

Community Connections: Partners for Learning, Service and Research

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Purpose

- This interactive presentation will describe the process of implementing a HRSA funded allied health project grant that has generated numerous and varied opportunities for community-engaged scholarship.
- The session will present an overview of the purpose and evolution of *Community Connections*, highlighting progress, challenges and preliminary outcomes from the project as a whole.
- Examples of community-engaged scholarship will serve as a springboard for faculty in the College of Allied Health Sciences to discuss their current community projects and explore opportunities for community-engaged scholarship.

Intended learning outcomes

- Distinguish between the “doing” of community engagement and the “scholarship” of community engagement
- Assess the potential for scholarship as part of one’s community engagement
- Conceptualize ways to integrate community-engaged scholarship into current and future community projects
- Generate a preliminary plan to pursue activities that will result in forms of community-engaged scholarship valued by their discipline/profession, department, and college

Starting premises

- **Similarities between UC-CAHS and MUSC-CHP**
 - Types of academic programs
 - Range of faculty: junior to senior
 - Community outreach activities
 - Well versed in health care challenges facing the nation
 - Medically underserved communities
 - Health disparities
 - Access to care

Starting premises

- **Health professions education**
 - Complex curricula that develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes
 - Students like to see faculty-in-action, modeling what is required of them, especially in a “real world” setting
 - Increase awareness and sense of social responsibility towards unmet health care needs
 - Adequate exposure to future practice arenas

A little historical perspective

- **Mid 1970's:** BS degrees for OT and PT with a 2+2 curriculum design
- **1997:** Implemented interdisciplinary degree in rehabilitation with a 3+3 curriculum design (9 semesters)
 - Occupational therapy
 - Physical therapy
 - Speech-language pathology
- Interdisciplinary learning in core courses
 - Basic sciences
 - Research, administration, ethics
 - Teamwork, professional issues, health promotion

A little historical perspective

- Profession-specific learning in all other courses
- Elective opportunities for additional interdisciplinary learning, some of which were community-based
- Full-time clinical rotations at end of program
- Curriculum in full swing when we wrote our grant proposal for *Community Connections* in early 2002

A little historical perspective

- **2003:** Engaged in major curriculum review and modification
- **2004:** SLP moved to post-bacc. entry and shortened curriculum to 6 semesters
- **2005:** OT moved to post-bacc. entry and shortened curriculum to 7 semesters
- **2005:** PT moved to post-bacc. entry and retained 9 semester curriculum for DPT
- **2006:** Applications to all three programs have doubled and more!

Allied health project grants

- Funded by HRSA with Title VII money
- National workforce goal: Improve access to quality health care through appropriate preparation, composition, and distribution of health care work force
- 9 different statutory purposes
- <http://www.hrsa.gov>
- ysong@hrsa.gov

College track record for allied health project grants

- **1993-1996:** Integrating Geriatrics into Teaching, Service and Research (\$438,117)
- **1997-2000:** Problem Based Learning, Distance Education Curriculum (\$331,096)
- **2000-2003:** AGElink – Advancing Geriatric Education through Community Linkages (\$342,072)
- **2002-2005:** Community Connections (\$368,906)
- **2005-2008:** Community Connections II (\$637,324)

Title VII statutory purpose

- **Expand clinical training sites in medically underserved areas (MUA's)**
 - Expand interdisciplinary community-based learning experiences for students and faculty in MUA's where services are needed
 - Foster reciprocal relationships between **academic and community partners** to promote delivery of needed allied health services for residents living in MUA's in the Lowcountry region of South Carolina

