Benchmarks for Campus/Community Partnerships

Campus Compact

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Benchmark Overview	5
Stage I: Designing the Partnership	8
Stage II: Building Collaborative Relationships	13
Stage III: Sustaining Partnerships Over Time	26
Conclusion	37
Profiles of the Wingspread Participants	38
Bibliography	41
About Campus Compact	42

Introduction

"We live in a time when every sector – corporate, government and nonprofit – is being mobilized to address community needs and reinvigorate our democracy."

– GARDNER, 1998

The Wingspread Conference: In April 1998, Campus Compact convened a meeting at the Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin. Practitioners, selected because of their expertise in campus/community partnerships, and Campus Compact staff gathered to examine the anatomy of campus/community collaborations. Their goals were to identify benchmarks for the critical components of a genuine democratic partnership with communities; to discuss ways to integrate these partnerships with the academic mission of the university; and to develop strategies for sustaining the partnerships. Through a competitive process, teams were selected as exemplary models of campus/community partnerships. The meeting was co-sponsored by the Johnson Foundation and the Corporation for National Service.

Participants: Eight teams of campus/community partners participated, along with a diverse group of individuals representing the public and private sector. Participants worked in small groups, presented case studies, and identified lessons learned and advice for future partnerships. Represented on the eight teams were presidents, community service and service-learning directors, faculty, students, and community constituents from public school principals to heads of community-based organizations.

WINGSPREAD CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

GateWay Community College (AZ), the University of San Diego (CA), Fort Lewis College (CO), DePaul University (IL), Metropolitan State University (MN), North Carolina Central University (NC), Oberlin College (OH), and the University of Pennsylvania (PA). Others: David Cox (Director, Office of University Partnerships, HUD), Richard Games (Director, Indiana Campus Compact), John Kretzmann (Co-Director, Asset-Based Community Development Institute), Mark Langseth (Director, Minnesota Campus Compact), Jowava Leggett (Director, Institutional Development and Undergraduate Education Services, (Department of Education), Keith Morton (Associate Director, Feinstein Institute, Providence College), Mary Kay Schneider (Coordinator, Maryland Leadership Development Program), Tom Sweeney (Professor, North Central College), and staff from the Campus Compact national office.

Outcome: The ideas shared and generated at the Wingspread conference shaped the benchmarks in this publication. The reader will find detailed benchmarks, stories, and insights derived from the experiences of these eight teams and other participants – distinct in their points of focus, united by the features that make them strong.

Why are genuine campus/community partnerships critical to sustaining the health of our democracy? Why is it important that partnerships be democratic themselves? As noted in the Presidents' Fourth of July Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education, "This country cannot afford to educate a generation that acquires knowledge without ever understanding how that knowledge can benefit society or how to influence democratic decision making. It is critical to teach the skills and values of democracy, creating innumerable opportunities for our students to practice and reap the results of the real, hard work of citizenship." Democratic campus/community partnerships are partnerships that strive to meet the needs of a community, as defined by the community, that are of high quality and sustained involvement, that involve presidents, students, faculty, staff and community members. In such partnerships, individuals can learn and practice civic skills. It is in this spirit that the partners work to invest the campus with a desire for community action.

Moving toward new models, new visions: Across the country many models of campus/community partnerships have emerged that address community development and some critical issues facing communities, such as education, housing, the environment, and public safety. Some models are linked to academically based service in ways that involve faculty, staff, and students. These models often build on community assets as well. Other models, however, exist in isolation – with no connection to students or faculty – and may be funded by multiple external sources such as government agencies, the private sector, and community partners. With the desire to broaden our knowledge about community partnerships and extend the reach of service-learning to fully engaged campuses, Campus Compact planned the Wingspread Conference on Campus/Community Partnerships in 1998.

What is the purpose of this publication? This publication outlines the essential features of genuine democratic campus/community partnerships as defined at the Wingspread Conference. It is written primarily for the higher education community, and it is intended to describe partnerships in terms of three ongoing processes – designing partnerships, building

relationships, and sustaining partnerships over time. This publication is not intended to be a step-by-step guide, but rather a series of guidelines that feature the essential components of any truly democratic and genuine campus/community partnership.

Why focus on colleges and universities rather than communities? This booklet directs its information toward the campus because campuses are our primary constituency and would benefit most from the expertise gathered. Forming partnerships with communities is difficult terrain for colleges and universities to travel. Although many college and university mission statements include public service as a priority, there are a number of obstacles that compete with that mission, such as the emphasis on research, publishing, and numerous disciplinary requirements. Moreover, the cooperative, collaborative model is not native to the university. Campuses are more likely to think of themselves as curators of knowledge rather than as students with much to learn from their neighbors. In true partnerships, all participants will both teach, learn, exchange resources, and reap mutual benefits.

What is meant by community? The term community poses a challenge. Understood broadly, community refers to groups of people united by a common location, or to groups of people that are linked intellectually, professionally, or politically; that is, geographic communities and communities of interest. In this publication, community refers primarily to the immediate neighbors of the college or university – schools, religious institutions, small businesses, big businesses, and community-based organizations. Partnerships are the result of collaborative efforts between these organizations and the university or college community.

Why do campuses and communities need to redefine their relationships? Often, institutions of higher learning attend to the well-being of their own academic communities, but neglect the larger geographic ones of which they are a part. Rather than actively participate in regional projects, colleges and universities circulate the knowledge and resources that they possess within the boundaries of their own gates. The gates that enclose the traditional campus green have long stood as a symbol of exclusion. Campus/community partnerships make it their task to take down the gates that divide campuses and neighborhoods.

In place of gates, partnerships create a path along which people, ideas, and physical resources travel from one community – an academic community

– to another – a residential or commercial neighborhood, and vice versa. In this process of two-way travel, the fundamental divides begin to be effaced, and the abundance of resources, the intersection of interests, and the complements between different skills come into focus. In partnership, the work of the campus is made accessible and useful to the community, and the community is viewed in light of its enormous strengths, rather than in light of its weaknesses.

Campus/community partnerships represent the efforts of public and private institutions to restore the experience of community and the practice of civic participation to American cities and towns. This process begins when collaborative relationships are forged where none existed previously, and the subsequent partnerships jointly develop projects to increase campus and community capacity.

Where does the process end? Ideally it will be ongoing and continue to expand and flourish, redefining the way cities and towns solve problems, and the way universities make use of knowledge.

Benchmark Overview

The benchmarks below represent the eight essential features of campus/community partnerships identified at the Wingspread conference. These features are grouped loosely into three overlapping stages that are characteristic of most partnerships:

Stage I: Designing partnerships based on the values of sharing and reciprocity.

Stage II: Building collaborative work relationships among partners.

Stage III: Sustaining the partnerships – linking partnerships to the missions of partnering institutions, establishing processes for decision-making and problem-solving, and installing the mechanisms for continuous evaluation.

The following represents a snapshot of the benchmarks. These benchmarks are targeted at colleges and universities.

Stage I: Designing the Partnership

Genuine democratic partnerships are:

Founded on a shared vision and clearly articulated values.

Partnerships proceed from the idea that participants are members of a common community that they seek to improve for the sake of their own and each other's benefit. In collaborative conversation, partners develop a vision of how their immediate environment – the community in which they live and work – can be strengthened. Resources and skills are pooled and used to help the partnership realize its vision.

Genuine democratic partnerships are:

Beneficial to partnering institutions.

The work of a partnership holds tangible incentives for partners. It satisfies some of their unique self-interests as well as the shared interests of the group. Concrete benefits are an important piece of why institutions remain faithful to a partnership.

Stage II: Building Collaborative Relationships

Genuine democratic partnerships that build strong collaborative relationships are:

Composed of interpersonal relationships based on trust and mutual respect.

Strong relationships take time to build and energy to maintain, but partnerships cannot exist without them. Genuine democratic partnerships value the bonds that form between people, and acknowledge that the building of strong communities happens through networks of individual relationships that deepen with time and experiences shared. Strong collaborative relationships are intentional and are characterized by the following: trust and mutual respect; equal voice; shared responsibilities; risks and rewards; forums to support frequent and open communication; clear lines of accountability; shared vision; and mutual interest.

Genuine democratic partnerships that build strong collaborative relationships are:

Multi-dimensional: they involve the participation of multiple sectors that act in service of a complex problem.

Multi-dimensional relationships are those formed between diverse institutions in order to address a neighborhood problem, or network of problems that no one institution can resolve on its own. They necessitate the participation of multiple sectors of society and are inclusive. Partnering institutions actively seek out the unique assets of each partner; each partner provides a contribution that enables the partnership to have comprehensive problem-solving strategies. Partnering institutions should, however, be prepared for the culture clash that may occur when a multi-sector approach is used.

Genuine democratic partnerships that build strong collaborative relationships are:

Clearly organized and led with dynamism.

Partnerships function best when participants understand their individual responsibilities and how these relate to the work as a whole. A combination of clear lines of accountability and energetic leadership fuels a partnership with the clarity of purpose and the inspiration necessary to effect change.

