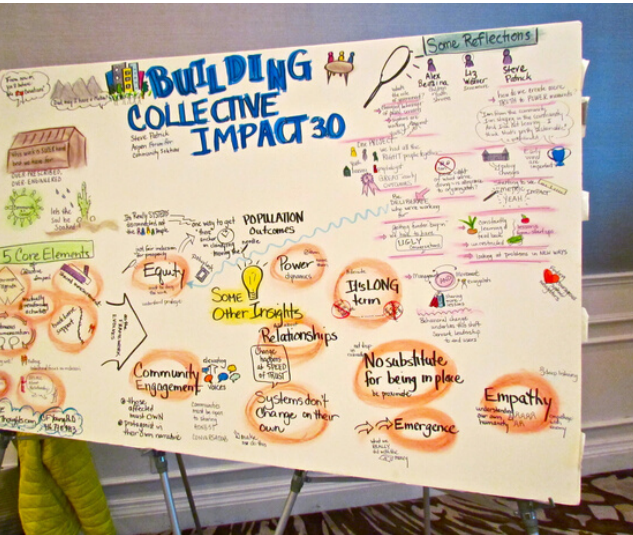
10 HOW TO DEVELOP A COMMON AGENDA FOR A COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Contributed by Alison Homer

How to Develop a Common Agenda for a Collective Impact: A 5 Step Guide is a paper written by Paul Born that provides a 'how-to' approach for developing a common agenda when working on Collective Impact initiatives. It provides real life examples of how this process has been used in Paul's own experiences as well as other organizations.

This paper was written by Paul in 2017 but remains our top resource for Managers of Cities and coaches supporting Communities Ending Poverty members to develop common agendas.

It is incredible to see the responses from member communities — it is a light bulb moment for them. They recognize the difference between strategic planning and a common agenda and the power nature of the latter — especially when realized by a committed multi-sectoral team of change makers.





WELL WISHES



Paul, WOW!! Just read the news on your forthcoming retirement - I'm sure we'll have the chance to connect over the next few weeks at the Summit - but I wanted to wish you all the very best in this next stage of your adventure.

Your guidance throughout the Hamilton Roundtable's journey has been absolutely instrumental to our progress. You were there at the beginning to get us off the ground, and remained a vital part of our success - particularly in spreading the good news when we were successful in making impacts in people's lives.

Your ability to connect so many people - across the country and the world- together gave Tamarack the fortitude to show that poverty in Canada wasn't an inevitability -but indeed something that could be solved. You brought out our better angels as we strove for collective solutions to societal dilemmas.

Thanks so much for everything, and we'll talk soon!

Tom Cooper



What a surprise to see the announcement of your retirement. I wish you every success as you transition into a semi-retirement role and do some further writing.

You have been a force for good and poverty reduction in Canada like no other. Thank you. I have learned from you, enjoyed our conversations, and am richer because of our contact.

May all good things be yours and may your amazing impact continue to shape the landscape of this great country.

With so much respect,
John Rook



Dear Paul: What an extraordinary record of achievement! I'm very pleased you are not retiring but pausing and then writing another book. You have too much to give to retreat. However, do take some time and relax although that is difficult in these strange times. Perhaps later in the summer when the sun warms and the virus wanes.

All the best to you and Marlene,
John English



Congratulations on your remarkable work to date, and the courage to design a new path ahead. You call it retirement, but I expect that is simply retirement from tamarack and I look forward to working with you on other things in the future.
Geoff Cape

Hi Paul:

I just read the announcement of your pending retirement that Liz and Shauna shared with the Tamarack Team.

I just wanted to acknowledge how deeply I value having had the opportunity to work with – and learn from – you. Your insights and tenacity in building such an incredible, national organization is testament to both your wisdom and also your great big heart. You are a champion for social justice! On a personal level I want to say how much I appreciate the faith that you have consistently shown in me and your willingness to create opportunities for me to be part of this incredible journey.

