FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Initiative Seeks to Build Cadre of Community-Engaged Faculty
Faculty are Key Ingredient to Sustained Community Engagement of Colleges and Universities

Community-engaged learning and research are gaining recognition and legitimacy in higher education. The critical issue facing colleges and universities today is how do we institutionalize and sustain them as core values and practices? Having a cadre of faculty with the commitment and competencies to link their scholarship with communities is central to answering this question.

Faculty for the Engaged Campus, a national initiative of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health in partnership with the University of Minnesota and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, aims to strengthen community-engaged career paths in the academy by developing innovative competency-based models of faculty development, facilitating peer review and dissemination of products of community-engaged scholarship, and supporting community-engaged faculty through the promotion and tenure process.

The initiative, supported by a three grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) in the U.S. Department of Education, builds on the work of the FIPSE-funded Community-Engaged Scholarship for Health Collaborative of health professional schools that has been working to build capacity for community engaged scholarship (CES) on their campuses and among their peers nationally (Details at http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/healthcollab.html).

Initiative Co-Director Lynn Blanchard, Director of the Carolina Center for Public Service at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill explains, “Through the Collaborative, we articulated a set of CES competencies and faculty development approaches. Faculty for the Engaged Campus takes this work ‘to the next level’ by collaborating with campuses across the country to test innovative models for developing community-engaged faculty.” Adds Initiative Co-Director Cathy Jordan, Director of the Children, Youth, and Family Consortium at the University of Minnesota, “The Collaborative’s indicators of quality CES and methods for documentation and assessment clearly point to the need for new approaches to peer review – both for products of CES and for community-engaged scholars. Faculty for the Engaged Campus will facilitate the peer review of the many products of CES that are not journal articles, such as policy reports, resource guides and videos. It will also broaden the definition of “peer” to include our community partners, without whom this work would not exist.”

In January 2008, the initiative will issue a “call for applications” to select teams from twenty diverse colleges and universities to participate in a faculty development charrette from May 28-30, 2008 in Chapel Hill, NC. At least four of the teams attending will subsequently be awarded two-year grants to implement and evaluate their designs. The initiative is also developing an online clearinghouse for peer review and dissemination of products of CES that are in forms other than journal articles, and a searchable online database of CES mentors and peer reviewers.

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1 A charrette is an intensely focused multi-day session that uses a collaborative approach to create realistic and achievable designs. Charrettes have mainly been used in architecture, urban planning and community design projects. Faculty for the Engaged Campus will convene campus teams, project staff and expert advisors to collaboratively design innovative models of CES faculty development.
For more information, contact Deputy Director Piper McGinley at fipse2@u.washington.edu or visit the Faculty for the Engaged Campus homepage at http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/faculty-engaged.html.

The Faculty for the Engaged Campus leadership team welcomes questions, comments and suggestions of key articles, reports, people and programs that should be considered as we get this initiative underway. These may be emailed to fipse2@u.washington.edu.

Stay connected with the initiative and related work through the Community-Engaged Scholarship electronic discussion group at https://mailman1.u.washington.edu/mailman/listinfo/comm-engagedscholarship.

Initiative updates and reports will be posted on the CCPH website as they become available at www.ccph.info.

Community-Campus Partnerships for Health is a nonprofit membership organization that promotes health (broadly defined) through partnerships between communities and higher educational institutions. Our growing network of over 1700 communities and campuses are collaborating to promote health through service-learning, community-based participatory research and other partnerships. What ties us together is our commitment to social justice and our passion for the power of partnerships to transform communities and academe. We believe that only by combining the knowledge, wisdom and experience in communities and in academic institutions will we solve the major health, social and economic challenges facing our society. CCPH advances our mission through information dissemination, training and technical assistance, research and evaluation, policy development and advocacy, and coalition-building. Learn more about CCPH at www.ccph.info.

The University of Minnesota was founded in 1851 and is the state's only research and land grant university. It is one of the premier comprehensive, publicly-engaged research universities in the world. It aims to generate and preserve knowledge, understanding and creativity; share that knowledge, understanding and creativity through education for a diverse community; and extend, apply and exchange this knowledge to benefit the people of the state, the nation, and the world. Its commitment to public engagement is exemplified in numerous multidisciplinary and community-engaged centers under the umbrella of the Associate Vice President for Public Engagement, an active community involvement and service learning center, and new promotion and tenure guidelines that recognize and reward community-engaged scholarship.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has existed for two centuries as the nation’s first state university to open its doors. Through its excellent undergraduate programs, it has provided higher education to 10 generations of students, many of whom have become leaders of the state and the nation. Since the 19th century, it has offered distinguished graduate and professional programs. A doctoral/research-extensive university, the faculty is actively involved in research, scholarship and creative work, whose teaching is transformed by discovery and whose service is informed by current knowledge. The mission of the University is to serve all the people of the state, and indeed the nation, as a center for scholarship and creative endeavor. The University exists to teach students at all levels in an environment of research, free inquiry and personal responsibility; to expand the body of knowledge; to improve the condition of human life through service and publication; and to enrich the culture. Through its teaching, research and engagement, the University serves as an educational and economic beacon for the people of North Carolina and beyond.

The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education is a unit of the Office of Policy Planning and Innovation, and is contained within the Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education. Established by the Higher Education Amendments of 1972, FIPSE’s mandate is to improve postsecondary educational opportunities across a broad range of concerns. Through its primary vehicle, the Comprehensive Program grant competition, FIPSE seeks to support the implementation of innovative educational reform ideas, to evaluate how well they work, and to share the lessons learned with the larger education community. For more information on FIPSE, visit www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/fipse/index.html.