Stage III: Sustaining Partnerships Over Time

Genuine democratic partnerships that will be sustained over time are:

Integrated into the mission and support systems of the partnering institutions.

The most effective way to sustain a partnership is to secure the support of influential neighborhood institutions, and to spread the work of the partnership throughout your own institution. Successful partnerships are aligned with their institutional missions, frequently linked to the academic curriculum and have full institutional support. The important questions to ask are: What does your institution value, and how does the work of the partnership relate to those values? To what degree should the work of a partnership link to the curriculum, and how might this link be made? Ideally, a partnership both reflects and influences the priorities of its sponsoring institution.

Genuine democratic partnerships that will be sustained over time are:

Sustained by a "partnership process" for communication, decision-making, and the initiation of change.

A strong partnership process provides ample opportunity for the sharing of opinions and ideas. This solidifies the commitment of partners to collaborate over time, and facilitates their ability to change direction and redefine their work as the world around them changes. Three major elements form the basis of a strong partnership process: a method for revisiting the premises of the partnership; a structure that allows for evolution and growth; and practices that support frequent communication both within the partnership and in the immediate community.

Genuine democratic partnerships that will be sustained over time are:

Evaluated regularly with a focus on both methods and outcomes.

A partnership can be evaluated on several levels simultaneously – the impact on participating groups (particularly the community), the products of a partnership, and the processes by which work is accomplished. The results of evaluation can be used to guide future work and modify existing practices. Sometimes evaluation can provide a context to convene partners and stakeholders. In this way, the activity itself serves the important purpose of bringing participants together in analytical conversation.

Stage I: Designing the Partnership

Genuine democratic benchmarks that build strong collaborative relationships are:

- ▲ **Founded on a shared vision and clearly articulated values**
- ▲ **Beneficial to partnering institutions**

"No self-interest . . . can be authentically shared and no intentional interdependence can emerge as long as the basic institutional relationship assumes that we are members of separate communities."

— KEITH MORTON, EXPANDING BOUNDARIES

As colleges and universities enter the millennium, many are returning to their original mission and vision – a mission of service. This movement to reinvigorate the public purposes and civic mission of higher education is reflected in an increasing number of short- and long-term partnerships with communities – schools, religious institutions, community-based organizations, health centers, etc. The following benchmarks will assist the campus in creating and sustaining collaborative partnerships to best serve all parties.

This publication is not intended to be a step by step guide, but rather a series of guidelines that feature the essential components of any truly democratic and genuine campus/community partnership.

The benchmarks that follow, and the stories that accompany them, describe how two foundational elements of design and planning – the common vision and the concrete incentive – lay the groundwork for a structurally sound partnership. It is assumed that a complex neighborhood problem has been identified by community residents, and that the partnering institutions wish to solidify their commitment to the neighborhood by forming a partnership that will work with the community to address the problem or identified need.

Key things to keep in mind: Programs need to be designed around community needs, not just students' needs. Keep in mind that both needs and people change – so your partnership needs to remain fluid and developmental. Focus on quality vs. quantity, think locally and globally about implications, and be sure to include time for all partners to learn about each other.

Projects are an opportunity to bring people together in a process that leads to partnership.

Genuine democratic partnerships are:

Founded on a shared vision and clearly articulated values.

Working together to develop a common partnership vision: Imagine the kind of community you wish to create. In many cases, the image that inspires a partnership is one in which university and community interests and resources interweave such that the two groups support each other and improve the quality of the other's life. A strong partnership relies on a common vision of the future. Partners come together because they share a commitment to a particular neighborhood, and they recognize their potential to make it stronger. When you have convened a group of potential partners, take time to investigate each member's mental image of a strengthened community and use this to establish a vision statement that describes what goal your partnership strives toward and what steps it will take to get there.

In the first stage of planning and conversation, it makes sense to answer those questions that may seem obvious or that partners may take as a given. Part of the purpose of your initial conversations is to get to know one another and understand the different vantage points from which each partner sees the community. Possible questions could be: Why is change needed? How will the partnership under consideration affect this neighborhood positively and negatively? How will this work increase the capacity of the local community to overcome an obstacle that they have identified? These questions might cause you to re-assess your vision. Or, you might find that your vision motivates the group as it stands. In times of trouble, partnerships return to their vision statements to recapture a sense of unity and purpose.

Clearly articulating values: Partnering institutions sometimes hold contrasting philosophies about how work should be accomplished or even what words should be used to describe that work. Usually, if these values and preferences are stated up front and honestly, they can be accommodated. It is critically important that each partner believes itself to be an equal player, and manifests this belief through active participation in conversations, tasks, and governance. This means that everyone believes in the vision of the partnership; they feel comfortable with the language used and the methods by which it was decided. Partners understand how their participation will help to achieve the goals of the group. When each member claims a role in major activities, when they help define the vision and values of their collaboration, they experience a sense of ownership over the project. This joint ownership in turn generates a commitment to work hard and helps overcome challenges.

DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT A PARTNERSHIP PROJECT. A TO-DO LIST.

- Brainstorm. What needs to be done?
- Listen to the ideas of everyone at the table.
- What outcomes are you looking for? How can these best be achieved?
- Design a project that furthers the mission of your partnership.
- Establish clear responsibilities and lines of accountability for the people working on this project.
- Set long- and short-term time lines to achieve your goals for the project.
- Prioritize the work that needs to be accomplished.

BARRIERS TO DESIGNING PARTNERSHIPS BASED ON SHARING AND RECIPROCITY

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS
campuses and communities may feel that problems are too big to solve

BUZZ WORDS, JARGON
partners often speak different languages

SHARING MONEY AND LAND
valuable resources – raises the risk for partnering institutions

PARTNERSHIPS REQUIRE ENORMOUS AMOUNTS OF TIME AND ENERGY
they cannot be initiated casually

Youth Empowered through Service, University of San Diego and Partners

HOW ACTIVE PARTICIPATION FOSTERS A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP

In 1997, a team of faculty and administrators at USD seized upon a grant offer as the opportunity to pool the creativity of four potential partners. These groups were public schools and community organizations with whom the university had established working relationships in service-learning courses. The potential partners met at USD for an initial brainstorming session.

First came introductions. The next step was to assess the feasibility of collaboration among the organizations represented at the table. The group drew topics of conversation from the questions posed by the grantmakers. They asked themselves: If we could improve the local neighborhood, Linda Vista, how would we do it? They surveyed the available resources and considered what could realistically be accomplished given the manpower, the money, and the particular challenges of their situation. They decided to focus their efforts on young people. Several hours and several drafts later, the team could articulate the seeds of what is now their partnership vision statement: "The Y.E.S. Collaborative (Youth Empowered through Service) works to leave something tangible to the Linda Vista community through the empowerment of youth, and to cultivate a village approach to raising our children."

The joint invention of a vision statement and action plan marked the first project undertaken by the Y.E.S. collaborators as a team. The facilitators of the group saw in the grantwriting process their first chance to establish an environment of citizenship whereby all partners speak their ideas, document important points, and offer to take on new tasks. The facilitators of the first meeting took pains to ensure that all partners attended and contributed to the emerging vision of what their partnership might look like. In this way, from the start, a common sense of ownership was secured. A USD project leader describes the process, "Our office brings people together, and once all parties are at the table, we are a partnership. One group's contributions are indistinguishable from the others. By the time we have brainstormed and planned a grant, you can't tell who contributed what."

Genuine democratic partnerships are:

Beneficial to partnering institutions.

Common interests: True partners value in name and deed an image of themselves as members of the same community. This means that they cultivate points of common interest, sharing the resources, risks, and rewards of their work together. Early on, partners will need to determine how completely they wish to share with one another. It may be helpful to keep in mind that control over money, information, and people are commonly thought to be the three key elements of power. Partners need to seek out points of intersection between what various community constituents want and what the college or university wants. Sometimes these are immediately apparent and sometimes they emerge as a result of two organizations getting to know one another. Either way, a discussion of the interests of partnering organizations will yield the opportunity to share material resources and begin to be of service to one another.

Self-interest: Partners are brought to the table by the promise of a concrete incentive. Partnering institutions need to answer two questions for themselves: What does my institution care about, and how will attaining the goals of this partnership further our mission and benefit business and operations? Knowing your own self-interests as an institution will help you design a partnership that is worthwhile and one that is supported by the leaders of your institution. This is the case at Metropolitan State University in Minnesota.

INTEGRATING A PARTNERSHIP INTO THE CURRICULUM: INNOVATIVE METHODS

- Design interdisciplinary seminars around core community issues.
- Isolate questions that arise in partnerships, and dedicate semester-long classes to analyzing them.
- Engage professional and graduate programs in addition to undergraduate ones.
- Create links between courses, so that students can study particular problems in-depth and over time.
- Recognize that partnerships equip students with marketable skills they might not otherwise attain at the university. Frequently, paid jobs arise out of the work that students do in partnerships. When partnerships link back to the curriculum, they increase the number of ways in which students are being taught. Community members function as teachers.
- Connect partnerships to faculty research agendas. While students come and go, faculty remain at an institution and therefore influence whether or not projects last.

