



## Community-University Partnerships: What Do We Know?

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*Community-University Partnerships: Translating Evidence into Action*

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## SYMPOSIUM OVERVIEW

*Sarena D. Seifer, CCPH and Armand W. Carriere, OUP*

Community-university partnerships are gaining momentum across the country as a powerful force for revitalizing communities, fostering civic engagement and strengthening the core missions of higher education. The landscape of community-university partnerships includes service-learning, community-based participatory research and partnerships focused on solving a particular problem or achieving a particular goal (i.e., neighborhood economic development, workforce development), among other approaches. The evidence base about these partnerships, factors contributing to their success and failure, and their impact on participating students, communities and campuses is growing, as demonstrated by the increasing number of multi-site evaluation studies, peer-reviewed empirical journal articles, and meta-analyses in the past five years alone. A major challenge for our field is to derive principles and best practices from across this evidence base, to facilitate the ability of emerging and existing partnerships to translate these into practice and policy, and to identify unanswered questions for future study and policy development. A related challenge is to strengthen the research and evaluation components of community-university partnerships for the purposes of continuous quality improvement, knowledge advancement and new partnership development.

Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of University Partnerships (OUP) have jointly planned and sponsored the symposium, "*Community-University Partnerships: Translating Evidence into Action*" in part to address these challenges. Timed to coincide with the annual grantee meeting of OUP's Community Outreach Partnership Centers and with CCPH's annual conference, the symposium is an unprecedented opportunity for advancing community-campus partnerships that truly span the campus and contribute to public problem-solving and healthier communities.

Plenary speakers include: **Barbara A. Holland**, National Service-Learning Clearinghouse; **Sherril Gelmon**, Portland State University; **Lawrence W. Green**, Office of Extramural Prevention Research, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); **Ella Greene-Moton**, National Community Committee of the CDC's Prevention Research Centers; and **Timothy K. Stanton**, Public Service Medical Scholars, Stanford University School of Medicine.

The goals of the symposium are to:

- Disseminate the findings of national multi-site evaluations of community-university and other community-institutional partnerships;
- Explore multiple sets of evidence-based principles and best practices for community-university partnerships;
- Facilitate the ability of community-university partnerships to translate these principles and best practices into actions at the local level;
- Develop an agenda for future research and policy development on community-university partnerships;
- Strengthen the roles of both universities and communities in the research and evaluation components of community-university partnerships; and
- Foster a multi-disciplinary, university-wide approach to community partnerships that includes undergraduate, graduate and professional programs

We have asked the plenary speakers to prepare brief reports framed around a set of questions designed to provoke thought, discussion and action on the part of all participants. This pre-conference document is a compilation of these reports.

**COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS:  
TRANSLATING EVIDENCE INTO ACTION**

*Barbara A. Holland, Panel Moderator*

As long as there have been campuses located in communities, there has been attention to the impact each has on the other – for good and for bad, constructive and destructive, accidental and intentional, real and imagined. Fortunately, the last decade has opened an era of new, more purposeful efforts to create constructive, mutually-beneficial and enduring interactions through formal partnerships between communities and their academic residents. The nature of economic, cultural, social and political conditions for both sectors evolved to a point where the need to learn to work together became so urgent and compelling it could no longer be ignored or denied. Public and private funders and policymakers pushed this discussion along with various funding and policy strategies meant to create incentives for partnerships. As is often the case in human endeavors, incentives attract our attention, and the exploration of the community-campus relationship was accelerated rapidly by actions such as the creation of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the HUD Office of University Partnerships, and various foundation program initiatives requiring collaborative approaches. The resulting interactions and evaluations inspired partners to document the features of their partnerships and capture effective practices. The desire to disseminate and exchange ideas inspired the formation of new affiliate groups, such as Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH), that provide specific venues for further exploration of the practice of partnerships.

Today, experienced participants and members of CCPH and the HUD Community Outreach Partnership Centers (COPC) program meet together in a unique summit discussion to reflect on the state of community-campus partnerships and facilitate further improvements in partnership quality and impact. The opening panel of Sherril Gelmon, Lawrence Green, Ella Greene-Moton, and Timothy Stanton offer us diverse but complementary perspectives on the aspects of community-campus partnerships.

Clearly, we have learned a great deal about the ideal characteristics of effective partnerships. The four panelists offer some examples of the many available lists of partnership features, and all are relatively similar. There is strong concurrence on the core importance of features such as reciprocity, shared planning and power and resources, good communications, clear goals and expectations, etc. Each list of partnership characteristics is quite similar to the others and reflects years of hard work to find the best methods for bridging two very different cultures and overcoming historic tensions in ways that, hopefully, lead to a sustainable level of trusted ability to interact.

