

## Providence College Campus Civic Action Plan

In April, 2016, Fr. Brian J. Shanley, O.P., President of Providence College, signed the Campus Compact Thirtieth Anniversary Action Statement, triggering a process whereby the campus would inventory, analyze, and summarize our efforts to achieve the statement's goals and commitments and what needs to be done in the future to strengthen these commitments. Fr. Shanley and Provost Hugh Lena appointed a campuswide committee to draft a campus civic action plan, in accordance with the promise that followed his signing (see Appendices A & B).

The Action Statement contains five commitments, three of which we have chosen to highlight in this plan, laying out where Providence College exhibits strength in already meeting the Statement's goals, where there might be additional opportunities to engage the campus in the larger community, and what recommendations can be made for reaching even higher aspirations for campus-community partnerships and progress.

### STRENGTHS

1. *We empower our students, faculty, staff, and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus—nearby and around the world.*

The opening statement of our most recent President's Honor Roll application states concisely the institution's commitment to service and mutually respectful partnerships: "Providence College embraces acts of service that create productive partnerships, build positive relationships, and are mutually beneficial to those serving and being served. Providence College sees service as a tangible expression of its mission-stated commitment to promote 'the common good, the human flourishing of each member of the campus community, and service of neighbors near and far.'"

A simple scan of Providence College's community partnerships shows that we already are doing much to accomplish this commitment. At the close of the 2014-2015 academic year, the Feinstein Institute for Public Service compiled a complete log of campus-wide community partners and service sites. This list was created from student service data reported from the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 academic years. Each community partner was logged with all of the college departments that coordinate their respective student service opportunities.

This log revealed that 99 community partners received Providence College student service during those two academic years. Of these 99 community organizations, **22 have two unique partnerships with Providence College** (i.e., through Campus Ministry *and* a service-learning program; hosting an intern *and* coordinating projects with an athletic team). An additional **11 community organizations have three or more unique partnerships with Providence College**. Those include:

1. Capitol Ridge
2. The Diocese of Providence
3. Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island
4. Hasbro Children's Hospital
5. Mary House
6. Mount Pleasant Library

7. My Brother's Keeper
8. Paul Cuffee Lower School
9. San Miguel School
10. Smith Hill Community Development Corporation
11. St. Patrick Academy

### **PC Campus-Community Partnerships 2013-2015**



In the academic curriculum, examples of mutually beneficial partnerships abound. For example, the Secondary and Elementary and Special Education departments partner with public schools across communities in Southern New England, particularly those in Pawtucket, North Providence, and Scituate. During the 2015-2016 school year, these two PC departments placed 71 students in Pawtucket, 55 in North Providence, and 19 in Scituate. These partnerships require strong working relationships between school district personnel and PC faculty, staff, and students.

Similarly, the Social Work Department has forged reciprocal relationships with dozens of public sector and not-for-profit organizations across Rhode Island, from Crossroads, RI to Dorcas International Institute of RI to St. Mary's Home for Children. At these three organizations, the needs of PC students and of the people they serve are met in a reciprocal fashion. MSW staff committed to the profession of social work, as well as to the education of our students, offer ample opportunities for our students to engage, assess, and intervene with clients, as well as opportunities for both formal and informal evaluation of work. At each agency, students have the chance to interface with other professionals (both within the agency, as well as those associated with other agencies).

In the Division of Student Affairs, staff and students work to co-create reciprocal service relationships with community members. For example, Providence College's chapter of Best Buddies is part of an international nonprofit organization that works with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The aim is to provide opportunities for socialization and employment while promoting diversity and inclusion of the IDD community. The students are matched in one-to-one friendships with an individual in the community who has an intellectual and/or developmental disability. There are also opportunities to be what are called "associate members," for students who aren't quite ready to be matched in a friendship but still want to be a part of the organization. In addition to monitoring these friendships as they occur outside of the club, they also host monthly events for their members and buddies. This year the events

include attending and supporting the Best Buddies RI charity softball tournament, a Halloween-themed match party where buddy pairs are revealed, and a bingo party and gift exchange with all of the buddies from this year. Finally, Best Buddies is also putting on a major event called “Spread the Word to End the Word”, which is a national campaign to end the use of the R-word.

