

2014 ANNUAL REPORT



prosperity connection™



NEW NAME, SAME COMMITMENT

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In mid-2014, the Board of Directors and staff of the St. Louis Community CU Foundation came together to reflect on our past, as well as contemplate the future ahead. At our core, we are a mission-driven organization that exists to serve low- to moderate-income (LMI) communities throughout the St. Louis region with financial empowerment tools and connections to additional support services. By pairing our financial education interventions with connections to partners who provide job training, foreclosure prevention, legal aid and more, we help our clients build pathways that lead to economic independence and prosperity.

Given the growing demand for our services and our staff's continued determination to provide clients with solutions that draw upon the expertise from varied partners, it became evident that the name of our organization should be more reflective of how we address the needs of LMI communities. Thus, the name **Prosperity Connection™** was adopted. Our mission remains the same, but our belief in providing clients with holistic solutions, through connections, will be the hallmark of our work for the future.

For more information about our continued work in the community, as well as updates on special initiatives and the people we serve, please visit www.prosperityconnection.org.



We help our
clients build
pathways
that lead to
economic
independence
and prosperity.

“10% is what life brings you; 90% is what you do with it.”

Alice Crowe

Alice Crowe has a quote about life that I find especially motivational: “10% is what life brings you; 90% is what you do with it.”

Throughout my career, my work and volunteer efforts have centered around helping people make the 90% of their lives positive. As the Divisional Director for Career & Technical Education with the St. Louis Public Schools, it was about moving young people forward to be as fully prepared as possible first for high school graduation, then for college and their careers. Putting on my current volunteer hat, I am now deeply engaged in Prosperity Connection™ because many, many people want to make their lives positive, but cannot

Our goal is to help low- to moderate-income persons take control of their lives financially.

Or it could be engaging in counseling to avoid payday lending. The possibilities are endless. Our goal is to help low- to moderate-income persons take control of their lives financially. When this happens, the potential for them, their families and children is boundless. In education, I saw how children emulate what they learn at home. Financial literacy and good money and credit practices can be learned the same way.

get the break they need to make that happen. I know that Prosperity Connection is helping to make a difference.

It could be taking one of our many classes in, for example, budgeting, establishing credit or looking for a job. Or it could be an adult receiving a scholarship to complete college.

2014 was a productive year for Prosperity Connection. We contributed over \$6,850 to the St. Louis community, reached approximately 5,800 individuals in classes throughout the community and awarded three \$2,500 Janice Mosby education scholarships. Next year there will be four scholarships!

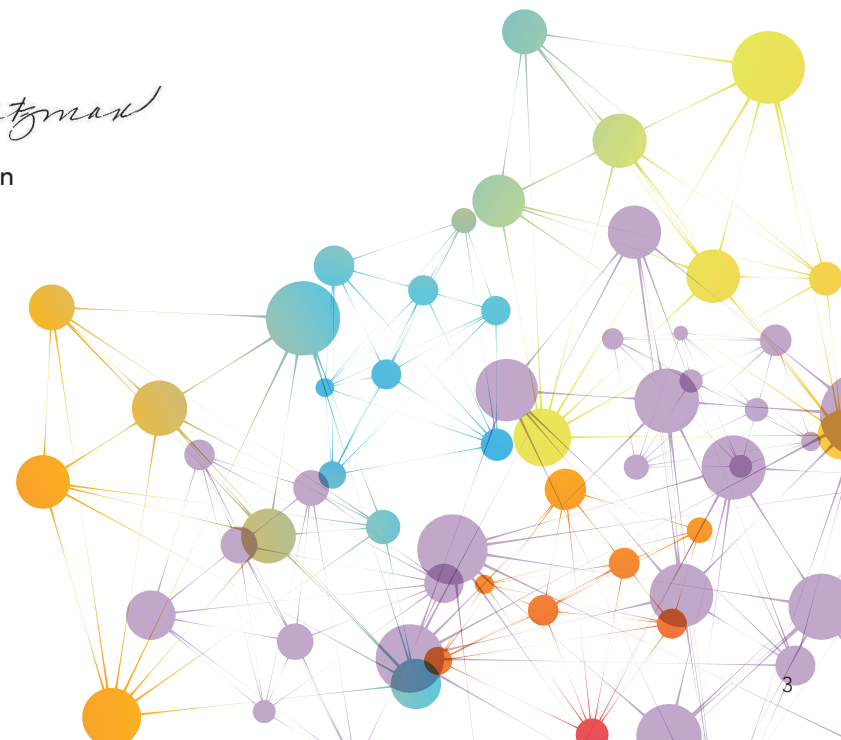
We extend a special thank you to our outstanding staff. Because of them, we have some stimulating and forward-thinking initiatives on the drawing board for 2015. Just as the Excel Center™ was a first-of-its-kind undertaking in our community, our upcoming plans will claim national attention.