We seem to have documented well what the ideal partnership features are, but there is a considerable struggle regarding effective techniques for translating ideals to practice. In particular, there is continuing difficulty around the issue of partnership goal setting and the articulation of one's own expectations of the partnership. Too often, partnerships are launched with a focus on a specific project or funding opportunity, and too little attention is given to the deeper and broader goals and expectations that participants bring to the table. In such a case, partners may assume they understand each other's motivations and rush on toward project and proposal planning. Absent an upfront and continuing investment of time and energy into a candid and comprehensive reflection on the goals and expectations of each partner, all the other features associated with effective partnerships will be difficult to implement and sustain.

In particular, the core values of reciprocity and mutual benefit are difficult to articulate, much less attain, if we do not begin with an accurate understanding of individual and collective goals

and expectations. Both formal evaluations and informal observations reveal that full realization of reciprocity and mutual benefit is the most problematic aspect of partnerships to achieve. This is not completely surprising given the long histories of misunderstanding of each other's needs and motives, and of the biases and stereotypes we have formed regarding each other's capacity to contribute to collaborative activities. In our rush to work together on specific project opportunities, partners may fail to take the time to articulate these historic tensions and to develop new understandings of each other's interests, capacities and limitations.

Perhaps the greatest and unending challenge facing partnerships is the level of time and energy it takes to launch and maintain an effective partnership relationship. Launching a project partnership is fairly easy, but launching a relationship is tricky. Partnerships are in many ways like personal social relationships. The best relationships begin by listening and learning about each other, and discovering how our differences and similarities make us appreciate each other. This hard work of listening and learning in relationships is never-ending. Community-campus partnerships are also relationships requiring a sustained commitment to listening, learning, and appreciating our evolving goals and interests, hopes and fears, strengths and limitations. By focusing more strongly on fundamental relationship development, and giving it the time and energy required, we may continue to make progress in realizing our collective ability to fulfill the defined characteristics of effective partnerships. In this way, the practice of partnerships may escape the trap of episodic attention to individual grants and projects, which tend to create superficial and temporary relationships, and advance to a sustained reciprocal relationship that builds community capacity over time.

Achieving sustainable and effective partnership relationships will, therefore, require some changes in the practices and structure of policies and funding programs. Now that we have a clearer understanding of the nature of partnerships, funders and policymakers will need to consider how their actions may unintentionally reinforce old habits as opposed to intentionally supporting sustainable partnership practices. As Ella Greene-Moton says in her paper: "Funders should be regarded as partners."

The four panelists remind us that we have indeed learned a great deal about community-campus partnerships, and at the same time we still have a great deal yet to learn about realizing the potential of partnerships. Today's shared summit is a unique opportunity to advance this work by identifying specific strategies and actions for engaging other academic and community colleagues and leaders in promoting a more sustained and expanded vision of partnership relationships.

**Barbara Holland, Ph.D.**, is Director of the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, a project funded by the Learn and Serve America program of the Corporation for National and Community Service. She joined the Clearinghouse in April 2002 after two terms as the visiting director of the Office of University Partnerships at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington, D.C. She also serves as a senior scholar for Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis in their Center for Service and Learning, as executive editor of Metropolitan Universities journal, and as Adjunct Professor at the University of Western Sydney. Previously, she held senior administrative positions at Portland State University and Northern Kentucky University. Her publications and presentations reflect her expertise in service-learning research, assessment, community-partnership building, and institutional change. She holds a bachelor's and a masters degree in journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a doctorate in higher education policy from the University of Maryland at College Park.

## **The Evaluation Perspective**

*Sherril B. Gelmon, Panelist*

### **Introduction to my work:**

Sherril B. Gelmon, Dr.P.H., is Professor of Public Health in the Mark O. Hatfield School of Government at Portland State University. She has particular expertise in designing and implementing models of assessment of community-based learning, with attention to the faculty role and to community-university partnerships. She is a lead faculty member for the Campus Compact "Institute on the Engaged Department", and serves as evaluator for the Compact's "Indicators of Engagement Project." Dr. Gelmon has extensive experience in evaluation of educational programs, and was the director of the evaluation of the Health Professions Schools in Service to the Nation program, one of the first national demonstration programs on service-learning within the disciplines. She is a member of the National Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement, as well as the Campus Compact/AAHE Service Learning Consulting Corps. Dr. Gelmon is a widely-published author, and has published monographs on assessment of civic engagement and service-learning for both Campus Compact and CCPH. She is an alumna of the Pew Health Policy Fellows Program, and received her doctorate in health policy from the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan.