Campus Ministry, through PC staff and students working together with local, national, and international partners, offers opportunities for justice-oriented service combining community work and faith. One of the more exemplary Campus Ministry programs is the New Orleans Immersion Program, where 15 students annually are sent to New Orleans in January to work with four different non-profit organizations and to meet with families and organizations to discuss faith and social justice issues in the city. This program is both a general response to the Gospel call to do justice and a specific response to the reality of post-Katrina New Orleans, Louisiana (NOLA). The NOLA Immersion has at its core a commitment to the dignity of the human person, lived out by accompanying our neighbors in the journey toward justice. The purpose of the NOLA Immersion is to cultivate, through active service and the lens of faith, a sense of solidarity with women and men living on the margins. In that same spirit of solidarity, participants live simply and in community together, with prayer and reflection central to the experience. The NOLA Immersion seeks participants with a diversity of spiritual backgrounds and welcomes applications from individuals of all religions. Participants in NOLA Immersion serve within the New Orleans community, attempting to understand the day-to-day realities of local residents, neighborhoods, and community groups.

Through a cooperative effort involving the Feinstein Institute for Public Service and the Office of Financial Aid, students and community partners co-create mutually beneficial relationships through the Community Work Study Program. Providence College regularly exceeds the 7% minimum federal requirement of Federal Work-Study Program (FWSP) participation in community service work. During the 2015-2016 academic year, 65 students, working in over 30 community-based organizations, participated in the program, earning nearly \$73,000 in FWSP wages. Our core “neighborhood” partners—Robert F. Kennedy Elementary, Saint Pius V School, Smith Hill CDC, and the Smith Hill Early Learning Childhood Center—each hosted between 4-10 students throughout the course of the year. In other instances, students were able to convert nonprofit or public sector internships into paid opportunities, combining their professional interests and education with community awareness. In a survey administered during the 2015-16 academic year, well over 70% of 31 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their work-study experience had resulted in meaningful professional development and had supported their future plans. Further, and perhaps most excitingly, all but two respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their work-study placement had resulted in an increased commitment to community work and sense of community responsibility.

2. *We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.*

Providence College’s Strategic Plan envisions graduates who are “engaged servant leaders,” exhibiting “the qualities of compassion, good citizenship, and

commitment to social justice." PC works hard to prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship and a lifelong dedication to pursue the common good. This begins from the student's first days on campus, through programs like FaithWorks and Urban Action. FaithWorks involves 40 entering PC students, working with student leaders and staff from Campus Ministry. The students work in collaboration with the Catholic Charities staff at the Diocese of Providence and with other faith-based organizations, to build community with their peers, perform service work for vulnerable populations in Providence, and reflect on the significance of this work for their own lives.

Urban Action, launched in 1991 with 17 PC student volunteers, has grown to 150 incoming freshmen. The program offers incoming freshmen an opportunity to spend their first days in the city of Providence improving the community that will be their "home away from home" for the next four years. Led by 25 upperclass student peers, these freshmen spend three days working on outdoor and indoor service projects important to the Providence community. The student leadership model exemplified by Urban Action has not only grown the program over the years, but also instills in the students and their leaders a motivation to act in pursuit of community improvement. Since 1991, more than 3,400 students have volunteered thousands of community service hours to Urban Action, with many returning each year as upperclass leaders. And the program continues during the school year, with UA students completing one service project per month, such as neighborhood cleanups, tree plantings, and snow removal assistance for the elderly residents of Providence.

Preparation of students for lives of civic action and community engagement is the hallmark of the Public and Community Service Studies (PSP) Department. The PSP curriculum, one of the only sustained, developmental academic community engagement programs in the country, involves students in an ever-deepening experience working with communities and reflecting on their roles as citizens and public servants. Every year, between 25 and 40 students graduate with a degree (major or minor) in PSP.

In addition to the interdisciplinary PSP program, in 2012, Providence College made it possible for all students to experience curricular community engagement, by adopting a civic engagement proficiency requirement for all students. Courses across the curriculum, from Public History and Finance to Urban Education and Wildlife Biology, fulfill this requirement by involving students in public issues that matter to them, often with a community engagement component, developing in students the ability to analyze the social, economic, or environmental forces that underlie these issues, and causing them to reflect on their own responsibilities for civic deliberation and action. Often partnering with the Feinstein Institute, nearly four dozen separate courses give students opportunities to increase their commitment to community work and their sense of community responsibility.

Speaking of the Feinstein Institute, during the 2015-16 academic year, the Institute directly supported 19 service-learning courses enrolling 385 students (332 unduplicated), working with 23 unique community partners. The Institute's support, consisting of student orientation and supervision, faculty development in best practices, and the provision of student liaisons to facilitate community logistics and student learning, enabled student service learners to contribute over 9,000 hours to these partnerships.