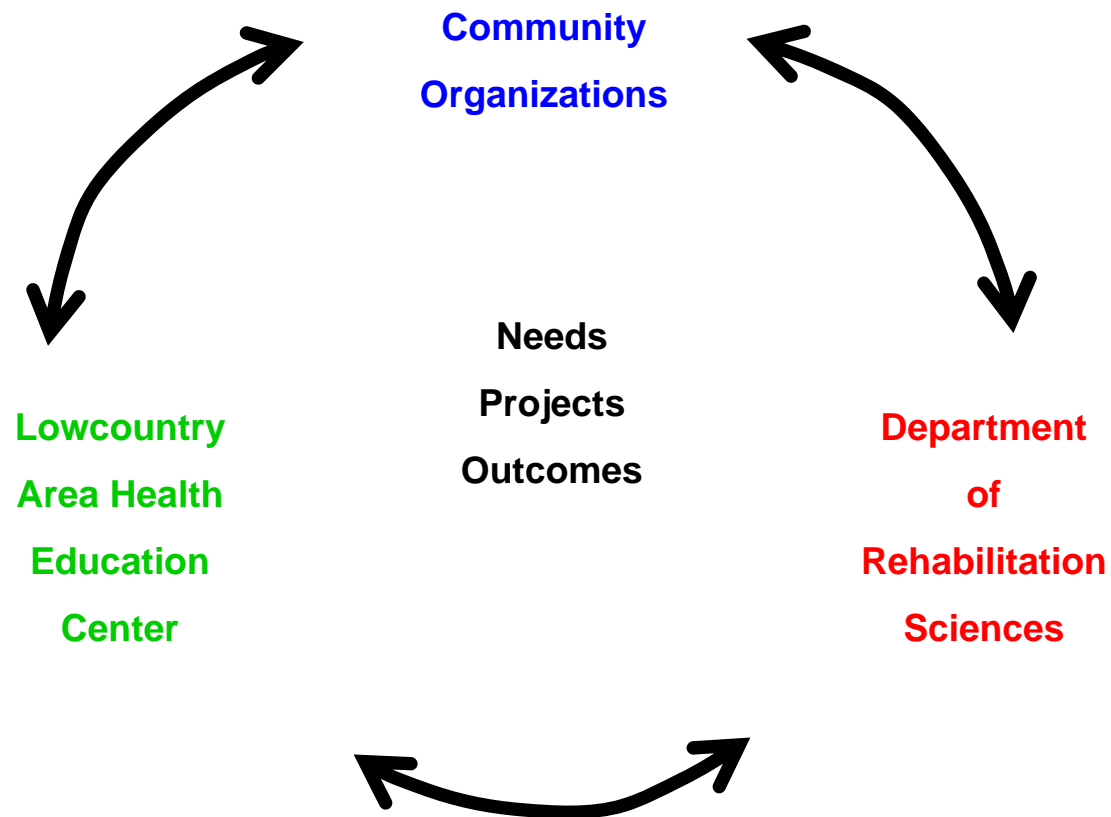
Community Connections: Partners for Learning and Service (2002-2005)

- Three-year allied health project grant funded by HRSA for \$368,906.00
- Grant personnel
 - PI and project director
 - Project coordinator
 - Community liaison
 - Interdisciplinary curriculum specialist
 - Project evaluator
 - 8 “junior” faculty mentors from Rehab Sciences
 - 2 community educators from Lowcountry AHEC
 - 2 external consultants

Goals

- Increase clinical training sites in MUA's in Lowcountry region in which interdisciplinary, community-based learning experiences take place for OT, PT, and SLP students and faculty
- Create a dynamic and comprehensive system of **community partnerships** among three constituent groups to enhance delivery of needed allied health services
 - Prevention and health promotion
 - Education and intervention

Connections among constituent groups



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Making the connections

- Faculty initiated
 - Looking for opportunities for students to engage and gain professional experience
 - Responding to requests from community groups and organizations for service
 - Expanding relationships with teaching patients
- Community initiated
 - LCAHEC aware of unmet needs in region
 - Link faculty and community organizations

Developing the projects

- Exploring faculty expertise and practice areas of interest
- Examining overall scope and sequence of curriculum for student preparation and readiness
- Identifying courses suitable for community-based learning experiences
- Embedding projects within course objectives rather than volunteer experiences
- Facilitating opportunities for interdisciplinary interaction beyond the classroom

Determining need

- Informal interactions
- Needs assessment
- Expectations
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Reciprocal appreciation
- Partnership formation

Implementing service

- Logistics
 - Scheduling, timing, travel, supplies
- Site readiness
 - Amenities, personnel
- Participant willingness
 - Attendance, follow through
- Sensitivity to context
 - Community focus not medical

Evaluating outcomes

- Selecting suitable methods and tools
 - Quantitative
 - Qualitative
- Measuring a variety of perspectives
 - Participants
 - Organizations
 - Students
 - Faculty

Types of projects

- **Single engagement**
 - Athletic screenings
 - Functional status assessment for seniors
 - Work site evaluation
 - Brain injury prevention education
- **Short-term engagement**
 - Week long summer camps
 - Weekly respite programs for families with kids
- **Long-term engagement**
 - Health education seminars for aging in place
 - Exercise and health promotion for support groups

Meanwhile...



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Concurrent mitigating factors

- College formalized workload expectations
 - 60% teaching (18 credits a year)
 - 20% research/scholarship
 - 20% service/practice
- Baseline with some individual variation
- New salary generation requirement very challenging for junior faculty
- New department chair expectations
- Search for creative solutions and better return on investment
- Community Connections the answer to prayer!