### **How do you define a successful community-university partnership? What are the indicators of success?**

- Definition of partnership -- two way (university and community, where organization is proxy for community members) or three way (university, service organization and community)
- Mutually agreed upon set of goals, operating principles, expectations
- Clarity of communication, leadership, power sharing, decision-making
- Sustained commitment, willingness to learn together and collaborate for long-term
- Sharing of roles -- co-teachers, co-learners, co-facilitators

### **What are the factors that contribute to successful evaluation of community-university partnerships?**

- Concrete frameworks to guide the evaluation (What do you want to know? What evidence do you need to know it? What will you measure/observe? What methods will you use to gather the evidence and from what sources?)
- Frameworks build upon accepted principles for partnerships (e.g. CCPH principles)
- Use of valid and tested methodologies, with appropriate degree of rigor for community-based applications
- Responsive to all constituents -- the community, the institution, the faculty, the students, and the partnership itself
- Address key questions of impact of the university's work on the community organization, AND of the community's work on the university, students and faculty

### **What are the barriers that interfere with successful evaluation of community-university partnerships?**

- Lack of acknowledgement of the factors above
- Disinterest in evaluation process and/or findings
- Belief that all activities should be directed towards service and that evaluation detracts from mission of organization by diverting energy into activities that may not be meaningful

- Fear and intimidation that evaluation findings will compromise the work of either of the partners or the partnership itself, and that there is a political agenda behind the evaluation
- Unwillingness to contribute and participate openly and fully in provision of information

**What ideas, recommendations and strategies can build the capacity of funding agencies to support the evaluation of community-university partnerships?**

- Willingness to commit core funds to support evaluation (generally accepted that 10-15% of a project budget should be spent on evaluation)
- Commitment to learn from the results of evaluations and use these findings to inform future funding of projects
- Ability of funders to help build knowledge of evaluation and to build capacity within community organizations to conduct practical and relatively low-cost evaluations (example of "Learning Laboratory" sponsored by Northwest Health Foundation in Oregon)
- Agreement by funders at staff, executive and governance levels of the value of good evaluation
- Responsiveness to "good" evaluation and use of findings; willingness to not commit to poorly designed evaluations that waste limited resources and produce marginal findings

**What ideas, recommendations and strategies can build the capacity of communities to evaluate their community-university partnerships?**

- Access to expert knowledge -- through university/college resources or other community-based nonprofits
- Willingness to commit time and energy to process and analysis of evaluation
- Readiness to integrate evaluation into daily work and not see it as a stand-alone
- Ability to work with experts (usually found in universities or colleges) to develop evaluation frameworks and build in-house capacity to conduct evaluation (often facilitated through work with students in a service-learning or internship experience)
- Identification of resources to help build knowledge through support to attend educational sessions (local workshops, technical assistance sessions or national conferences such as CCPH)

**What ideas, recommendations and strategies can strengthen the ability of campuses to evaluate collaboration across the disciplines, professions and departments when engaging in community-university partnerships?**

- Willingness to commit time and energy to process and analysis of evaluation
- Commit to recognize value of collaboration and assessment of collaboration, and derive learning from this -- as compared to just "doing" and never assessing what is done, what the outcomes are, or what the resource commitments are
- Ability to support partner organizations to work with university to learn about collaboration and to improve upon work by learning from this evidence
- Validation by senior leaders of merits and value of evaluation, and commitment of resources to support the evaluation activities (may be integrated in campus-wide assessment initiative but must show real evidence of action and results to be accepted)

**How can we improve our collective learning about evaluation of community-university partnerships and translate that learning into action?**

- Make a commitment to learning about and from evaluation, and make that commitment evident by senior leadership of various partner organizations

- Commit resources (human, time, fiscal) to evaluation and recognize its value
- Build knowledge through various learning activities to expand the base of expertise to design, implement, analyze and interpret various components of evaluation
- Do not treat evaluation as add-on, but integrate into routine of work
- Support greater number of individuals to become experts in evaluation methods and to share this expertise and further build knowledge
- Seek commitments from funders to support significant demonstration research projects to truly learn about partnerships -- little if any such work going on at present that is being conducted within a methodologic framework that would enable translation and replication in other settings

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## **The Community-Based Participatory Research Perspective**

*Lawrence W. Green, Panelist*

### **Introduction to my work:**

My work in participatory processes in public health began with my graduate studies in public health education at the University of California at Berkeley in the 1960s. It intensified during my year at Harvard as Visiting Lecturer in Health Policy and a consultant to the World Health Organization where I wrote the background paper for the World Health Assembly meetings of 1982, devoted to participation in public health. During my 8 years in Canada, I led a team that reviewed the literature and experience in participatory research, in which we developed guidelines published by the Royal Society of Canada. In my current position, I have been able to put those guidelines to work as a touchstone for grant applicants and peer reviewers in a national research grant program on Community-Based Participatory Prevention Research.

### **How do you define a successful community-university partnership? what are the indicators of success?**

I define a successful partnership between academics and community practitioners or policy-makers as one in which the university's need for important research or knowledge development or training is met, and the community's need for relevant research that answers their needs is also met.