On behalf of Prosperity Connection's Board, thank you for your current and continued support as we reach out to as many people as possible, helping them accomplish with their lives what will be positive for them and those they love.

In appreciation,



Susan E. Katzman
Chairperson



OUR IMPACT: EXCEL CENTER™

Prosperity Connection aims to transform communities by empowering people with tools and connections that help build wealth and family legacies. By helping our clients become financially capable, they gain the knowledge and skills necessary to manage their financial resources effectively.

Since opening in 2012, the Excel Center has served more than 6,100 individuals with a full range of life skills and financial education resources. Through pre- and post-test evaluations, our clients demonstrate a 47% increase in knowledge gain. Additionally, after receiving services, our clients report a 22% increase in average confidence related to managing their personal finances.

This unique facility has become a gathering place not only to learn, but also to celebrate the individual and collective successes of our clients.

To build upon the success of our first Excel Center, as well as meet the increasing demand for our educational services, Prosperity Connection plans to open several more Centers in the near future.



GENDER, AGE AND RACE



81%

of our clients are female

39%

of our clients are 35-49 years of age

90%

of our clients are African-American

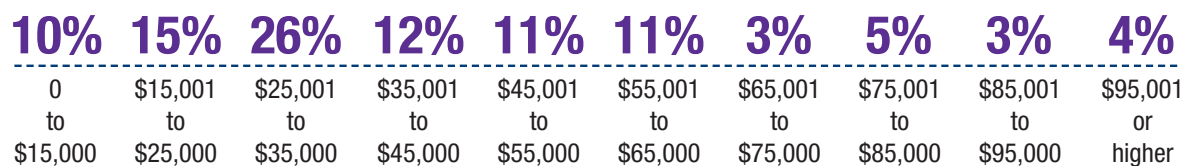
19%

of our clients are male

18-24 years of age: 4%
25-34 years of age: 23%
35-49 years of age: 39%
50-65 years of age: 27%
65+ years of age: 7%

African-American 90%
Caucasian 5%
Asian 1%
Hispanic 1%
Other 3%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME



74%

of our clients have a household income of \$55,000 or less annually

OUR PROGRAMS

Prosperity Connection exists to provide clients with services and connections that build their knowledge and the skills needed to foster personal behaviors that build a financially capable society. Our educators and partners provide the foundation upon which clients are able to gain the confidence and expertise needed to build wealth and strengthen the future for the next generation. Whether through group classes taught at our Excel Center or one-on-one coaching sessions provided at partner agencies like the YWCA, our staff assists clients by providing them with the tools they need to succeed.

In addition to being a trusted source of free financial education, Prosperity Connection is able to provide clients with connections to the financial products and services they need to build personal wealth. Rather

than being solely focused on their bottom line, financial institution partners work cooperatively with our educators to ensure that the needs of clients are met. When the most economically vulnerable members of our communities succeed, we all benefit.

Our staff works cooperatively with a network of non-profit partners throughout the region to provide clients with financial education training that their staff is not equipped to teach. These non-profit partners, of which many provide a range of workforce development services, family stability support and more, integrate our educators into their programs to meet clients where they receive services. Whether it is workforce training or family stability, Prosperity Connection's educators sync their outreach with the life situations of the clients they meet.

When the most economically vulnerable members of our communities succeed, we all benefit.

STL Youth Jobs

STL Youth Jobs trains at-risk youth to be ready for the jobs of tomorrow through individualized career assessment, financial literacy, job readiness training, employment experience and continuing career support.