I'm happy to learn that, while your role with Tamarack is evolving and changing, you intend to keep consulting and writing in the months/years to come as I look forward to continued opportunities to work with you well into the future!

You so deserve the opportunity you are taking to start a new chapter in your professional life and I am so glad you have chosen to take it. At the same time, I will miss you.

Sylvia Cheuy



Ahhh, how wonderful Paul. Congratulations! Is that a thing you say to people retiring?? ☑ Can't wait to read and learn from the new book. Vicki Saunders

Oh Paul,
I saw this with deep sadness (for me and for the loss of a leader with your talent, grace, wisdom and vision) and hope to connect again soon and learn about your dreams and hopes.

Another book! Well I for one will be waiting with great anticipation. I refer to your writings more than any other books I've ever read. I'm excited to hear about that. I'm sure you will be inundated with lots of questions and well wishes. I just wanted to reach out to you and say I look forward to staying connected with you and when you find some time to connect again and hear about next steps.

Warm regards and a virtual hug for you. And one day, I look forward to sharing a meal with you!

Lidia Kemeny



Paul, congratulations on retiring after so many years of incredibly successful community building.

However, as another so-called retiree, I can tell you that for someone like you there is no such thing as retirement. You're just changing gigs.

So after your next book is written I expect you'll be back in some way or another helping create healthy communities.

Mike Harcourt

Paul,
What a big milestone!
I am so happy for you. I hope you will be able to take this time to recognize the gifts you've brought to this world and feel the love from those you have impacted. Your legacy with Tamarack is profound and you've paid such careful attention to transition out well.
Awesome.
Excited to see what comes next for you -
d



A great letter, Paul. You are doing something that I never quite managed in my career of launching new organizations: a graceful, timely departure. Looking back, I think I always felt a tinge of “coulda, shoulda, woulda” - regrets of sins of omission or commission, or mistakes of timing (too soon, too late) - but then, thank goodness, I did move on. Your departure has been finely planned, both for the organization and for yourself. Tamarack is strong, and you will still be contributing to the mission, but differently. It is a good moment for Tamarack to adjust to new leadership, smoothly, and a good moment for you to step back from the strain of being the Founder and go-to guy.

Despite your habitual deflection of credit to others, you should be feeling a quiet sense of accomplishment - even joy!

Tim Brodhead

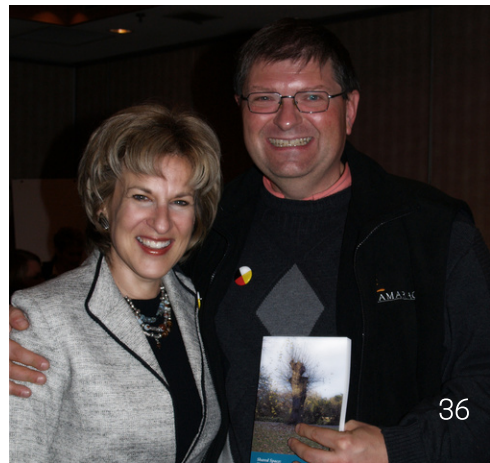
Paul,
Well you certainly have had an impact on the world! You've really set the standard for how to concretely improve the lives of a lot of people. I'm sure you'll continue to do so as teacher and author. I'm certainly looking forward to the collective wisdom.

Warmest,
David Brooks



Hi Paul... your incredible legacy will live on! Your contribution to so many people across the globe through your innovations, presentations, workshops, publications and writings is immense. Thank you particularly for those times in Australia and New Zealand and your ever generous hospitable times in Ontario. Enjoy your retirement plan and hopefully a slower pace. Go well, stay safe and keep inspiring....

Peter Kenyon



Dearest Paul, what an incredible landmark for you and for all of the people and communities you've impacted across the country. Congratulations! And wow, I can't imagine the swirl of emotion you must be feeling today.

Good luck on the coming months of the next phase.