In addition to FaithWorks, Campus Ministry instills this preparation for

engagement through exemplary programs like My Brother's Keeper (MBK). Campus Ministry works with the Dartmouth, MA office of MBK by providing individual volunteers predominantly through its Poverty & Hunger Outreach Ministries and the FaithWorks program, along with staff service days with the organization. Most days of the week, Poverty & Hunger Outreach sends students to assist with furniture deliveries in the afternoons. During the 2015-2016 academic year, 32 students provided nearly 1,000 hours of service through My Brother's Keeper, assisting in its mission to provide furniture assistance to all members of the Fall River and New Bedford communities. Students find the faith-based encounter and conversations with community members to be particularly meaningful. This student's reflection on the program gives testimony to the civic learning developed in those who participate:

"Throughout my time at My Brothers' Keeper, I have directly experienced the grace of God's call for us all to serve. I have learned to be empathetic and look past the borders created by race, age, socioeconomic standings, etc. Getting to go into my "brothers and sisters" homes and physically give them furniture that they need to have a decent living situation has not only aided me in growing in compassion for all of God's children, but has allowed me to feel that I have a purpose outside of my "bubble." Getting off campus and participating in My Brothers' Keeper deliveries every week creates a realization of the grand scheme of things and allows me to become more aware of myself, and society in general. I have seen this awareness and newfound knowledge of the world in each and every one of the students that come along with me each week as well."

Perhaps most connected to the goal of "engaged citizenship," the Department of Citizenship and Off-Campus Life of the Division of Student Affairs attempts to encourage eligible students to register to vote and cast an informed ballot in all local, state, and national elections. Armed with data from the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)—which is able to track the actual voting participation of PC students—showing that only 49% of students eligible to vote in 2012 did so, and an even more shocking 14% of those eligible to vote cast a ballot in 2014, Student Affairs staff worked to increase voter awareness and participation in the 2016 election. They enlisted the aid of TurboVote, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that makes it easier for students to register and to vote, either in their home states or the state where they attend college. At the time of this plan's publication, we are awaiting the results of this year's study of PC student voting behavior.

*3. We embrace our responsibilities as place-based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities—economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.*

Over the past decade, Providence College has moved strategically to become a better neighbor and to strengthen the communities of which it is a part, economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically. For example, of the eleven community organizations with which we have three or more unique partnerships listed above, six lie in the neighborhoods that surround the College.

Perhaps no project exemplifies this better than the establishment of the Providence College Smith Hill Annex. Since 2012, the College has been leasing a 1,000

square-foot space on Douglas Avenue with the simple purpose of fostering conversation between members of the College community and the Smith Hill community—resulting in increased mutual understanding and opportunities for collaboration. A collaboration with the Smith Hill Community Development Corporation, the Annex supports immediate, short-term initiatives like potlucks, speak-outs, exhibitions, and meetings. It also supports courses, workshops, and retreats of campus and community groups, and ongoing projects that serve campus and community. In addition to coordinating and developing conversations and activities at the Annex, the College's commitment to the Smith Hill CDC has found concrete expression in a grant of \$750,000 to the CDC for housing redevelopment and rehabilitation in the neighborhood (see 2014 Chronicle of Higher Education article for further details: <http://www.chronicle.com/blogs/bottomline/college-provides-750000-to-fight-blight-at-its-doorstep/>)

PC is particularly dedicated to strengthening its communities educationally, and no effort exemplifies this better than the San Miguel Partnership, an initiative emanating out of three divisions of the College—Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Mission & Ministry—partnering with one local organization. The San Miguel School of Providence, located just over a mile from PC's campus, is a private, independent Lasallian middle school for approximately 80 boys from the greater Providence area. San Miguel fosters a school culture that emphasizes citizenship, service, and personal responsibility in a caring learning environment where academics are rigorous, expectations are high, and individual talents are nurtured. Ninety percent of San Miguel graduates complete high school and 70% of those who complete high school choose to go on to either college or military service.

The partnership between PC and the San Miguel School began over ten years ago. Providence College has since deepened its partnership with San Miguel through a variety of collaborative initiatives, including the Scholars Club, Step Up!, and the Mentoring Program. The Scholars Club offers after school tutoring twice a week during the academic year, pairing up San Miguel students and PC service-learners for individualized learning. College students tutor the middle school students in basic subjects such as math, literacy, science, and social studies, while building meaningful relationships across generational, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Each semester, about 6 service-learners support the work of the Scholars Club.