As identified by STL Youth Jobs, financial literacy is key to the long-term success of the individuals who participate in the program. During the summer of 2014, nearly 200 youth participated in a four-session financial education workshop that covered topics on checking and savings basics, credit, budgeting, and avoiding predatory lending.

Prosperity Connection educators led the workshops and found that on average, participating youth increased their financial knowledge by 52% (based on a comparison of pre- vs. post-tests) and experienced a 20% increase in their confidence level for managing personal finance.

Fathers' Support Center

Fathers' Support Center (FSC) serves fathers rebuilding life after incarceration and/or long-term unemployment. FSC holds six-week training sessions at multiple sites, where their participants gain valuable life skills and prepare to seek and achieve gainful employment.

Since 2008, our educators have taught the financial literacy component of the seminars. Topics covered include credit, budgeting, identity theft, payday lending, the basics of checking and savings accounts, and a wrap-up/review session. The fathers who attend these classes come to know and trust our educators, and they often are interested in individualized financial coaching, which supports the implementation of better money management skills.

The financial education we provide through FSC gives these men the hope of a better tomorrow as they become equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to manage personal finances.

As demand for our services has continued to increase, our staff has begun to shift their focus towards providing more opportunities for one-on-one financial coaching. While we still use group classes to lay the groundwork for financial basics, one-on-one coaching has become an increasing priority for our target population.

We are the recognized leader throughout the region for financial education programs targeting financially underserved populations. It is because of this distinction that demands for our services increasingly exceed our capacity to meet all requests.



Participating youth increased their financial knowledge by 52%.

“It just makes you feel better about yourself. It makes you keep going, and it makes you a stronger person.”

BARBARA



“I came a long way with the counseling and all of the different services that I received,” Barbara explains. “I know that I have a resource where I can get out of debt... where I can start all over.”

Life can be full of unexpected twists and turns... Barbara had her share of them.

As a victim of domestic abuse, she started off as a resident of the local YWCA's Transitional Housing program. For the first time in her life, she began her journey to independence. Barbara took advantage of the organization's life skills and counseling services. Financial self-sufficiency was a major component. It was there where she had her first encounter with Prosperity Connection.

“I just couldn't get ahead, you know, without taking care of my debt first,” said Barbara.

Prosperity Connection offered weekly financial education classes to the YWCA, as well as one-on-one coaching sessions. Based on what she learned, Barbara was able to open a bank account and begin living for herself. She actively participated in the classes and was eager to absorb all that she could to improve her life for the better. Barbara also took part in the Individual Development Account (IDA) program through YWCA and Prosperity Connection, which introduced her to the concept of saving.

“I came a long way with the counseling and all of the different services that I received,” Barbara explains. “I know that I have a resource where I can get out of debt... where I can start all over.”

Barbara now calls the YWCA her place of steady employment as opposed to her residence. Thanks to Prosperity Connection, she is living life on her terms, moving from victim to victor.

She proudly proclaims, “It just makes you feel better about yourself. It makes you keep going, and it makes you a stronger person.”

REGINALD



Second chances do exist. And Reginald is grateful for them.

After being released from prison, Reginald faced a variety of struggles. He wanted to connect with his daughter, but encountered challenges when interacting with her mother. Unfortunately, this prevented him from being involved in his daughter's life. Having grown up without his father in the picture, Reginald wanted to break the cycle.

He reached out to Fathers' Support Center — an organization that develops active fathers and cohesive families. Fathers' Support Center provides services to unemployed or underemployed fathers. Prosperity Connection has actively worked with this organization for years, providing financial education and an outlet for account services. Reginald enrolled in a program that allowed him to participate in the classes and see things in an entirely different perspective — a hopeful one. He learned that part of being an involved father meant getting on track financially and demonstrating commitment to employment. The financial management skills he learned put him on the road to becoming the provider he yearned to become.

“I was really looking at no way out,” Reginald said. “A lot of people really don't know what they are doing with their money... and I was one of them.”

"If it wasn't for them, I would probably be in so much debt right now," Reginald exclaimed. "They [Prosperity Connection] began to really inspire me on saving and getting things back to normal in my life."

Today, Reginald is a Supervisor Facilitator for Fathers' Support Center, as well as a Facilitator for Family and Workforce Centers of America, a partner group. He's paying it forward, helping other fathers who walked in his shoes. And most importantly, he now has a relationship with his daughter and control over his financial life.