Sending love,
George Roter



Can't imagine those birkenstocks being hung up for any length of time! Big congrats Paul on a life well wandered to date and so much good terrain ahead.

With respect and admiration, Nick.
Nick Saul



Dear Paul,
This is wonderful news! I love that you are creating a new sense of time in your sabbatical, to rest and pull in to your own deep self and tap your beautiful wisdom and stories to share with us.... xo Vanessa Reid



Congratulations Paul - the definition of tour de force.

« Retiring... » ... hmmm. Looking forward to hearing what is next!
A+

Rachel Pulfer



Great decision and hopefully a well-deserved change of pace coming for you and the family! More time to focus on what you really enjoy doing! 🎉 🎉 🎉 🎉 🎉 🎉 😊

All the best my friend!
Pierre Legault



Dear Paul - Wow. Congratulations on your life work and life plan. I can't wait to read your new book and learn from your big thoughts during sabbatical.

Peace and Love to you dear Paul.
Jay Godsall



Congratulations Paul. It's been so wonderful to get to know you just a little bit as a bealighter, and I can imagine the gaping hole that you're opening up at Tamarack! Can I say the idea of writing an entire book in 6 months feels impossible to me so your ambition clearly continues to be intact!

Cheers,
Jon Shell



Paul, congratulations on your retirement! It is certainly well deserved given all of the amazing and hard work you have done. But, of course, you are leaving a big gap. All the best,
Manuel Riemer

A beautiful milestone indeed. Can't wait to hear, and read, more.

Sending love to you all. Rahul Raj



Huge congratulations Paul. While you will undoubtedly be missed, this is a well-deserved next step in your journey.

Liz - very pleased that we will be able to continue to work with you on the implementation of the Communities Building Youth Futures. It has been such an important project that we are very proud of and are thankful for your and Paul's contributions to date.

All the best Paul!
Kelly Campbell



Good Morning Paul,
I believe you are fulfilling your vision of writing and teaching. Please know that I only support that decision and while I will miss our conversations immensely, I know that great things are to come.

Selena DeMelo



Very fitting that your retirement is announced on the dawn of the big pink moon! Enjoy today and your next chapter.
Anil Patel



Paul: Thank you for your contributions to Tamarack, McConnell, and most importantly to the welfare of Canada and Canadians - hopefully we will have the opportunity to celebrate your ongoing contributions to social change in Canada. Until then, good luck with your next steps and I look forward to continuing the conversation.
All my best,
Chad Lubelsky



I cannot imagine Community building in Canada without you! What a tribute, a life of engagement.

Paul, I hope we will continue to share our learnings in this exciting period for Tamarack. Wish you all the best for this new stage of your life!

Lyse Brunet



Paul,
Unfortunately, you are leaving Tamarack as I join but your legacy is undeniably strong. I am so grateful that you created an organization that leads and guides amazing, community-centred, collective impact work and that I am now able to contribute to that greatness in some way. Wishing you all the very best in your retirement and much gratitude for all of your community building over the years!

Mike Des Jardins



Paul – my favourite story of yours was about your determined effort to knit a group of strangers into a neighbourhood of caring friends. Your first attempt to bring everyone in your cul de sac together for a dinner didn't get 100% buy-in, so you kept changing dates until you found one that did. I'm sure your retirement will be equally full of stones that need turning; you're the best guy for the job.

Anne Makhoul



Paul, while our paths only crossed a handful of times, I am thankful for those opportunities I was able to learn from you. Congratulations on your retirement. What a tremendous legacy. I look forward to seeing what this next chapter brings for you.

Sincerely – Connor Judge



Paul, thank you so much for sharing your wisdom and for being such an important mentor to me over the last five years. I'll always remember how your vision and leadership led VC to hit our 20-year goal of 1 million fewer people living in poverty in Canada! Next year, we'll hit 100 members working together, and I know you'll be there to celebrate with us. Thank you for supporting me to grow and for always inspiring our team to think bigger. I wish you the very best in your writing and next endeavours!

