

Governor's task force to join poverty simulation



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(Photo: Patti Singer/@PattiSingerRoc/staff file photo)

Several members of Gov. Andrew Cuomo's Rochester Anti-Poverty Task Force are expected to participate in a simulation designed to provide a glimpse of the problems they are trying to solve.

They will join members of the steering committee and work group leaders of the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative on May 15 at the downtown Rochester Educational Opportunity Center. [Members of the community \(/story/news/2015/03/12/anti-poverty-effort-clicks-regular-people/70230918/\)](#) who have expressed interest in joining one of seven work groups also have been invited.

Each group will have people who are among the working poor, the first area of poverty that the Rochester-Monroe initiative will address. They already know the challenges, so the simulation is geared to show the frustration and stress rather than tell those unfamiliar with the situation.

"By no means is it supposed to be we leave and people say, 'Now I know what it's like to be in poverty,' " said Carly Layton, director of communications for the United Way of Greater Rochester, which is helping convene the Rochester-Monroe initiative. "That's not it. It's a glimpse that if you were this stressed and this put upon for an hour, what does that mean for people? It opens your eyes. It's one more way to make sure we're surrounding people involved with the realities instead of what people just talk about."

The Rochester-Monroe initiative is led also by Assembly Majority Leader Joseph Morelle, Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren and Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks.

[This is the third poverty simulation in Rochester this year. \(/story/all-about-health/2015/03/26/health-blog-patti-singer-poverty-simulation/70505438/\)](#)

Participants are assigned a role as a mother, father or child and given a scenario — single parent, someone with a job, someone looking for work — and have to live out that situation.

This simulation is sponsored by the Greater Rochester Health Foundation to show a connection between poverty and health.

"The most dramatic example is that (people) in the lowest-income ZIP code in Rochester live on average 17 years less than the county-wide average," John Urban, president and chief executive officer of the Greater Rochester Health Foundation, wrote in an email. "Therefore, anything that increases people's knowledge of this issue and motivates them to think of creative, effective solutions will ultimately improve the health of the community."