Dayton's Bluff Urban Partnership, Metropolitan State University and partners

A SHARED-USE APPROACH

Metropolitan State University tests the limits of how thoroughly a university and its local community can share resources. Upon its founding in 1972, Metro State named itself a "school without walls" to signify the way the university permeated local Dayton's Bluff, Minnesota. The university instituted a policy of "shared use" which informs, in particular, university and community building projects.

When the university and community first discussed the possibility of formal collaboration, they asked themselves, "Where do our interests converge?" Their answers centered on the use of urban spaces. Both university and community residents held a vested interest in an attractive, safe neighborhood, alive with commercial operations, and free of vacant buildings.

Having identified a common interest in new building projects, the next step of the nascent partnership was to act. Partners initiated the design of two shared-use spaces, each of which serves an interest of both the university and the community. A campus-based community health center serves students and community members and draws staff from both constituencies. Academically, the center meets the need of nursing students for on-site experience. A second shared enterprise, a student and community library, will house traditional spaces for academic study as well as a career resources center and a family reading room. The entire building will be open to the public.

Metro State benefits from the publicity and good will generated by its work with Dayton's Bluff residents. But on a grander scale, large building projects such as theirs would be impossible without community support. To quote the faculty coordinator, "When we have a project such as the library, it's so much stronger to go in with community backing, and when the community wants something, it's so much stronger for them to go in with university backing."

Metro State found that building projects necessitate conversation with community members. Rather than rushing through these conversations, however, they used them to examine the community's self-interest as well as their own, and to find the commonalities between the two. Out of a thorough examination of shared values and self-interests, a jointly devised and executed partnership emerged. "To date, the success of the Dayton's Bluff Urban Partnership has been the willingness of all partners to explore shared interests as well as common values," commented the faculty coordinator.

Metro State transformed a university development project – a common source of conflict – into a neighborhood project that took advantage of a shared need and continued to meet the self-interest of the university. However, after their first shared-use spaces were built, a challenge presented itself. Community members were not using the space. To simply build public spaces on a college campus was not enough. If these spaces were to be used, they had to be made comfortable for community residents. The Dayton's Bluff Urban Partnership began by holding their own meetings in the designated spaces. Next, they invited community organizations into the space. They found that community members are more likely to attend if invited as part of a group. In time, community residents get to know people on campus and, through the relationships formed, they begin to feel at ease in what was previously an unfamiliar environment.

Stage II: Building Collaborative Relationships

Genuine democratic benchmarks that build strong collaborative relationships are:

- **Composed of interpersonal relationships based on trust and mutual respect**
- **Multi-dimensional: they involve the participation of multiple sectors that act in service of a complex problem**
- **Clearly organized and led with dynamism**

> *"The challenges facing communities of every size are not one-dimensional. Rather, they are interrelated, intertwined and interspersed; so are their solutions... For true change to happen a community must embrace the need to be inclusive."*
>
> — SUZANNE MORSE, CHANGING COMMUNITIES: WHAT WORKS

Collaboration among a diverse group of stakeholders is a clear example of the 'whole being greater than the sum of its parts'. It requires a special tripartite partnership among students, faculty and the community – solidified by strong, trusting relationships. However, building those relationships is one of the most challenging aspects of any partnership.

Throughout the following section on interpersonal and institutional relationships, the word collaboration is used repeatedly to describe both an attitude that informs the way people relate and a format in which they accomplish work. Stated simply, collaboration is a type of work in which participants share ideas, responsibility, and credit in achieving their desired goal. Collaborators strike a balance between jointly planning and individually executing specific tasks.

Typically, principles of solitary study and competition govern academic work. The university is organized according to a competitive model rather than a cooperative one. However, in order for partnerships to succeed, an organizational model that places independent thought at its locus many need to be replaced with one that highlights relationships.

Genuine democratic partnerships that build strong collaborative relationships are:

Composed of interpersonal relationships based on trust and mutual respect.

Building relationships in an atmosphere of equal voice and shared responsibilities is key to a successful partnership, but for many people, working collaboratively feels unnatural and awkward, and is contrary to their leadership style. For others, who may be accustomed to functioning alone, and making independent decisions, it is difficult to accept that partners may add value. The following anecdote illustrates this point. At the end of a workshop on interpersonal communication in the emergency room, the facilitator asked doctors for feedback. What have you learned from this training? One doctor raised his hand and told the group: "I've found out exactly what prevents me from getting anything done: it's the people. If everyone would leave me alone, maybe I'd accomplish something!"

Precisely the opposite spirit drives partnerships. The only way that work is accomplished is in the context of interpersonal relationships based on trust and mutual respect. Indeed, partnerships may be seen as a series of interpersonal relationships built one on top of the other to create a bond between institutions.

When campus constituents form relationships with community members, a history of town/gown interactions frames the gesture. For relationships to begin on positive, egalitarian footing, the people involved must tread carefully. The very different cultures of the college and community may have created a history of mistrust or distance. In order to bridge that distance, individuals must remain alert to imbalances in power, and approach each other as equals. At Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO the process of building relationships with community residents and community partners has taken generous amounts of time and energy. They do their work "in partnership time" (see the example on page 19).

Genuine democratic partnerships that build strong collaborative relationships are:

Multi-dimensional: they involve the participation of multiple sectors that act in service of a complex problem.

Multi-dimensional relationships are those formed between diverse institutions in order to address the needs of a community. The participation of multiple sectors of society allows a partnership to address a problem that no one institution could resolve on its own. While it is valuable to build strong, diverse communities because they strengthen the fabric of society, there are additional reasons to forge collaborations between multiple

The Poverty Roundtable, Fort Lewis College and Partners

HOW INVESTING TIME AND ENERGY CAN CREATE STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

One strategy for building partnerships begins with individual relationships and a focus on concrete community needs. At Fort Lewis College, faculty and staff immerse themselves in the daily practices of community-based organizations. They visit board meetings and attend community events. Before beginning a large-scale collaboration, faculty and staff forge informal relationships in the community. They watch neighborhood agencies at work, and become knowledgeable about regional concerns. Their stated aim is to build upon the existing infrastructure for problem-solving. To this end, the Center for Service-learning at Fort Lewis convenes several community agencies each year to discuss how the resources of the college can be useful in their efforts to address a particular community need.

The Center for Service-learning invited 50 representatives of 24 grassroots organizations onto campus for lunch and informal conversation around the problem of poverty and homelessness. The event led to the creation of a poverty roundtable, a partnership whose purpose is to address economic inequity in Durango, Colorado.

Thus far, the partners have conducted a survey in the neighborhood to assess the needs and assets of the poor. They have held interviews and written down the stories of impoverished neighborhood residents, and hosted a homeless guest speaker at one of their discussion events. In gathering information, the partners of the Poverty Roundtable came to realize the importance of corporate involvement. Accordingly, they approached a local business association and invited it to help draft a proposal for economic development in Durango.

The input of the corporate sector has enriched the partnership with new skills and perspectives. It has also highlighted the contrast in operating styles between the nonprofit and corporate sectors. While the business association seeks to speed up the process and produce results quickly, the partnering nonprofits prefer to take time building relationships in the community. At Fort Lewis, the roundtable reached an important decision. They decided to slow down their proceedings and spend more time listening to stories and getting to know impoverished community members as well as each other. As the project director observed, "Strategies and policies can be so distanced from the people they serve that you lose their participation and their voice." The challenge for the Poverty Roundtable will be to proceed on two levels simultaneously, that of direct service and economic development, and also to respect the differences among partnering organizations and use these differences to strengthen the work.

sectors. For one thing, in order for partnerships to effect deep change in the structures of communities, they need access to influential decision-makers. These decision-makers come from all different sectors – nonprofit, corporate, and government – and each possesses a different kind of access to the social systems that make neighborhoods function. Collaboration among these diverse parties holds the potential to transform the systems that perpetuate inequity.

Furthermore, the problems that communities face are multi-layered, and for this reason, they necessitate collaboration between sectors. Consider, for example, that a problem with public education may be addressed through housing, drug, and alcohol initiatives, as well as in schools. The pressing needs in communities are best solved in combination with one another and through a range of strategies.

Understanding why multi-sector partnerships can be difficult: Building a team with members from multiple sectors means inviting several different cultures to the table. Divergent values and work habits of partnering institutions can do two things; they can spark conflict and they can solve complicated problems. At first glance, campuses may strike people in the community as "the institutions that quantify our misery" as a woman once told a sociologist. In turn, when campuses look at their neighbors, they may see twenty square miles of need. Frequently, communities are framed in terms of their deficits, not assets. But practitioners have shown that it is equally simple and infinitely more productive to frame them in terms of their assets or resources. The key is knowing where to look for those resources.