Alison Homer

Paul, Tamarack would not be what it is today without your leadership. Canadian communities would not be what they are today with Tamarack. I am forever grateful for having worked with you and for all that you have taught me over the years
Jana



Paul has paved the way for many years to grow and make flourish Tamarack's work in Québec. He has built strong and deep relationships with prominent Québec leaders over time that unlock today a great potential for our development into the future. He has encouraged us to profile and learn from the innovative work that Québec changemakers are leading and to share it with the rest of Canada and even beyond. He believes Tamarack holds a unique position and valuable assets to serve as a bridge between francophone and anglophone experiences and accelerate our impact by learning from each other.

Thank you, Paul, for your bold vision, your trust and for bringing me on board to contribute to this work. Un immense merci "de créer des possibles"!

Myriam Bérubé



Inspiring passion, powerful metaphors, forward thinking and vision. Thank you, Paul, for these ingredients (and many others) that have made Tamarack an impactful organization.

Jean-Marie

Paul, I am so grateful for the opportunity to connect with you and learn from you in unique and meaningful ways. First as part of my role at McConnell and now as part of my role at Tamarack. I appreciate your passion for building spaces that are grounded in authenticity and purpose, and I admire your vision for systems change. Thank you for being a mentor and an enabler of transformation in the context of our climate transitions work. I look forward to continuing our exchanges in the near future.

Warmly,
Jorge Garza



Paul – Without your leadership and forward thinking over that past 20+ years Tamarack would not be where it is today. Your passion and commitment to the work we do always shines through. Thank you for all the hard work that went into setting us up for success. I will remember you as strategic, optimistic, and selfless. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.

Mikayla



Paul, I am so in awe of the way you put your heart into your work. Here's to celebrating your legacy and honouring the dedication that you have shared with all of us. Wishing you all the best in this next phase of your journey.
-Kimber Kunimoto

Paul,
Although we're still in that 'getting to know you' phase of our relationship, it's your candour and commitment that have been most evident in our conversations to date. You bring a whimsical energy and steadfast dedication to your work. The level of passion and perspective that you inspire in our community is commendable, your stories are enlightening as they are endearing, and you've created a wonderful, enduring legacy for us all. Congratulations on an enviable career, and best of luck with all that the future holds.

Kind regards,
Jeff



Paul,
It has been an incredible few years working together (I'm of course counting the McConnell years too). You have been a tremendous leader and have built an organization that is truly exceptional in more ways that I can count. You have also been such a supportive leader to me personally and I've appreciated all your trust and encouragement. I cannot imagine this organization without you in your current role, but it's comforting to know that you'll still be involved with us and that our paths will continue to cross regularly. Wishing you all the best in your reconfigured role – I'm sure it will be a joy to focus on the work you love most, like writing, supporting communities directly, and of course more time with family, friends, and pursuing your hobbies.

Warmest regards,
Laura



Paul,
It's really hard to imagine Tamarack without your vision and wisdom at the helm. Your unconventional approach to poverty reduction and community work has been an inspiration to me as well as thousands of people across Canada and around the world. I appreciate your dedication to the cause as well as to your team. Thank you for your mentorship over the past 7 years and always pushing us to achieve more than we think is possible. Your smile and enthusiasm will be missed!

Sincerely,
Natasha

Reading your stories and witnessing your impact has inspired me to be even more involved in community-action based approaches for creating change in my community. As a youth, I am grateful for the work you started and maintained for 20 years. I wish I worked with you longer, reading how you were a wonderful person to tackle these issues with. I hope to continue passing this will forward in my work, especially when I envision my journey in not only the next year, but also the next 20 years. Wishing you for even better opportunities and rest to come, and I hope you can celebrate your successes!!

Thank you Paul!!