Community Connections: Structure

- **Judicious use of grant funds to**
 - Defray personnel costs
 - Offset faculty salary generation requirements
 - Support faculty development activities
 - Support faculty release time
 - Support faculty travel to conferences
 - Pay for faculty travel to community sites
 - Pay for supplies for implementing projects

Community Connections: Structure

- **Enabling mechanisms**
 - Served as the maiden voyage for junior faculty participating in a funded grant
 - Provided a mechanism for collaborative faculty development while meeting the goals and objectives of the grant, and legislative intent of the funding agency
 - Conceptualized scholarship in the context of community engagement as an emergent and unfolding process

Community Connections: Structure

- **Distributed leadership**
 - Steering committee
 - Peer mentors
 - External consultants
 - Community partners advisory council
 - Colleagues at annual colloquia
 - Guest speakers at regular grant meetings

Community Connections: Strategies

- Embedding scholarship within the grant
 - Clarifying annual expectations for participation
 - Reframing the boundaries for scholarly endeavor
 - Promoting knowledge and skill development
 - Developing and disseminating of scholarly work
 - Reviewing and celebrating progress
 - Providing sustained collegial support

Clarifying annual expectations for participation

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Establish community campus partnership	Expand community campus partnership	Sustain community campus partnership
Design community based learning experience	Enhance community based learning experience	Embed community based learning experience in courses
Conceptualize scholarly potential	Develop scholarly trajectory	Disseminate scholarly product
Participate in meetings and annual colloquium	Contribute to meetings and annual colloquium	Influence meetings and annual colloquium

Reframing the boundaries for scholarly endeavor

- Embracing teaching-learning as scholarly work (Boyer, 1990; Glassick, 1997; Hammel et al, 2001)
- Seeing value of scholarly work
- Reconceptualizing the learning experience (Hammel et al, 2001)
- Anchoring the learning experience in course objectives

Promoting knowledge and skill development

- Scheduling speakers to attend regular faculty mentors' meetings on key topics
 - Navigating through the IRB
 - Understanding AHEC as a bridge to the community
 - Defining service learning concepts
 - Understanding the nature of community engagement
 - Writing concept papers
 - Reviewing the literature

Promoting knowledge and skill development

- Bringing in consultants during annual colloquia to address key concerns
 - Year 1 - Barbara Brandt, PhD
 - *A Personal Journey with the Scholarship of Teaching/Learning and Engagement*
 - Year 2 - Sarena Seifer, MD
 - *The Evidence Base for Outcomes of Community-Academic Partnerships*
 - Year 3 – Barbara Brandt, PhD
 - *Community Engaged Scholarship*
 - Year 3 – Sarena Seifer, MD
 - *Sustaining Community-Campus Partnerships*

Promoting knowledge and skill development

- Organizing individualized peer consultation/review for faculty mentors
 - Describing projects to grant team
 - Writing concept papers
 - Submitting conference abstracts for peer review
 - Presenting papers and posters at professional conferences
 - Preparing papers for submission to peer reviewed journals

Development and dissemination of scholarly work

	Year 2	Year 3
• Presentations		
– National	6	4
– Regional	1	
– State	1	1
• Posters		
– International		4
– Regional		2
• Publications		
– In preparation		

Collaboratively reviewing progress

- Setting annual expectations for grant
- Discussing semester progress
- Evaluating annual accomplishments
- Celebrating grant accomplishments

Providing sustained collegial support

- Coaching through distributed leadership
 - Diverse skill set of steering committee members
 - Meeting individual faculty mentor needs
- Scheduling regular faculty mentor meetings
- Valuing talk about work in progress

Successes: Learning

- Increased courses with community-based learning experiences from 6 to 13
- Increased faculty mentors implementing community-based learning experiences from 6 to 11
- Delivered over 700 student community-based practice interventions

Successes: Learning

- Demonstrated positive responses from OT, PT and SLP students to
 - Participation in community-based learning experiences
 - Exposure to preclinical training in MUAs
 - Early interaction and collaboration with other professions
 - Opportunities to work directly with faculty members

Successes: Service

- Developed community-campus partnerships with 10 key community organizations
- Reached almost 2000 community participants in over 100 different sites
- Expanded projects into 10 of 12 counties in the Lowcountry region

Successes: Service

- Demonstrated that recipients of our services
 - Enjoyed their interactions with students
 - Benefited from the programs offered
 - Requested more offerings
- Demonstrated that community partners
 - Appreciated their involvement with the university
 - Responded favorably to the programs offered to their organizations
 - Requested more offerings
- Demonstrated that Lowcountry AHEC
 - Welcomed further collaboration with the university in innovative ways to meet their mission

Competing continuation grant

http://people.musc.edu/~mauldinm/community_connections/community2.html

Purpose

- Expand the scope of Community Connections
- Add a new component that connects science to service
- Develop a mechanism for collaborating with a variety of academic and community constituents
- Establish a “center for community engagement” to coordinate, develop, disseminate model allied health programs that provide prevention and health promotion services in MUAs and HPSAs

Focus

- **Learning** that promotes social responsibility and influences future practice patterns for graduate occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology students
- **Service** that builds on mutual interest and fosters dynamic, reciprocal partnerships between academic and community organizations
- **Research** that embraces the development of community-based participatory approaches and measures the efficacy and effectiveness of graduate student learning and service delivery outcomes

Further questions



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