What follows are observations about cultural differences between various sectors and suggestions about how to anticipate these and use them to good effect rather than allow them to negatively control your work.[1]

The college or university as partner: The campus educates and employs a range of talented individuals – students, faculty, staff – all of whom can bring their expertise to bear in the community. Often, for example, staff members are long-time residents in local communities, while students and faculty may be unfamiliar with a neighborhood or may view their residence there as temporary. In building a partnership, it may be helpful to invite the input and participation of many different campus constituents. For instance, the business and operations side of a campus can be a resource just as useful as the academic side. The campus commands a

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1 Many of the insights that follow have been taken from John McKnight and John Kretzmann's *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Communities Assets* (Chicago: Urban Affairs and Policy Research Neighborhood Innovations Network, 1993) and Peter Drucker's *Managing the Non-Profit Organization: Principles and Practices* (New York: Harper Business, 1999).

North Carolina Central University

AN EXAMPLE OF A MULTI-SECTOR APPROACH

The North Carolina Central University (NCCU)-North East Central Durham (NECD) partnership between the university and a community-based organization works to eliminate the dangers of lead poisoning for infants, and improve the quality of education, housing, and safety in North East Central Durham. Using a service-learning model, NCCU biology students teach about lead poisoning to high school students who, in turn, present a simplified lesson plan to middle school students. Two individuals, one representing NCCU and the other representing NECD, lead the NCCU-NECD partnership to address lead poisoning in neighborhood homes. The two partners split their grant money evenly, and the co-chairs alternate facilitating monthly meetings. The co-chairs also attend the relevant meetings of neighborhood organizations. In visiting other meetings, they have engaged the participation of a wide range of groups from a variety of sectors.

Partners include: parents, NCCU faculty, and Durham public schools who educate on the subject of lead poisoning; and the Durham County Health Department (DCHD) and Lincoln Community Comprehensive Health Center, which provide inexpensive screenings and other treatment resources. The Durham Day Care Coalition cares for the children with lead poisoning. The State Department of Natural Resources and DCHD's Environmental Health Division monitor lead exposure and enforce policies to reduce lead poisoning. The Affordable Housing Coalition rehabilitates those houses painted with lead paint. The Real Estate Board and Home Builders Association likewise manage damaged houses. And finally, a local anti-poverty program and all of the state partners help spread the word about the problem of lead poisoning, and how it affects children.

wealth of economic and physical resources: lecture and conference spaces, athletic facilities, purchasing power, and employment opportunities. Through their graduate or pre-professional programs, universities often link to other public institutions such as hospitals or social service agencies. The resources of these institutions augment the overall influence of the university, and the number of possibilities they hold for community groups. Finally, the visible presence of the college or university brings with it a prestige that can open doors for community groups and attract the attention of funders.

Although partnerships may benefit from the involvement of campuses, campuses may also confound other institutions in a number of ways. Consider the time and bureaucracy required to design, have approved, and teach a course. The campus semester and vacation system places limits on a partnership that need to be addressed up front. Campuses differ from other institutions in their emphasis on students. In a conversation about the benefits of a partnership, the campus constituents may dwell first on how their work will affect the student body while other institutions consider their responsibility to a different "clientele."

When thinking about how to make the available resources useful to the community, consider that the campus can play a number of helpful roles in relation to local groups. In the most in-depth and interdependent type of relationship – a partnership – the university and a community institution share resources and work toward a mutually envisioned goal. The university may facilitate community projects, leaving responsibility vested in the hands of the community, but providing a context in which the community project can occur. In both of these roles, the campus can initiate a project or conversation, and draw on its far-reaching contacts to convene a diverse group of thinkers from different sectors of public life. Finally, the university may use its own influence and resources on behalf of the community to act as an advocate or as a funding source for community initiatives.

Nonprofit and community-based organizations as partners: Community organizations and other nonprofit organizations vary greatly in size, resources, and mission. Each has a different history, different culture and customs, and a myriad of leadership styles. Understanding the differences and recognizing the unique assets of each partner will help to build better long-term working relationships.

One feature that distinguishes institutions, either in the community or on campus, is the mode of teaching and learning, and the value attached to these practices. Often, campuses and community organizations share the perspective that a partnership is an educational opportunity. They may, however, differ in their educational methods. In contrast to the college or university's emphasis on writing, many community organizations share important information orally. Where the campus values objective thinking, community organizations may analyze problems and offer input from a subjective perspective. When planning projects, community organizations may think expansively, in contrast to faculty, for example, whose focus is often more narrow and quite specific. The concept of evidence may also

be understood differently between the community organization and the campus. The community organization is often more trusting and may believe whatever it hears from a reliable local source; the campus, however, is usually looking for information that has been verified or proven. Community organizations often operate informally and place a high value on face-to-face interaction. Their structures for accomplishing work tend to be inclusive in contrast to campus structures, which are typically competitive and hierarchical.

Another point on which institutions differ is their sense of what constitutes results. The university may pride itself on published articles, books, research, or awards. Nonprofits, on the other hand, may hesitate to say what constitute results in their institution. "For many organizations in the nonprofit sector, to be specific about results is still odious. They believe their work can only be judged by quality – if at all.... There is the temptation to say: We are serving in a good cause...or we are doing something to make life a little better for people and that's a result in itself" (Drucker 1990, 140). Drucker, from whose work these ideas are drawn, suggests alternative questions for nonprofits to ask about their results. "What return do you get? Are you getting better? Are you improving? How are you doing in terms of the resources you spent?" In spite of a disinclination to pinpoint results, when the community organization expects results, they may wish to see them immediately and in concrete terms.

Community organizations possess a wealth of resources that can be invaluable to a partnership. Most organizations maintain important social contacts with community members who can lend credibility to the work of a campus. The community organization either employs or can access leaders in the neighborhood. Community groups are often experts in regional issues; they can name some of the most pressing community concerns from a new perspective. They may know how to navigate racial and ethnic difference within the community and between institutions. Frequently, their staff speak several languages.

An example of culture clash between campus and community partners: Partners in DePaul University's technology initiative understand what it means for a partnership to be multi-dimensional; the initiative uses a combination of strategies to address a community need, and it navigates the challenges of culture clash between campus and community institutions.

COMMUNITY ASSETS

- People known and personal credibility in the community
- Knowledge of regional issues
- Cultural diversity
- Languages spoken
- Unique assets and skills of individuals, associations, and institutions

UNIVERSITY ASSETS

- Trained professionals with academic and administrative expertise
- Student volunteers
- Physical resources such as lecture and conference space and athletic facilities
- Economic resources such as purchasing power and employment opportunities
- Links to hospitals, social service agencies, and other public institutions
- Prestige in local and national communities

DePaul / West Humboldt Alliance

DePaul University designs its programs based on the goals articulated in a community development plan written by the West Humboldt Park Family and Community Development Council, an association of 80 neighborhood organizations in one of Chicago's impoverished neighborhoods. DePaul fashions its projects to meet the stated goals of the council. Among their latest innovations is a two-part technology initiative designed to strengthen community capacity through the use of computers. DePaul shares its knowledge of and access to technology with two distinct groups – jobless neighborhood residents and community-based organizations. Thus DePaul and its partners approach their technology initiative from two different angles, through two distinct projects linked by a common concept that drives them.

DePaul services a technology lab at a local job-training center. When they visit the center, community residents can use the lab to compose resumes, search the Internet for job opportunities, and acquire marketable computer skills. In this way, DePaul deploys one of its most unique and exclusive resources – technology – to address the problem of joblessness and to offer basic training. In the second part of the initiative, DePaul shares its on-line services with five neighborhood partners. Access to the Internet enables these organizations to identify funding opportunities and publicize their own services.

The technology initiative has faced two challenges, both of which amplify the practical and ideological differences between campus and community institutions. First, some of the community-based organizations working with the DePaul partners were not equipped to receive the proper electronic signals. Their own infrastructure – a shortage of telephone lines, for example – limits their ability to use the technology.

A second challenge to the initiative highlights the need for understanding between different organizational cultures. DePaul's Office of Legal Council and Center for Computer Services wrote a manual to educate community-based organizations about the technical and legal implications of shared access. When the manual was completed it was as large as a small-city yellow pages and just as packed with information. The manual, written like a legal document, confused the community organizations; they needed a user-friendly booklet. DePaul returned to the drawing board. It took six months and 4 university departments to re-write the manual line-by-line. By the time it was completed the text was brief and readable.

Partners at DePaul learned the hard way that in order for their efforts to be useful to the community, the campus must break routine patterns and think about how to make its resources not only available, but also accessible. Fortunately, DePaul's partner organizations immersed themselves in the technology and now use their new knowledge as a selling point in the community. At present, DePaul's staff are documenting their efforts and plan to share the model of their technology initiative with other campuses.