Step Up! began in Spring 2009 as an initiative of PC's Organization for Latin American Students (OLAS). It was founded by a PC student who was also an alumnus of San Miguel and who saw a need to encourage college conversations at the critical middle school age. Step Up! brings San Miguel students and their families to PC's campus for eight Saturdays during the Spring semester. About 15 San Miguel students participate each year, working with about 25 PC students. Step Up! aims to prepare students at San Miguel for life beyond middle school and to instill in them the ability and desire to make positive life choices.

The San Miguel Mentoring Program, begun in 2006, was initiated through the President's Council, a leadership group comprised of senior executives from many of Rhode Island's most prominent employers, who serve in an advisory capacity to the College's president. In order to assure its sustainability and institutional resources, the mentoring program transitioned into the Chaplain's Office in 2014. The San Miguel Mentoring Program matches 20 PC students with 20 San Miguel boys. Once a month

the group participates in expanded learning opportunities together, allowing the mentor/mentee pairs to meet and build positive one-on-one relationships.

Each program works closely to develop positive and productive relationships between San Miguel students and Providence College students. Through a shared vision of bringing the PC campus and surrounding Smith Hill community together the partnership is able to build capacity and leverage resources between the College and the San Miguel School. The College's investment in San Miguel transcends these three programs and includes a full tuition scholarship for one San Miguel graduate each year. This deep, multifaceted partnership with San Miguel is aligned with the College's commitment to acts of service that create productive partnerships, build positive relationships, and are mutually beneficial to those serving and being served. In recognition of this relationship, Providence College was awarded the prestigious Miguel Medal in 2016.

Another educational-strengthening effort can be found in the Feinstein Institute's EXPLORE! Program, which works with 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders in five local high schools. The mission of EXPLORE! is to promote awareness of, access to, and readiness for college and career among first generation local urban high school students while, at the same time, supporting and enhancing the educational experiences of PC students. The program includes weekly on-site after-school programming throughout the academic year and several days of PC campus programs and college visits for high school students. Throughout the year, PC students visit the schools to engage in a variety of formal and informal programming structured around a unique college readiness curriculum. This curriculum is designed to target key aspects of youth identity and skill development so that the youth engaged in this program can identify, pursue, and achieve their goals in life.

Beyond the EXPLORE! Program, Providence College has created initiatives and partnerships across the community to advance the cause of college access, readiness, and persistence. The PROMISE Program, a summer program that assists high school juniors in preparing to transition to college by taking two Providence College courses—one writing and one academic skill-building—while also participating in workshops that address the college admission experience, is one good example of this. So, too, are the efforts of Admissions Office staff to devote their time to informing high school students about higher education options and readiness, through college fairs, workshops, and school-based mock interview sessions or parent nights. Additionally, the College and its staff have developed a growing number of partnerships and collaborations with other organizations doing similar work, such as Young Voices, Breakthrough Providence, College Visions, and the Providence Children & Youth Cabinet.

One small but well-coordinated effort to strengthen the community economically is the annual Turkey Drive, led by the President's Standing Committee on Service. In the fall of 2015, the committee and its campus partners collected over \$3,000 in monetary donations, 104 turkeys, and thousands of canned goods and other non-perishable items. PC's contributions to the Turkey Drive benefitted two of our strongest neighborhood partners, the Smith Hill Community Development Corporation and Mary House, the Social Ministry of St. Patrick's Catholic Church. As a result of our efforts and the contributions of other local partners, 382 families were able to enjoy a full Thanksgiving dinner at home.



The effort to strengthen Rhode Island communities extends also to spiritual development. Campus Ministry's Youth Education Ministry program partners with local Catholic parishes to offer religious education to elementary through high school aged youth and to plan and lead retreats for youth ministries in the local area. During the 2015-2016 academic year, 42 students gave 500 hours of service at 8 parishes in the local community. In addition to serving their neighbors in Rhode Island parishes through sharing the Gospel, the Youth Education Ministry program draws students into the faith lives of community members they otherwise would not meet and helps them to reflect upon how they might share their own faith and participate in the church's mission. One student's reflection makes this claim:

I initially joined Youth Education as a freshman as a way to get better connected with my school and community. It was something that I had always wanted to be involved in, but never had the chance to previously. Youth Education became how I connected with my faith here at Providence College. Not only was I there to help teach classes and run retreats, but I learned so much from the students I worked with as well. The community that was formed, whether on retreats or in the classroom, helped me push myself deeper into my faith and fully immerse myself. This program helped me to place my own faith into a broader context. As I would share my faith journey with volunteers, retreatants, and students, I realized how truly universal so many of our problems are, and how universal the answer of Christ is as well. I had to learn to become more vulnerable to those around me. I was also pushed to think more deeply about my faith. There is a certain level of learning that comes when you are teaching another, and you find yourself discovering truths you did not even realize. Education has become such a crucial aspect of my life, and this program helped me to understand the importance of a Catholic education. It is because of my experiences with this program that I hope to even further pursue the importance of Catholic education with young adults.