"If it wasn't for them, I would probably be in so much debt right now," Reginald exclaimed. "They [Prosperity Connection] began to really inspire me on saving and getting things back to normal in my life."

"I was really looking at no way out. A lot of people really don't know what they are doing with their money... and I was one of them."

MONICA



Monica was ready to make some changes in her life. For starters, she wanted to take control of her finances.

"I just wanted a few tips to get out of the hole I created," Monica said.

Prosperity Connection works with Kingdom House — a local social service agency — offering financial education and outreach. A friend of Monica's referred her to the classes as a means to get her moving in the right direction.

Monica was determined to make this work. She attended every Prosperity Connection course, took diligent notes and began to put what she learned into action. She was all in.

"I couldn't believe it was free," she stated. "Just having the free classes is motivating because it means someone really cares about you."

One day, Monica attended a credit building session. She learned how to develop a plan of action... how to eliminate her bills one by one. The instructor talked about the snowball effect of paying the lowest debt first, then proceeding to the next one. It was a new experience for her. Monica was skeptical at first, but the plan worked.

"This is the first year I started saving," Monica beamed.

She decided to shift her spending lifestyle, breaking the cycle. Monica stopped using her credit cards. This led her to ease up on clothing and shoe purchases. Every time she began to deter from her new path, there seemed to be another class on the schedule to keep her focused. This fueled her motivation.

Monica had the opportunity to have her credit reviewed. To her surprise, her credit score improved as a result of her own due diligence of paying down her debt. Thanks to the newfound knowledge she gained, Monica was able to buy her dream car: a pre-owned, 2012 red Nissan Sentra.

"If I can do it, anyone else can. I am proud of myself. I still can't believe I did it."

The possibilities are endless now that Monica has a sense of hope. In addition to receiving the tools she needed in the classes, her entire point of viewpoint on money management has changed. Monica is **determined** to move forward.

"All doors are opened to me now. I have nothing holding me back," Monica joyfully said. "I sleep better now."

"If I can do it, anyone else can. I am proud of myself. I still can't believe I did it."

OUR PARTNERS & EDUCATORS

Financial Education & Community Outreach Partners

- AARP
- Better Family Life
- Beyond Housing
- Center for Women In Transition
- Daybreak Corporation
- Dream Center
- Employment Connection
- Family and Workforce Centers of America (FWCA)
- Fathers' Support Center
- Gateway EITC Community Coalition
- Grace Hill Settlement House
- Kingdom House
- KIPP St. Louis
- Legal Services of Eastern Missouri
- Maplewood-Richmond Heights High School
- Marian Middle School
- MERS/Missouri Goodwill Industries
- MET Center
- Missouri Career Center
- O'Fallon Park Service Providers Council
- Redevelopment Opportunities for Women (ROW)
- St. Louis Job Corps
- St. Louis Public Library
- STL Youth Jobs
- St. Patrick Center
- United Way of Greater St. Louis
- Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis
- Youth In Need
- YWCA

Volunteer Educators

- Chris Cunningham, Central Bank
- Steve Dilley, St. Louis Community Credit Union
- Shalia Ford, Community Volunteer
- Janiene Garcia, Kingdom House
- Suzanne Hough, Carrollton Bank
- Tom Hough, Carrollton Bank
- Tim Julius, Carrollton Bank
- Treina Lind, St. Louis Community Credit Union
- Cherie MacDonald, Greensfelder Hemker & Gale P.C.
- Ashley O'Neal, PNC
- Riisa Rawlins, Mental Health America
- Terrence Rogers, Carrollton Bank
- Vena Stevens, Gateway EITC Community Coalition
- Andre Walker, Walker Wealth Management
- Cheryl Walker, Stifel Bank and Trust
- Aveon Wallace, Enterprise Car Sales
- Hollis Whiting, Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis
- Dan Wilson, St. Louis Community Credit Union

Prosperity Connection Educators

- **Jaison McCall** – Financial Education Manager
Expertise: Jaison holds an MBA from Fontbonne University and has a background in finance, business, education, and counseling.
- **Sarah Dlugolecki, MSW** – Financial Education Specialist
Expertise: Sarah holds an MSW from Washington University's Brown School of Social Work, is fluent in Spanish, and is a former Teach for America instructor.
- **Evette Baker** – Financial Education Specialist
Expertise: Evette holds a BA from Maryville University and has a background in both foreclosure prevention and home ownership advisement.