Institutions – colleges and universities, for example – are not always organized to be user-friendly. Nor can they always anticipate how others will find them useful. A campus may value intellectual expertise as its greatest asset, while a community organization may be more interested in campus facilities. DePaul University, for instance, was proud to have written a comprehensive volume on the legal implications of shared computer access when what the community organizations wanted was a simple briefing. Some partnerships find it a useful practice to take inventory of each partner's resources or assets. After taking inventory, they consider the best ways to make these resources easily accessible.

Genuine democratic partnerships that build strong collaborative relationships are:

Clearly organized and led with dynamism.

The way a partnership is governed determines who holds the power. Because true partnerships are collaborative relationships founded on principles of equality, the challenge of the partnership leader, co-leader, or board of trustees is to spread resources, responsibilities, and rewards as evenly as possible throughout the group. The strongest partnerships delegate important responsibilities to each partner, and clarify lines of accountability. New leaders are continually identified and trained so that the partnership builds an infrastructure to support eventual changes in personnel. A focused organizational structure can help a partnership function efficiently and collaboratively. Careful organization maximizes the satisfaction of partners and their ability to adapt to change.

Much of the energy and dynamism of a partnership relies on the quality of the people leading it. Strong leaders have several important qualities in common. They are able to mobilize resources for the partnership and influence the values of partnering institutions. They contribute time and energy to building relationships within the partnership and in the community. They work well with a variety of individuals and can recognize this skill in others. They are able to coordinate many projects simultane-

ously and think in terms of systems. Since partnerships typically encompass a variety of projects and employ several strategies, it can be difficult to unite the many diverse strands

Leadership roles: Partnership leaders will gravitate toward one end of the continuum between directive and facilitative roles. Ideally, additional staff members can be found to balance the skills and preferences of the group. Below are some of the important roles that partners can fulfill. (Adapted from the ideas of Mary Walshok, of the University of California, San Diego, in her chapter Strategies for Building the Infrastructure that Supports the Engaged Campus recently published in Colleges and Universities as Citizens.)

The project manager: The project manager is an organizational leader, an individual with financial know-how and an ability to see the big picture of the partnership.

The advocate: The advocate speaks on behalf of the partnership in order to recruit financial and political support. Advocates "sell" the mission of the partnership; they are both lobbyists and salespeople with a genuine interest in increasing the capacity of targeted community populations. Advocates understand what partners want and communicate the importance of these needs to people in positions of power.

The interlocutor: Mary Walshok observes, "The ability to operate simultaneously in the world of the 'esoteric' academic and that of the everyday layperson is a capacity fewer and fewer people display." Those who possess this skill can offer an invaluable resource to partnerships, which are by nature "hybrids" or "interactions," which marry both the intellectual and civic traditions of analysis and discourse." The interlocutor, as Walshok names this translator of ideas, can help negotiate the organizational culture clash of partnering institutions. The interlocutor facilitates meetings and roundtables. They may sit on advisory committees and assist in the development of curricula, research initiatives, and community forums. They are able to identify natural collaborators, and teach the art of teamwork to those who need lessons. The interlocutor's most important job is to move back and forth between partnering cultures, to interpret or translate ideas, values and social customs. The interlocutor is able to convey the major concerns of one culture to the other. In this way s/he facilitates the formation of productive partnering relationships.

Models for leadership and organization: Below are several examples of the different ways that partners can approach the challenge of organizing and managing the work of a partnership program.

University of San Diego – The Consultant

Youth Empowered through Service (Y.E.S.), a collaboration of faculty and staff from USD, local schools and community organizations, employs service-learning courses to empower neighborhood youth and college students. Partners in the Y.E.S. collaborative use a consultant/observer to help them monitor how the partnership is working and to assure that the distribution of power in their partnership remains balanced. The consultant is an unbiased observer who works with all partners equally. The consultant confers with partners individually and offers feedback at the end of monthly meetings. Her principal aim is to see that the bulk of power is spread evenly throughout the group and to ensure, in particular, that the university does not hold the majority of control. The consultant acts from the dual perspective of informed participant and impartial advisor.

Oberlin – The Independent Organization Linked to the Classroom

Operating under the Environmental Studies Community Action Research Program, several college-based partnerships at Oberlin work on local ecological issues in classroom and field-based collaborations between students, science educators, and farmers. A ten member Board of Trustees engineers one of those partnerships, the Oberlin Sustainable Agriculture Program (OSAP). The Board is composed of three faculty members, a project coordinator, one Oberlin student, three members of city council, and two members of New Russia Township, where Oberlin is situated. In OSAP, rather than two organizations collaborating (as is the case with Oberlin's Watershed Education Partnership Project), a new self-contained organization is comprised of an array of diverse individuals. The Board meets every two weeks. Different Board members organize different OSAP projects. As the partnership acquired more money and land on which to model sustainable agriculture, they needed a paid support staff person. In the next three years OSAP plans to expand the scope of their work. This expansion will necessitate a transition from their current informal, volunteer structure, to a more formal one – possibly a non profit organization.

Fort Lewis – Community Leadership

At Fort Lewis College, all partnerships begin with the community. In the case of the Durango Latino Education Coalition (DLEC), for example, several parents from the community approached Fort Lewis to discuss a problem they had identified: the unreasonably high drop out rate among Hispanic students in local high schools. The parents requested that the college institute a tutoring program. The college responded in such a way as to keep responsibility for the project in the hands of the community. They listened to the parents' stories, interviewed both enrolled students and students who had dropped out, and they began a tutoring program for kids from elementary school to high school. The tutoring program has since blossomed into a community-based non profit made up of 20 participants that include teachers, parents, students, and representatives of area programs and Fort Lewis. The DLEC board meets monthly to plan new initiatives and projects. The same parents who approached the college now govern the non profit, with Fort Lewis stepping in to fill gaps with technical assistance and relevant expertise. The Fort Lewis team strives wherever possible to respond to community initiatives and to keep leadership in the hands of the community. According to Kalin Grigg, the Director of Service-Learning at Fort Lewis, the team "start(s) with what already exists, and create new policies, relationships, and courses if they need to." This leadership model solidifies participation and a sense of ownership on the part of the community.

University of Pennsylvania, Center for Community Partnerships – A Comprehensive Strategy / A Complex Structure

The Center for Community Partnerships at UPenn has a broad range of programs. One of the newer programs, the Program in Nonprofits, Universities, Communities, and Schools (PNUCS) provides a range of technical assistance, educational, and other support services to local nonprofits and area public school teachers as well as leadership training for public school students. The partnership efforts address the needs of West Philadelphia residents through a combination of academic study, direct service, and community development projects designed to strengthen local nonprofits and create educational programs.

The Program in Universities, Communities of Faith, Schools and Neighborhoods (PUCFSN), supported by the Jesse Ball DuPont Fund at UPenn combines research, community dialogue, and direct service in its multi-layered efforts to address how faith-based organizations and community-based organizations can effect change in West Philadelphia. This large-scale partnership operates principally on three levels: a large advisory group that serves as a forum for conversation, a working group that organizes direct service work, and student and faculty researchers. Fifty religious leaders of multiple faiths comprise the advisory group that meets each month to discuss major local concerns and how churches can intervene. The working group of Penn coordinators, clergy, congregational leaders, and student coordinators meets every other week to plan outreach and identify areas where research is needed. This group manages the operation end of the partnership. Finally, graduate and undergraduate students conduct research projects with local religious institutions. Their research findings fuel the development of new service-learning courses. The UPenn Director of the Center for partnership and the university chaplain co-lead the church partnership.

All the UPenn programs in the Center collaborate closely, which is part of their comprehensive organizational strategy. For example, PUCFSN and PNUCS and the school-based programs of the Center work closely on an integrated approach to teach community members how to use technology. In some cases, classes are taught by UPenn staff and volunteers, or by volunteers from communities of faith, and/ or assisted by local high school students and people recruited from CBO's.

Stage III:
Sustaining Partnerships Over Time

Genuine democratic partnerships that will be sustained over time are:

- **Integrated into the mission and support systems of the partnering institutions**
- **Sustained by a "partnership process" for communication, decision-making, and the initiation of change**
- **Evaluated regularly with a focus on both methods and outcomes**

> *"We describe effective partnerships as knowledge-based collaborations in which all partners have things to teach each other, things to learn from each other, and things they will learn together. We have seen that an effective partnership builds the capacity of each partner to accomplish its own mission while also working together.... Sustainability is directly associated with an ongoing sense of reciprocity related to the exchange of knowledge and expertise."*
>
> – GELMON AND HOLLAND, THE STATE OF THE ENGAGED CAMPUS

Sustainability needs to be a priority from the onset; each partner can contribute to the long-term stability of your collaboration by following some of the suggestions below. Taking time for planning is important, keeping in mind that partnerships need to have goals but be flexible – because change is a given.

Genuine democratic partnerships that will be sustained over time are:

Integrated into the mission and support systems of the partnering institutions.