The Athletics Department also runs a signature program related to this commitment to strengthening the Providence community. Providence College and the City of Providence formed a partnership at the beginning of the 2015-2016 academic school year between the College and the City's Department of Recreation that allows City students who participate in Recreation Department programming to attend Providence College athletic events free of charge, while getting the opportunity to spend time on campus and meet PC student-athletes. This program is called *Junior Friars*, an initiative that the athletes have embraced, led by the College's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. Several student-athletes from one team greet the students when they arrive on campus, and spend time talking with them before each game to emphasize the importance of hard work across academics as well as athletics, and encourage them to set their sights on going to college once they graduate from high school. A different team is responsible for each athletic event. Afterwards, the athletes enjoy the game sitting alongside the students, forming relationships and serving as a friend and role model. It is personal interactions like these that the student-athletes have cited as being most rewarding, seeing the excitement on the young students faces makes the experience worthwhile.

The PC commitment to local communities involves alumni as well as current students, staff, and faculty. For a decade, PC students, alumni and staff have worked with the City of Providence in Friars United for Service in Our Neighborhood (FUSION),



a collaboration to refurbish historic landmarks and community parks in Providence. The unique partnership with city parks department officials was developed by the President's Council, the same body that initiated the San Miguel Mentoring Program mentioned earlier. The FUSION effort matches PC undergraduates with young alumni/alumnae who graduated since the year 2000, regional alumni club leaders, members of the National Alumni Association Board of Governors, and members of the President's Council. FUSION is designed to facilitate networking and service opportunities among students, alumni, College neighbors, and members of the Greater Providence community. For example, in 2014, the group focused their efforts on Corliss Park in the Wanskuck section of Providence and built a community garden. Providence Parks Department officials estimate that there has been more than \$100,000 of labor donated to various projects by PC students, staff, alumni, and city employees in the ten years of this partnership.

Environmentally, Providence College has launched several initiatives aimed at reducing our carbon footprint and becoming better stewards of our natural resources. The most significant of these involve water conservation and stormwater management. In the area of water conservation, PC has replaced 994 faucet aerators in the residence halls, dining halls and administration buildings. These old faucet aerators averaged 2.2 gallons per minute. Of the new aerators, 696 have flow rates of 0.5 gallons per minute and 248 of the aerators are 1.5 gallons per minute (kitchen faucets need a higher flow rate). We also replaced all the campus showerheads with low flow replacements in 643 locations (residence halls and athletic facilities). Average flow of the old showerheads was 2.25 gallons per minute, whereas new low flow heads are 1.5 gallons per minute. Low flow toilets were also installed in many areas. Additionally, PC installed 48 water hydration stations in older buildings throughout campus to reduce the use of bottled water. All new construction since 2010 has low flow water conservation fixtures, low flow toilets and hydration stations.

Additionally, PC's stormwater management program has received recognition from various environmental agencies and environmental groups for its use of green infrastructure in managing stormwater runoff. PC currently has five bioretention areas (a.k.a. rain gardens or bioswales). These bioswales help to retain stormwater on campus during peak storm events, and in doing so, reduce potential erosion, flooding and contaminate transport (salt, fertilizer, oils) to waterbodies downstream from the campus. In 2013, PC received Environmental Merit Awards from Save the Bay and the Narragansett Bay Commission for our stormwater management program. PC's Director of the Office of Environmental Health and Safety has made numerous presentations to community-based organizations, including the Nature Conservancy, the RI Green Infrastructure Coalition, and Groundworks Providence. Several times a year, students from Groundworks Providence take a field trip to PC to see our bioswales and learn about green infrastructure. The Director worked with the biology faculty to select diverse plant species for the bioswales. The plant selection and the insects these plants attract aid in faculty and student research and classroom teaching. The bioswale located near the science complex also has an outdoor classroom to enhance the opportunity for outdoor learning. These bioswales create a parklike setting for the enjoyment of the college as well as the local community.