OUR SCHOLARSHIP

We believe that education is the passport to opportunity. Prosperity Connection administers the **Janice Mosby Scholarship Fund**. Since its inception, we have awarded scholarships totaling \$25,000 to deserving adult students. The Janice Mosby Scholarships help create a successful path for aspiring achievers and lifelong learners.



JANICE MOSBY

Janice Mosby was a teacher and principal with St. Louis Public Schools for more than 30 years. She dedicated her life to helping students in the community develop to their fullest potential. Ms. Mosby served on St. Louis Community Credit Union's Board of Directors for 40 years, and also as a Board member for Prosperity Connection until her passing in late 2010. To honor her memory, we launched the **Janice Mosby Scholarship Fund** to provide much-needed financial assistance to adult students, aged 23 years or older, who are pursuing a two-year or four-year post-secondary degree.

WHAT JANICE MOSBY'S FAMILY SAYS

"Not a day would go by when my mother didn't mention the mantra, 'You must finish college.' Education was very important to my mother and (Prosperity Connection) was very important to my mother. Isn't it interesting that (Prosperity Connection) has developed a scholarship to support her efforts, her ideals, and her thoughts about continuing education — particularly for adults? So her family is very pleased and honored that you are continuing her goals of continuing education for adults."

— Barbara English Pinder
Janice Mosby's daughter

WHAT ONE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT SAYS

"Going back to school/college after nearly 27 years since high school was daunting. It had always been my desire to go back, but life seemed to get in the way of those dreams. Looking back from that time in 2011, I am grateful that I took a leap of faith. The Janice Mosby Scholarship provided me the necessary funding to cover book expenses throughout my undergraduate studies. I was able to continue my planned course of study without deviating and graduate with honors in 2014. I am more confident in what I know and what I can learn, and that level of confidence has led me to enroll in Lindenwood University's MBA program, with an expected graduation date of December 2015."

— Angela Dennis
Janice Mosby Scholarship Winner
2012

WHAT OUR SPONSOR SAYS

"Our strategy is to work together with local community partners such as Prosperity Connection to help people and communities to thrive. Education empowers people and providing support for the Janice Mosby Scholarship program is one of the ways we can make a difference."

— Leisha Gordon
Dir. Bank CRA Officer
TIAA Direct,
TIAA-CREF Trust Company, FSB

Statement of Financial Condition: For Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2014

Assets

Cash	162,600
Fixed Assets	<u>2,731</u>
Total Assets	\$165,331

Liabilities and Unrestricted Net Assets

Payments and Other Liabilities	
Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>165,331</u>
Total Liabilities	\$165,331

Income

Other Contributions and Gifts	<u>102,944</u>
Total Income	\$102,944

Expenses

General Operations	<u>105,848</u>
Total Expenses	\$105,848

Funding Sources

Member Donations	11,416
Corporate Donations	<u>91,528</u>
Total Contributions/Donations	\$102,944



AFFINITY PROGRAM

Since 2011, Prosperity Connection has partnered with St. Louis Community Credit Union's (SLCCU) employees in the Affinity Program. In which participating staff automatically donate a small portion of each paycheck (typically \$2.50 - \$3.50) in exchange for the opportunity to wear jeans to work every other Friday.

Since the introduction of the program, approximately \$24,000 has been raised by SLCCU employees to support free financial education programming offered by Prosperity Connection.

Thank You to Our Supporters

Carrollton Bank
Center for Financial Services Innovation (CFSI)
Central Bank of St. Louis
Community Development Administration of St. Louis City
Community Development Department of St. Louis County
Enterprise Holdings Foundation
Family and Workforce Centers of America
Fathers' Support Center
Kresge Foundation
Missouri Department of Economic Development,
Neighborhood Assistance Program
National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions
Prosperity Connection Affinity Program Members
Reliance Bank
Stifel Bank & Trust
St. Louis Community Credit Union
TheBank of Edwardsville
TIAA-CREF Trust Company, FSB

BOARD & STAFF.