Weaving partnerships into the educational philosophy of the college or university: The most effective way to sustain a partnership is to secure the support of influential neighborhood institutions and to spread the work of the partnership throughout your own institution. Successful partnerships are aligned with their institutional missions, linked to the academic curriculum, and have full institutional support. Some operate independently of the teaching and learning mission of colleges and universities. Oftentimes, however, partnerships span a range of campus programs and

incorporate multiple layers of the institution. This kind of comprehensive strategy, though harder to organize, often proves to be the most effective in solving complex problems and building new communities.

Ideally, a partnership both reflects and influences the priorities of its sponsoring institution. When trying to assess how to connect your work in a way that will ensure that the partnership will be sustainable, it is worthwhile to ask:

- What does your institution value?
- How does the work of the partnership relate to those values?
- To what degree should the work of a partnership link to the curriculum, and how might this link be made?

Garnering administrative support: Institutional commitment is reflected in the allocation of resources and rewards. Promotion and tenure practices demonstrate what kind of work administrators value. The creation of faculty support networks (teaching assistants, advisory groups) and the granting of special privileges (e.g., release time, conference opportunities for professional development) constitute small-scale but important gestures of support. Gaining the attention of chief academic officers will also go a long way to build support for your programs.

While active administrative interest is the ideal, the word partnership does not imply that all parts of an organization are involved. You may need to proceed without the full support of your institution. Whenever possible, however, seek ways to demonstrate how the work of your partnership is directly connected to institutional values. Cultivate effective leaders on campus and keep them informed of your progress.

Below are two examples of how existing partnerships relate their programs both to the mission of the college, and to the curriculum. At GateWay Community College, service-learning practitioners think strategically about how their method relates to the educational philosophy of the college. GateWay also increases the visibility of their initiative by involving administrators in their activities. At Oberlin College, almost all partnering begins in a single department, but reaches out to multiple disciplines and to various sectors of community life.

GateWay Community College

Linking your program to the mission of the college

Building Intentional Community through Service-Learning exists to initiate collaborations between GateWay faculty and community organizations. When service-learning was introduced to GateWay faculty as an innovative pedagogy, its advocates considered the most effective way to present the method to their colleagues. First they considered the question of the college's identity: What is GateWay Community College. Their answer: GateWay provides experiential instruction in a range of occupational-technology disciplines. The college serves a student body of 7,600, most of whom are older adults of diverse ethnic backgrounds, enrolled on a part-time basis. Service-learning advocates identified the close link between service-learning and experiential education, a concept with which the faculty was familiar.

Today, 40 percent of all courses at GateWay are service-learning courses. As one project leader writes, "Using the community as an extension of the classroom is consistent with the mission and goals of the college, as experiential learning has been part of GateWay Community College since its founding in 1968."

A high visibility partnership invites administrative support

Faculty at GateWay keep top-level administrators apprised of their plans through year-end reports and regular invitations to service-learning events. In turn, the president and deans show their support by participating in bi-annual reflection colloquia and attending conferences such as the Wingspread Conference that spawned this publication. An advisory board, co-chaired by a faculty member and an administrator oversees service-learning activities on campus and recommends policy to the president.

The administration at GateWay demonstrates its support of service-learning and the importance of community engagement through its hiring practices. GateWay President Phillip Randolph appointed a Dean of School and Community Relations to supervise the Director of Service-Learning and the Director of Community Partnership Programs. This position organizes all forms of outreach from corporate trainings on campus to one-day service events.

Oberlin College and Partners: Environmental Community Action Research Program, Watershed Education Partnership Project

LINKING TO STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE COLLEGE

In 1994, administrators at Oberlin College identified several social barriers they would work to overcome as part of a new strategic plan. Disciplinary separatism and town/gown estrangement were at the top of the list. While the college formed an agenda for campus and community change, the Environmental Studies Program at Oberlin considered how best to make a pressing community need – pollution in the local Black River – both a priority for the college and an issue that would appeal to individuals from all walks of college and community life.

The Environmental Studies Program seized upon the college's community-building mission and adapted it to their plan for a community partnership. First, they considered how to frame pollution in the Black River as an interdisciplinary issue. They invited 8 professors from disciplines as diverse as Anthropology, English, and Engineering to deliver a single lecture on the Black River. The department reasoned that a team-taught course would lighten the load of each individual professor and attract a range of students. A full-time staff member was paid to handle the logistics of the course so that the teachers were free to do what they do best – teach.

Next, the Environmental Studies Program integrated campus/community relations into the design. Organizers determined that the best way to raise awareness about the Black River was through the local elementary school system, using Oberlin students to develop an elementary school curriculum on the Black River and teach it in local schools.

The project, started in a single department, galvanized a range of interdisciplinary faculty, and eroded a major barrier for Oberlin, the barrier between the college and Lorain County. Its benefits extend far beyond the campus into Lorain County.

Genuine democratic partnerships that will be sustained over time are:

Sustained by a "partnership process" for communication, decision-making, and the initiation of change.

Partnerships will only grow and flourish if fueled by a strong partnership process. A strong partnership process is one that responds to change even as it works to realize an ambitious, long-term goal. It provides ample opportunity for the sharing of opinions and ideas. This solidifies the commitment of partners to collaborate over time, and facilitates their ability to change direction and redefine their work as the world around them changes.

Three major elements that form the basis of a strong partnership process are:

- practices that support frequent communication with partners and with the immediate community
- a method for revisiting the essential elements of the partnership and making decisions
- a structure that allows for evolution, change, and growth

Communication: In partnerships, as in life, relationships are enhanced by frequent communication. Although telephone and email contacts are useful, there is no substitute for face-to-face communication. A healthy process allows for both informal sharing of information and regular, scheduled meetings to address major concerns. You may wish to discuss early on how conflicts will be resolved and how decisions will be reached in meetings.

Revisit the essential elements of your partnership: Successful partnerships periodically reexamine their original mission, values, and tenets of collaboration. One way to accomplish this is to develop a set of questions to ascertain whether all partners are on the same page. Some possible questions to discuss, for instance, might be the same questions that you asked in the early stages of collaboration:

- How does this partnership fit with the work of the institution? Does the fit need to be modified? Do our employers support us in this partnership?
- Does everyone in this partnership exercise a voice and participate thoroughly? Do all partners use the same language?
- What is the mission of this partnership? What need is being addressed? How has that need changed since the work began? What can be done to address the changes?

- Are the resources being shared? How do the partners relate to each other? How well do the partners work together? What resources does each partner contribute? Are roles and responsibilities clearly delineated?
- Are the right parties involved? Have new people expressed interest in our work? How can new people be involved as stakeholders?
- Do all parties benefit from this partnership? If not, why not? What, if anything, can be done to change this? Are individuals and the partnership as a whole being rewarded for the successes?

Allow for evolution, change, and growth: Because partnerships extend over time and sometimes outlive the participation of their founders, unpredictable changes may occur. A strong partnership incorporates a plan to respond to unforeseen change or obstacles from the onset. For a partnership to thrive, it must be immediately responsive to internal change and to changes in the community. Two of the most common types of change are turnover in leadership or personnel, and a revision of partnership goals or projects.

The partnership process established by the University of San Diego's Y.E.S. Collaborative strengthens relationships and leaves room for program change and innovation. The regular turnover among student participants necessitates a flexible, spontaneous approach to planning.

University of San Diego

DESIGN A PROCESS THAT SUPPORTS RELATIONSHIPS

Daily operations of the Y.E.S. Collaborative are informed by an important goal: to secure the participation of all members and affirm their value to the partnership. The structure of the monthly meetings highlights this attention to inclusiveness. Partnership meetings are held each month in a different location, and each month a different group member facilitates. This system of rotation not only keeps partners involved, it offers a window into how each institution operates independently of the partnership.

At least two or three representatives from each partnering team attend Y.E.S. meetings. When the group is convened, they generate an agenda.

This practice, which partners view as a key element of their process, originated as the solution to a problem. Previously, it was the responsibility of the facilitator to write an agenda prior to the meeting. But often facilitators forgot or were too busy. In changing their methods, the group turned this accident into a benefit, and a means of working even more collaboratively. Now all parties can own the agenda rather than feel that it has been imposed upon them.

Meetings are not the only areas in which the Y.E.S. collaborators emphasize participation. They also use written communications to make their work public and to give each participant a voice in defining and redefining the nature of what they do. The proceedings of each meeting are documented and then circulated among group members and top level administrators. In keeping the president and provost of USD informed about major projects, the partnership has earned administrative interest and support. USD provost, Francis Lazarus, was so interested that he attended the Wingspread Conference as part of the Y.E.S. team. The written reports sent to funders and administrators serve the auxiliary function of articulating what the partnership does and why. Partners return to these texts in order to evaluate their progress and overcome obstacles.

A second major task of the partnership process is to facilitate evolution and change. The Y.E.S. collaborative has change built into its work since every year students enter schools and graduate from them. The partners use special events such as conferences and camping trips to solidify the participation of new members and benefit from their fresh ideas. Time spent in a different environment – at a conference or around a campfire – enables partners to reflect critically on their work. Evaluations completed mid-semester offer yet another opportunity for evaluation and the sharing of ideas.