## OPPORTUNITIES

Providence College already demonstrates great strength in meeting these three Action Statement commitments. The examples detailed above represent only a fraction of the work going on between the College and its multiple external communities. Opportunities exist, however, for the College to strengthen its achievement of these three commitments.

In consultation with a number of campus constituents, the following areas have been identified as ones where further opportunities exist for community engagement and civic learning:

Community Partnerships for Educational Opportunity and Success. Many opportunities exist to build upon the strong K-16 partnerships already in place at Providence College. Most recently, Fr. Shanley announced a financial gift to support scholarships at five Catholic elementary schools in Providence. This donation will be coupled with a community service commitment, where students, faculty, and staff will become involved in school programs, tutoring, and mentoring. This new initiative will challenge the campus to collaborate with the five schools to develop mutually beneficial projects and relationships, as it already has done in the case of San Miguel School. Beyond this new initiative, opportunities abound for the College to enhance its efforts in college access, readiness and success, through existing initiatives like the EXPLORE! and PROMISE Programs, as well as growing partnerships with organizations like Young Voices and Breakthrough Providence. This should be coupled with a commitment to increase access to Providence College for first generation students in Rhode Island, by agreeing to meet the full financial need of local first gen students.

Deepening Students' Preparation for Lives of Engagement and Citizenship. We have chronicled examples where students are being prepared for lives of civic action and community engagement, in and outside the formal academic curriculum. This can be strengthened, however, primarily by encouraging students to see connections between their identities as civically responsible actors and their academic majors and/or career aspirations. We believe this can happen through the curriculum, for example, by each department and program developing or revising key courses that meet the Civic Engagement Proficiency in the core curriculum (see recommendation below). We also see these connections between professional and civic life taking place outside the curriculum, through deepening community partnerships and work in Campus Ministry, linking reflections on faith and community with conversations about "civic vocation." This also can be done through Student Affairs initiatives, like the newly established Citizenship and Service Cohort in Residence Life. We also see opportunities to engage alumni in these efforts to instill a lifelong civic commitment, both by providing vehicles and venues for alumni to continue to serve communities (like the FUSION initiative), and by tapping into the experience and expertise of alumni in educating current students about the value of a robust civic life after college.

Improving Environmental Sustainability and Responsibility. There are multiple ways the College can continue its commitment to greater environmental stewardship. Recently both the Faculty Senate and Student Congress voted to encourage the campus to undertake additional efforts in sustainability. These might include: increasing

the number of water hydration stations across the campus, with the goal of eliminating reliance on bottled water for drinking; enhancing local or “real” food initiatives undertaken in concert with campus food service providers; exploring efforts to vastly improve recycling and initiate composting of food and other organic waste; and looking to build or renovate new campus spaces and transportation systems in ways compatible with sustainability and reducing our collective carbon footprint.

Promoting Social and Economic Justice. As an institution dedicated to promoting justice and the common good consistent with the tenets of Catholic social teaching, Providence College has sought to be a good neighbor and economic incubator for the urban communities in Rhode Island, exemplified by the partnership with the Smith Hill neighborhood highlighted earlier in this document. Other opportunities for PC to contribute to social and economic equity in the region exist, however. For example, in the process of developing this plan, the Civic Action Planning Committee learned about the efforts of other higher education institutions in the region, using purchasing and staff hiring as a way of opening opportunities up to local businesses and potential job applicants, and of achieving greater diversity in the vendor pool and in campus staffing. For Providence College, this can be another vehicle for addressing longstanding issues of racial equity, understanding that the local community can be a source of potential students and teachers, a font of wisdom for the College, and also the place where resources and talent lie, which can help the College improve and reach its ultimate goals related to social justice. Although the hiring and purchasing process is fairly decentralized, we believe the College can do more centrally to encourage its different units to pay attention to local community considerations in their hiring and purchasing decisions. This, too, is one of our recommendation items in the final section of this plan.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To take advantage of some of these opportunities for enhancing the College's commitment to civic and community engagement, we have several recommendations to make. The two most important of these action recommendations are that Providence College:

1. Move quickly toward the hiring of a full-time Transportation Coordinator, to provide students and staff with a variety of ways to make possible deep and meaningful commitments to community service, including Community Work Study students and those representing Clubs and Organizations within the Student Affairs division of the College. Transportation issues related to service have long been a concern across the campus and on the agenda of the President's Standing Committee on Service. Although access to transportation definitely has improved over the past decade, one of the barriers for many students wanting to engage in community-based service and research work, for faculty to assign community engagement work as part of a student's academic program, or for FWSP-eligible students to choose a community site for their employment, continues to be a lack of reliable and efficient transportation options. Transportation barriers also have presented themselves for students in academic programs with a required field practicum or internship. Transportation options should be enhanced, not simply by adding to the fleet of vans or increasing shuttle bus availability, but also by consideration of alternative modes of transportation, such as a zip car fleet for community-based service and internships, or even a bike share program (which would improve sustainability and the overall carbon footprint of the campus). A staff member dedicated solely to transportation could better accomplish this enhancement.
2. Establish a formal, standing Sustainability Committee for the College, and move toward hiring a full-time Campus Sustainability Coordinator. Other Catholic campuses, from Boston College to Loyola to Villanova, have recently made major commitments, in mission, policies, and staffing, to environmental sustainability, and we recommend that PC make a similar commitment. A full-time coordinator could not only explore different options for assessing and reducing the College's carbon footprint, but also work collaboratively with faculty and staff to educate all campus constituents, including students, about ways to be better environmental stewards and protectors.

In addition to these two critical action steps, we recommend that the College:

- Encourage and support every academic department and program to develop or revise courses to meet the Civic Engagement Proficiency in the core curriculum. We believe one of the best ways to deepen students' understanding of their social and civic responsibilities, and at the same time to create meaningful community engagement opportunities and partnerships, is to more closely tie the core proficiency to students' learning within their majors. In fact, this was the reasoning behind adoption of the core proficiency in 2012. Having established a Faculty Fellow for Civic Engagement in 2016, the College is able to provide greater assistance to departments in making it possible for their majors to fulfill this core proficiency within the major rather than having to go outside it.

- Create incentives for staff and administrator community engagement, including the development of a work-release program and/or the development of an HR policy for service days as part of every full-time staff & administrator's benefit package. This, too, has been on the agenda of the Standing Committee on Service for almost a decade. A logical extension of the College's support for community service and engagement would be to develop formal and informal incentives for all, but especially staff and administrators, to make long-term commitments to community based organizations. PC's promise of staff volunteering to accompany the recent gift announcement to Providence Catholic elementary schools, for example, would be more easily facilitated if the College offered incentives like paid leave for community service to all staff members.
- Increase the percentage of Federal Work-Study Program (FWSP) dollars devoted to students doing community service work. Many sister colleges and universities who consider themselves community-engaged institutions have dedicated as much as 25% or more of their FWSP funds to community based work. We recommend a gradual increase over the next several years, to at least 15%, along with an increase in the average award available to students and in the hourly pay rate, at least for those students who choose community work study. This increase should be coupled with a corresponding commitment to enhancing the capacity in both the Financial Aid Office and the Feinstein Institute to implement this policy. This recommendation not only serves the interests of FWSP-eligible students looking for meaningful community service work, but also the needs of community-based organizations, many of which have been hit by state and federal budget cuts.
- Continue to create the capacity for greater diversity and inclusion in campus hiring, and for involvement of more local vendors and businesses in the purchasing process across the College. We believe the central administration can do more both to open its gates to a wider group of job applicants and local small business vendors, and to raise awareness about local vendors and more inclusive hiring practices among the College's decentralized and disparate units. Here, working together with larger organizations like AICU and Campus Compact might help leverage resources and facilitate best practice approaches.
- Develop metrics for assessment of the College's community engagement work that can capture relationship- and community-building impact rather than simply total numbers of individuals serving or hours served. The College's development of a new Strategic Plan offers a golden opportunity to view its work through the lens of "collective impact," including community impact.

## **Appendix A: Campus Compact Action Statement & Commitments**

In the mid-1980s, a group of higher education leaders came together based on a shared concern about the future of American democracy. Motivated by their conviction that amidst the pressures toward personal acquisition and personal advancement, their students were not learning to think, speak, and act in the service of the public good, they resolved that higher education must reclaim its historic mission of preparing the next generation of citizens to achieve public goals and solve public problems.

This group—a handful at first, and more than one hundred within a year—decided to take action. They became the founders of Campus Compact. Their chosen language—a compact—signified a commitment to each other to work together to advance the public purposes of higher education on their campuses, in their communities, and across the country. It also signified a commitment to honor the longstanding compact between higher education and the public.