Freshta Ahmadzai



Paul,

Heard the news of your retirement and wanted to wish you well in your future pursuits and hoping you are doing well.

It appears Tamarack has adapted well to the pandemic and congrats to you, Liz and the team for doing so.

Just wanted to send you my well wishes

Best
Mark Holmgren

Paul, we are so appreciative of your vision and leadership. Tamarack is a thriving and influential place because of your passion and enthusiasm for communities and community change. Thank you for all that you do and we wish you well on this journey into the future.
Liz



Paul, congratulations on a much deserved retirement. I look forward to reading your next book and hearing about all your travel adventures. Until next time, Stephanie



Hi Paul. Thanks for all your great work at Tamarack. Wishing you the very best in your retirement. Looking forward to reading your new book! Congrats and all the best 😊
Ruté



Congratulation on retiring Paul - you have really helped create Tamarack into such a recognizable name across the country and beyond. Thank you for creating an innovative space. Good luck on your book and hoping travel is in the near future.
Dan

Paul, you have been such an important mentor professionally and personally. I continue to learn so much from you. Canada is a better place because of your work.
Justin



The Kitchener-Waterloo Region (and far beyond!) have been greatly improved by your efforts Paul! Thank you for all you have done, and for giving me a chance to contribute as well. I hope you are able to enjoy what comes next, and can create quality memories with friends and family.
Isaac



Thank you so much for your inspiration and leadership over the years. You have made a difference across Canada and beyond. Congrats on this next exciting phase of your life!
Jill



Paul,
Thank you for all you have fostered – for me personally, for all you have built relationship with, and for communities everywhere.

You took a chance on me and I will be forever grateful. Your belief enabled me to pursue my dreams and your mentorship has helped me to grow.

Putting together this 10 Guide for you has been a gift. It has allowed me to soak in the wisdom that you have offered throughout the years.

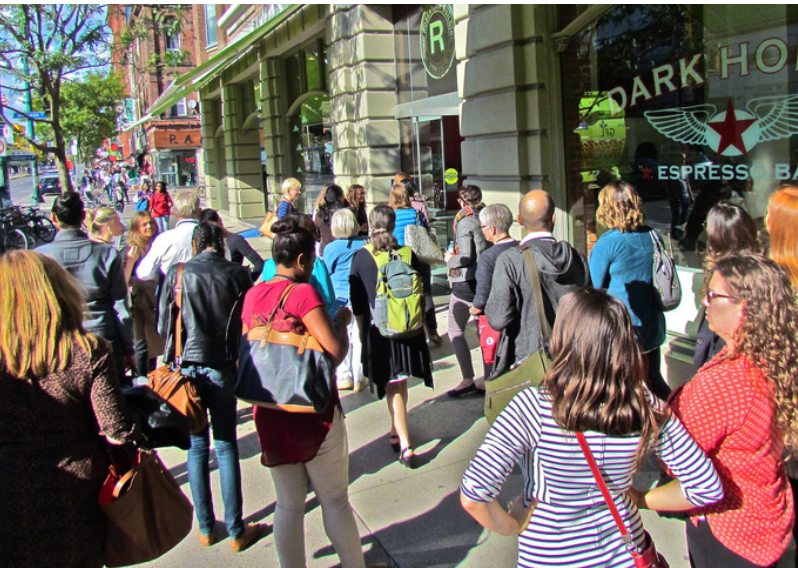
Thanks you for all you have done!
Lisa Attygalle

Yikes I am very late to this “tributes to Paul “party!

What an extraordinary legacy you have created. You write about community, you found and run organizations that are all about community, you deeply embed yourself in all the communities you are part of and you form communities around food, books and spirit.

All with an unbridled passion and huge sense of goodwill and fellowship. So many have mentioned how you have done it around food. I have a stronger bond with you over martinis!! We each have special people we think of when we are indulging and also toast the wonderful friendship we have with each other.

Here’s to many more of those shared moments!! A big hug!
Bill Y





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