"We have learned that a shared vision sustains our partnership; service-learning that excites the students energizes the entire group," says Judith Rauner. The Y.E.S. Collaborative underscores its mission – to empower students – in every detail of its work. In grant proposals it requests funds to send students to conferences. And it is not uncommon for student graduates to take jobs with partnering institutions. These facts attest to the partners' success in realizing their vision. In turn, their successes derive from a clear understanding of partnership goals, open lines of communication, and an effort to include all participants in the activity of envisioning – and revising – the partnership.

In other cases, planning can be halted or derailed by major changes in leadership, which was the case with the partnership between North Carolina Central University and North East Central Durham.

The North Carolina Central University - North East Central Durham Partnership

OUT OF TURMOIL CAN EMERGE A TECHNIQUE FOR PROBLEM-SOLVING

The NCCU-NECD Partnership in North Central Durham, North Carolina relies on shared governance. For this reason, an abrupt change in leadership threatened to end the partnership last year. Since that time, however, the partners have worked through obstacles in a way that affirms rather than dismantles the trust between them.

When a dynamic community leader and co-chair of the NCCU-NECD Partnership died, the loss exposed a number of conflicts. A single leader had acted as the glue that bound partners to one another. Without her, the trust and collaborative spirit that the partnership had previously enjoyed faded, and money became a source of disagreement. Participants learned that their grant money, which in their original agreement was to be evenly divided between the two major partners, was in fact distributed unequally. This unexpected revelation caused several stakeholders to pull out. The remaining parties were advised to dissolve their collaboration on the spot. However, rather than do so, NCCU and NECD called in a Dispute Settlement Center, an unbiased third party, to help them resolve the immediate problem of financial inequity and restore trust among the partners.

In a series of conversations, the Dispute Settlement Center helped the group articulate their frustrations and agree upon practical solutions. One of the problems identified was that community members avoided opportunities to take initiative in the work. A major goal of the partnership, to build community capacity, could not be realized unless community members participated actively. The group agreed that the community partner would make an effort to take on independent responsibilities, and the university would give them the time and space to proceed slowly. The partners agreed that active participation and the building of community capacity were major goals, but that each partner had held different ideas about how these could best be realized. With the sudden absence of a dynamic community leader, however, all participants were forced to hold themselves accountable if they were to realize their initial goals.

Today, NCCU-NECD partners emphasize open communication. They proceed more cautiously than before and check in on a regular basis. All parties have acknowledged their mistakes, and recognized the loyalty and hard work it took to move through upheaval into a new phase of understanding. The loss of an influential leader damaged their partnership in the short run, but with the help of a mutually trusted third party, the partners have begun to recover momentum. Moreover, they have learned how efficiently work proceeds when each party takes responsibility for progress, rather than allowing one individual to drive their efforts.

Genuine democratic partnerships that will be sustained over time are:

Evaluated regularly with a focus on both methods and outcomes.

It can be tempting to think of evaluation as a product that is separate from the work of a partnership, executed for the consumption of funders or supervisors. When it works best, however, evaluation is integrated into daily operations and long-term objectives and becomes a tool to improve the partnership rather than simply a report on its successes and failures. Assessment or evaluation can improve work on a number of levels. The lessons yielded can form the basis for important revisions of work strategies and goals. The pages of documentation generated can be thought of as a map of where the partnership has been and a set of directions for where it's going. Partners often return to old minutes and reports in order to reconstruct successful projects and problem-solving techniques. Finally, the process of assessment serves a valuable role in convening participants and asking them to reflect individually and as a group on their methods and goals. Assessment institutionalizes critical analysis. For this reason it is most useful when viewed as a continuous process that begins when the partnership does.

Thinking about designing an assessment: Design assessment to address the specifics of your partnership. Assessment, like every other facet of a partnership, needs to be tailored to the specific values and goals of your work. Thus, in order to achieve useful results, you will need to have clearly articulated what those goals are. What constitutes success? Ideally, you will ask this question at the start of your collaboration and return to it again and again. Both the process and the products of your partnership need to be evaluated regularly and from the beginning.

Identify your goals: All partners need to be clear about what it is you want to accomplish, and what constitutes success. Your goals might include outcomes for the community, the partners involved, stakeholders, or your campus. For example, does your work influence institutional policy? How does your work impact other institutions? Have you identified and trained new leaders in the community? Are your relationships deepening? Do partners participate actively?

Select indicators for reaching your goals: Indicators can be short-term (focusing on day-to day activities), interim (focusing on the results of day-to-day and week-to-week work) or long-term (capturing the outcomes over prolonged periods).

Strike a balance between internal and external evaluation: Consider whose role it is to define the success of your work. Many effective partnerships are evaluated both by funders and by participants in the daily life

Program in Nonprofits, Universities, Churches, and Schools: University of Pennsylvania and Partners (PNUCS)

EVALUATION IS AN ON-GOING ACTIVITY DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE PROGRAM EVEN AS IT IS BEING CONDUCTED.

There are multiple dimensions to the PNUCS program at UPenn, which is a collaboration between small, local nonprofits, five colleges at UPenn, religious institutions, and public schools. In order to serve its many dimensions, the PNUCS evaluation process asks multiple questions simultaneously and targets a variety of groups in extracting an accurate understanding of how the program effects participants and the general public, how the partnership is currently useful or not useful to these parties, and how it can be made more useful in the future. The evaluation process is organized around three major questions:

What are the most pressing technical assistance needs of local nonprofits and how is the PNUCS initiative approaching the task of meeting those needs? What is the community response to the effort?

How successful is the project in building local coalitions of universities, nonprofits, churches, public schools and businesses? What accounts for PNUCS' successes and what interferes with its progress?

What changes in higher education can strengthen the direct service to local nonprofits and schools, and what about those changes will result in long-term institutional change?

Thus the evaluation looks for community-based organizations that have recently become able to leverage resources from Penn, new relationships that have formed between neighboring nonprofits, faculty and community members who have come to recognize the benefit of campus/community collaboration.

Leading the evaluation are one undergraduate and two graduate students, one of whose dissertation takes partnership evaluation as its subject. Together, the three contribute at least the equivalent hours of a full-time employee. The evaluators concentrate their energies on gathering information from local nonprofits and UPenn constituents, the primary partners in the program. Secondarily, they solicit feedback from religious institutions and public schools. The evaluators employ a variety of techniques that range from formal to informal. They gather information in correspondence, written statements, progress reports, personal interviews, focus groups, presentations, and through observations during partnership meetings. The individual methods used are standard evaluating tools. Where the methods break new ground, however, is in their multiplicity – in the variety of methods used and the number of contexts in which they are applied.

From the initial focus groups during which the current structure of the partnership was fashioned, the evaluators have been present at important conversations. They make themselves available to personal queries and invitations to important meetings. Rather than framing their role as university researchers who pass judgment on the partnership, the evaluators position themselves as listeners, observers, and collectors of information. In addition to their analytical role, the evaluators participate actively in campus/community relations; one serves on a planning board of faculty engaged in service-learning, the other is the director of Civic House, the volunteer center on campus. The continual visibility of the evaluators and their dual role as observers and participants has facilitated their access to important conversations and perspectives from which a more distanced evaluating party might be excluded. It is not uncommon for evaluators to be feared as a threat to the progress of partnership. The PNUCS evaluators work against any fear or suspicion by making use of their own investment in the success of PNUCS. It is understood that the information they gather will be useful to the partnership as a whole and to their funder, The Kellogg Foundation, for whom evaluation is an explicit priority.

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Kellogg sets aside a portion of UPenn's grant money for evaluation. While its own criteria for evaluation are not precisely matched with those of the partnership, the two complement and feed into one another. Among other things, Kellogg is interested in the level of participation of community members and the opportunities to institutionalize partnering work, in order for it to be sustained.

PNUCS is currently in its second year of activity. The evaluation process continues to be a formative one based on gathering information about the resources and needs that partners have so that eventually, the evaluation can determine how far the partners have come. At the end of the process will be a summative evaluation that details lessons learned, work accomplished, and work that remains undone. In between are many stages of synthesizing information and learning from responses to PNUCS. At times, the evaluators think of themselves as conducting a customer satisfaction survey. They act as ambassadors of PNUCS, listening to be sure that the program is properly understood, seeking out the source of misunderstandings and obstacles. They try to be present whenever possible, to acquire important information accidentally as well as deliberately. One major challenge before them is to integrate the component pieces of the evaluation, and to communicate to participants and to the general public a sense of how the many elements of the program cohere, and how these many pieces are emblematic of UPenn's investment in West Philadelphia.

of the partnership. These two parties may bring contrasting values to the task of assessment, and it can be a challenge to synchronize the two such that their findings are useful. The following questions may prove helpful in sorting out the priorities of external and internal evaluators:

- What are the criteria for evaluating the people and projects?
- Are the two aligned?