That initial commitment catalyzed a movement that has changed the landscape of higher education. Nearly 1100 institutions now belong to Campus Compact, which has grown to include a network of state and regional Compacts and has become a key element of a global movement for the public purposes of higher education. Campus Compact helped build a national network of engaged faculty and staff and a vast trove of research-based and experiential knowledge about how to educate students for democracy and build community partnerships for positive change. Because of the work undertaken through Campus Compact and a growing group of allies, what was once a novel and marginal idea—that college students should engage in sustained community-based experiences to develop their capacities as local and global citizens—is now in the mainstream of higher education.

In an effort to build from student engagement to deeper institutional change and community impact, Campus Compact in 1999 promulgated the Presidents' Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education, a statement calling for renewed action to magnify the impact of campus engagement. Evidence of the power of the Presidents' Declaration abounds: the emergence of civic engagement centers whose leaders have claimed a voice in higher education; the centrality of community engagement in campus strategic plans; countless innovative partnerships producing positive educational, health, environmental, and economic outcomes for communities; and the creation of the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, the first mechanism for certifying an institution's substantive commitment to engagement.

These successes warrant celebration. They represent advancement of the public ends that are the very reason colleges and universities are brought into existence. Nonetheless, even as colleges and universities have deepened our commitment to the public and democratic ideals at the heart of Campus Compact, the challenges around us have grown. We have seen a decline in the culture and practice of democracy, as evidenced by the polarization of our political discourse and institutions. And we have witnessed a rapid increase in economic inequality, exacerbating America's persistent racial divide and eroding the capacity of higher education to play its historic role of enabling social mobility.

We therefore face a choice: We can conclude that the challenges are too great and scale back our ambitions for the public and democratic value of higher education, or we can redouble our efforts with a renewed commitment to preparing students for democratic citizenship, building partnerships for change, and reinvigorating higher education for the public good.

Recognizing the special responsibilities of presidents and chancellors in a democracy, we choose the latter course. We choose to articulate the public purposes of the institutions we lead. We choose to deepen the work of our campuses by ensuring that our teaching, research, and institutional actions contribute to the public good. And we choose to work together to accelerate the pace of change commensurate with the local, national, and global challenges we face. For while we compete for students, for funding, and for victories on the athletic field, when we act in the civic realm we act in concert, speaking with one voice to make the case for the contribution of higher education to the public good.

To advance the public purposes of higher education, we affirm the following statements, which characterize our current commitments and name the ideals toward which we will work with renewed dedication, focus, and vigor.

**We empower** our students, faculty, staff, and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus—nearby and around the world.

**We prepare** our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.

**We embrace** our responsibilities as place based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities—economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.

**We harness** the capacity of our institutions—through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice—to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.

**We foster** an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.

These are commitments we make to each other with a recognition that our goals for a thriving and sustainable democracy cannot be achieved if we act alone—and that they cannot be denied if we act together. Our success over the last thirty years gives us confidence that we can build a world in which all students are prepared for lives of engaged citizenship, all campuses are engaged in strong partnerships advancing community goals, and all of higher education is recognized as an essential building block of a just, equitable, and sustainable future.

In affirming these statements, each of us makes a commitment to develop a Campus Civic Action Plan within one year after March 20, 2016, or the date thereafter on which we become signatories. Our Civic Action Plans will state the actions our campuses will take as we move forward with a renewed sense of urgency, along with the impacts we expect to achieve. Our Civic Action Plans will be shared publicly, as will our assessments of the progress we are making in achieving the goals stated in the Plans.



## **Appendix B: Campus Civic Action Planning Committee and Committee Charge**

### **Committee Members:**

**Rick Battistoni, Director, Feinstein Institute for Public Service (Chair)**

**Diana Canales, Class of 2019**

**Meghan Griffiths, Assistant Director, Feinstein Institute & Co-Chair, President's Standing Committee on Service**

**Katherine Kranz, Assistant Professor & Chair, Social Work Department**

**Steven Maurano, Associate Vice President for Public Affairs & Community Relations**

**Robert Pfunder, Campus Minister, Chaplains Office & Co-Chair, President's Standing Committee on Service**

**Steven Sears, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students**

**Ralph Tavares, Assistant Dean and Director of Multicultural Student Success**

**Stanley Vieira, Director, Citizenship & Off Campus Life, Division of Student Affairs**

### **Committee Charge:**

**To thoroughly chronicle and evaluate current community engagement efforts across campus, suggesting ways to improve these and move forward with new initiatives.**

**Committee will produce a draft Campus Civic Action Plan to be presented to Provost Lena and Fr. Shanley for their review by the beginning of March, 2017.**