PROSPERITY CONNECTION BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Susan Katzman
Chairperson

Tom Sullivan
Vice Chairman

Gerald Brooks
Treasurer

John Windom
Secretary

Patrick Adams
Suzanne Hough
Kathy Reeves

PROSPERITY CONNECTION STAFF:

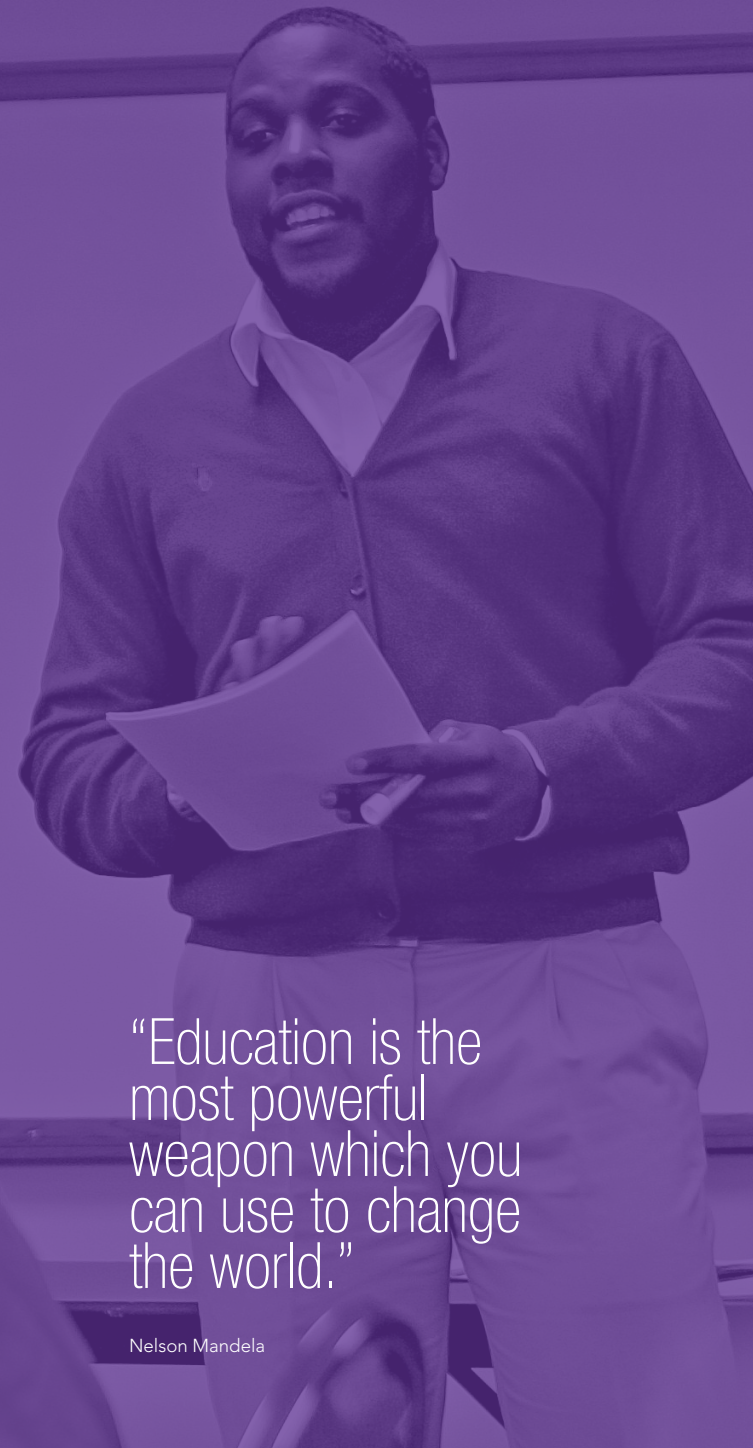
Paul Woodruff
Executive Director

Julie Mauchenheimer
Development Specialist

Jaison McCall
Financial Education Manager

Evette Baker
Financial Education Specialist

Sarah Dlugolecki, MSW
Financial Education Specialist



“Education is the
most powerful
weapon which you
can use to change
the world.”

Nelson Mandela



“An investment in
knowledge pays
the best interest.”

Benjamin Franklin



prosperity connection™

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www.prosperityconnection.org