

Vern Reed



Vern Reed spent much of his early career in education as a teacher/coach at West Burlington High School in West Burlington, Iowa. But, at some point in his journey, students once classified as “at risk” began finding their way to Reed and his wife, Cindee. Eventually, Reed began to understand that his life had to be more than coaching basketball. Somehow, some way, he had to find a way to better impact these students’ opportunities to write their own “future stories.”

Eight years ago, Reed lobbied to become the official “at risk” point person at West Burlington High School. Since that time the “Success Center”—essentially a place no student ever wanted to go—has become “The Corners.” The Corners serves more than 120 junior high and high school students, and it has become the place that not only under-resourced students want to be a part of, but almost every student in the school makes use of on a regular basis.

Reed’s school brought Bridges Out of Poverty to Southeast Iowa. Since December 2015, the partnership has grown to include local businesses, churches, the local community college, Great River Health Systems, and many more key partners. Reed consults and trains on the topics of addressing poverty and emotional poverty.

“Like many people, for too long I’ve fought the ‘symptoms’ of a ‘metaphorical disease’ that is generational poverty. In reality, my biggest aha! moment may have been the Bridges definition of poverty! Understanding that poverty is about resources, not necessarily money, has empowered me and all who are on their own Bridges journeys. We can all work together to help build the key resources that we all need to live a sustainable life.”

Selected workshops presented by Vern Reed

- ♦ A Framework for Understanding Poverty
- ♦ Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities

With consultants and publications around the world, aha! Process helps communities move individuals, families, and entire neighborhoods out of poverty and into sustainability and growth.



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