Remember that the act of evaluating is an assertion of power. Within the partnership, this power ought to be evenly distributed.

Set up a system to collect data and manage information: Give some thought as to who will collect the information, what tools will be used, who will analyze it, and who needs to participate. Incorporate qualitative and quantitative methods. One of the major challenges of evaluation is to find persuasive evaluative tools. The most successful partnerships combine qualitative and quantitative forms of analysis in order to satisfy the dual – and sometimes conflicting – needs for hard data about the partnership, and information that communicates the humanity of the work.

Use your outcomes: When individual stages of evaluation have been completed, make sure to capitalize on your results. Your shortcomings can offer lessons for the future, and your successes open up a host of opportunities to publicize the partnership with celebrations, stories for the media, and public forums for discussion. Small and large-scale victories represent important opportunities to share credit among partners, and to thank all the people who have contributed to the success of your work. Your own lessons learned can be valuable resources for other partnerships.

Conclusion

Campus Compact is deeply committed to advancing the concept of the Engaged Campus. Our role as a national higher education organization is to support the educational and civic purposes of our campuses and to help refine and strengthen the critical partnerships between those campuses and the communities in which they live. It is essential that we do the difficult work of understanding how to build genuine democratic partnerships that benefit communities, meet real needs, address real issues, and educate all partners to their individual roles and responsibilities. That work is in many ways just beginning.

This publication is designed to stimulate deeper thinking and discussion across the various constituencies we serve. It is expected that the ideas and principles expressed here will provoke continuing dialogue at the local and national levels, and that colleges and universities continue to increase their effectiveness as equal partners in addressing the common issues in their communities.

Profiles of the Wingspread Participants

The following descriptions provide an overview of the eight partnerships represented at the Wingspread Conference. In some cases, the work described is a mere sampling of the types of campus/community collaborations undertaken by these institutions.

GateWay Community College, Phoenix, AZ

Building Intentional Community through Service-Learning

Building Intentional Community through Service-Learning is a program to facilitate, enhance, and expand student learning through the integration of service-learning opportunities into existing occupational and liberal arts courses in order to 'build intentional communities'. Service learning courses initiate collaborations between GateWay faculty and community organizations. Activities are centered on introducing community groups to service-learning and integrating the pedagogy into experiential education. Faculty and staff meet with agencies to build relationships and to plan curricula that incorporate community needs into service-learning courses. Forty percent of the faculty has integrated service-learning into at least one course.

Contact: Michele Bush, Director, Community Partnership Program, 602 392-5185, bush_m@gwc.maricopa.edu

University of San Diego, San Diego, CA

Youth Empowered through Service

Youth Empowered through Service (Y.E.S.), a collaboration of faculty, staff, schools and community organizations, employs service-learning courses to empower neighborhood youth and college students. Projects like the beautification of school grounds by creating a native plant garden are designed to help students K-16 develop planning and leadership skills. A convocation was arranged to highlight the contributions students of all ages can make to such community partnerships.

Contact: Dr. Judy Rauner, Director, Office for Community Service-Learning, 619 260-4798, rauner@acusd.edu

Fort Lewis College, Durango, CO

The Community and College Institutes Project

The Community and College Institutes Project at Fort Lewis College mobilizes the college's resources for community building and social change. Each year faculty, staff, students, and Colorado Corps and VISTA members use the Institutes to review community assets and pressing needs. A theme is chosen

as their focus of analysis, like the high Latino drop-out rate in local high schools. Plans are then developed for their potential to cultivate both student leadership and community participation. One recent Institute included 20 community residents who helped analyze school policy, resulting in a collaboration to create a tutoring program and a service-learning course for college faculty and students to work with Latino high schoolers. A local business association has recently joined the partnership, and assists the group in designing models for Durango's economic development.
Contact: Kalin Grigg, Director, Center for Service-Learning, 970 247-7641, grigg_k@fortlewis.edu

DePaul University, Chicago, IL
The DePaul/West Humboldt Alliance
Under the aegis of its Egan Urban Center, DePaul's community service projects follow the mandates created by a community development plan written with the collaboration of a Council of 80 neighborhood organizations. To address the problem of joblessness, DePaul is currently deploying its expertise and resources in computer technologies by sharing its on-line services with five neighborhood partners, and servicing a technology lab at a local job training center. Community residents can compose resumes there, search the Internet for job opportunities, and acquire marketable computer skills. Access to the Internet also enables the university's community partners to hunt for funds and publicize their own services on the Web.
Contact: Jerry Watson, Director of Neighborhood Partnerships, 312 362-6530, jwatson@wppost.depaul.edu

Metropolitan State University, St. Paul, MN
Dayton's Bluff Urban Partnership
The Dayton's Bluff Urban Partnership exists to forge links between the university and the culturally diverse neighborhoods by planning and developing community enhancement projects. Already developed are a community café, community garden, social service center in the elementary school, a campus-based community health clinic, and a library with a job resource center. Additionally, the partnership regularly studies initiatives to support the local community, including recently organizing a research project on how to develop affordable housing.
Contact: Tom O'Connell, Faculty Coordinator, Center for Community-based Learning, 651 772-7786, thomas.oconnell@metrostate.edu

North Carolina Central University, Raleigh/Durham, NC
The NCCU-North East Central Durham Partnership
The NCCU-NECD partnership between the university and a community-based organization works to eliminate the dangers of lead poisoning for infants, and improve the quality of education, housing, and safety in North

WINGSPREAD CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

GateWay Community College (AZ), the University of San Diego (CA), Fort Lewis College (CO), DePaul University (IL), Metropolitan State University (MN), North Carolina Central University (NC), Oberlin College (OH), and the University of Pennsylvania (PA). Others: David Cox (Director, Office of University Partnerships, HUD), Richard Games (Director, Indiana Campus Compact), John Kretzmann (Co-Director, Asset-Based Community Development Institute), Mark Langseth (Director, Minnesota Campus Compact), Jowava Leggett (Director, Institutional Development and Undergraduate Education Services, (Department of Education), Keith Morton (Associate Director, Feinstein Institute, Providence College), Mary Kay Schneider (Coordinator, Maryland Leadership Development Program), Tom Sweeney (Professor, North Central College), and staff from the Campus Compact national office.

East Central Durham. Using a service-learning model, NCCU biology students teach about lead poisoning to high school students who in turn present a simplified lesson plan to middle school students. In this way an educational/mentoring continuum has been established among the cohorts. The university also offers educational workshops to residents interested in strategies for community health education, and a partnership work team of at-risk youth, parents, NCCU volunteers, and a crew chief visit homes to reduce lead hazards and discuss safety issues.
Contact: Dr. Ted Parrish, Chair, Health Science Department, 919 560-6404, tparrish@wpo.nccu.edu

Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH

The Environmental Studies Community Action Research Program
Operating under the Environmental Studies Community Action Research Program, several college-based partnerships work on local ecological issues in classroom- and field-based collaborations between students, science educators, and farmers. In an interdisciplinary team-taught course, 20 Oberlin students each semester study issues like watershed pollution and farmland lost to urban sprawl. They also conduct research and make their findings accessible to local public schools in publications and web sites. Faculty help students learn the basics of curriculum development and instruction, which the students can integrate into the teaching of K-12 curricula. One partnership, the Oberlin Sustainable Agriculture Program, manages both a farmer's market and an organic farm, where students work with local farmers to research and model sustainable farming practices for interested community residents and help distribute surplus food from the market and farm among low-income families.
Contact: Brad Masi, Environmental Studies Project Coordinator, 440 775-8409, Brad.Masi@oberlin.edu

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

Program in Nonprofits, Universities, Communities, and Schools; Program on Communities of Faith
Under the direction of the Program in Nonprofits, Universities, Communities, and Schools (PNUCS), all Penn partnership efforts address the needs of West Philadelphia residents through a combination of academic study, direct service, and community development projects designed to strengthen local nonprofits and create educational programs. Penn faculty provide the nonprofits with technical assistance like grant writing, computer training, counseling on public policy, and program development. They have helped establish a youth leadership program and summer workshops for neighborhood teachers and administrators. Faculty are also currently restructuring Penn's curriculum to correspond to the Program's themes, including creating two new social work programs.
Contact: Ira Harkavy, Associate VP & Director, Center for Community Partnerships, 215 898-5351, harkavy@pobox.upenn.edu

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About Campus Compact

Campus Compact is a national coalition of more than 850 college and university presidents committed to the civic purposes of higher education. To support this civic mission, Campus Compact promotes community service that develops students' citizenship skills and values, encourages collaborative partnerships between campuses and communities, and assists faculty who seek to integrate public and community engagement into their teaching and research.

Campus Compact works on a national level to cultivate discourse and support for public and community service; develop resource materials, grant programs, workshops, and institutional capacity for its members; and support a growing network of 28 state Compacts and one specialized office serving member community colleges throughout the country.

Campus Compact is a national nonprofit organization based at Brown University.