### **What are the factors that contribute to successful community-university partnerships?**

The guidelines mentioned earlier have a detailed set of criteria for the process of conducting community-university participatory research. These depend largely on building trusting relationships, a governance process that assures a voice for the community in research decisions, a mutually agreed research question of importance to both parties, consultation throughout the data collection and analysis stages, and close collaboration in interpreting the results.

### **What are the barriers that interfere with successful community-university partnerships?**

Barriers include the reward system in academia, the suspicion of the community that academic researchers will only exploit their time, and the additional time commitment required of both parties to conduct the research collaboratively.

### **What ideas, recommendations and strategies can build the capacity of funding agencies to engage in successful community-university partnerships?**

Speaking for CDC and NIH, where I have spent the past two years developing interest and support for community-based participatory research, the key to gaining the support of these funding agencies has been the argument that a participatory approach at the front-end of the research pipeline is the best assurance of relevance and utilization of the research at the other end of the pipeline. These agencies, and their supporters in Congress, are concerned that much of the cumulative knowledge from research is not being applied by practitioners and policy-makers. We have argued successfully, so far, that participatory research will enhance the other strategies of dissemination and translation of research conducted elsewhere in populations unlike those faced by local practitioners and policy makers.

### **What ideas, recommendations and strategies can build the capacity of communities to engage in successful community-university partnerships?**

Funding agencies can provide the push on academics to take their research skills and interests to the community, but communities also need to provide the pull. They need to make the

partnership opportunities, the research needs, and the programs and populations available for research known to the researchers.

They need also to take every opportunity during the research process to make themselves more conversant with the research language, if not the theories and methodologies, so that they can engage the university partners on their terms, while also insisting on the validity of their own indigenous knowledge of the community.

**What ideas, recommendations and strategies can strengthen the ability of campuses to collaborate across disciplines, professions, departments, when engaging in community-university partnerships?**

CDC is insisting on transdisciplinary collaboration in the research it will support through extramural funding, as one of several principles. The Institute of Medicine has made a similar appeal for research in public health issues. Much of the funding from NIH and CDC for research centers (CDC, for example, funds some 90 centers of excellence in research) has interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary collaboration as one of the conditions for funding. Deans often dislike centers because it complicates the organization chart and lines of reporting, but centers and institutes have been the usual means of breaking down disciplinary and departmental walls. University promotion and tenure committees also need to be required to give more credit to the multi-authored papers on the CVs of aspiring professors, because the demand for solo-authored publications conspires against interdisciplinary collaboration.

**How can we improve our collective learning about community-university partnerships, and translating that learning into action?**

We need continued development of guidelines for participatory research, based on experience from the field, methodological studies of the existing guidelines as they work in formulating grant applications, assessments of community needs, program plans, and program evaluations. Their use in peer review processes, such as the experience of the California Breast Cancer Research Program, the California Tobacco Control Research Program, and the CDC Extramural Prevention Research Program, can be analyzed more systematically to establish the validity of the criteria and guidelines. Finally, the funding of participatory research projects provides a set of case studies of the process, which need to be examined each in its own right. But we will also need to demonstrate over time the added value that participatory research brings to the research enterprise in terms of better outcomes, better or richer findings, more extensive application of findings in policy and practice.

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For a copy of the full report on *Participatory Research in Health Promotion in Canada*, contact:  
Health Promotion Report  
c/o Royal Society of Canada  
283 Sparks Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7X9  
Canada  
Tel: 613-991-6990  
Fax: 613-991-6996

They will invoice you for \$17.50 Canadian or equivalent U.S.\$, plus postage.

For links to abstracts and publishers for the above citations, go to <http://www.lgreen.net>.

## **Community Perspectives on Community-University Partnerships**

*Ella Greene-Moton, Panelist*

### **Introduction to my work:**

As a direct result of the Community-Based Public Health Initiative funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, in the early 90s, the partnership(s) of which I am a member are very complex and far reaching. My involvement in and contributions to the development of many community-university partnerships both locally and nationally, is influenced by the long history of working with a well defined, multi-faceted collaborative locally. I am involved in the developing, cultivating, maintaining, and sustaining of these long-term partnerships. A very unique aspect of this partnership is that it not only includes community and university, but practice as well.

The community component of the local community, academic, and practice partnership is somewhat advanced. We have learned that the community must recognize the strengths and weaknesses of each partner sector represented. The community has the responsibility of not only learning from its partners, but it must also teach its partners how to partner with the community. This two-way learning process stimulates growth throughout the partnership.

### **How do you define a successful community-university partnership?**

A successful community-university partnership is one that organizes around and or synthesizes its course of work and development through a shared vision, mission, and common goals.

What are the indicators of success?

- longevity
- Individual growth within the partnership
- Partnership's growth and development
- Partnership's influence in the community of interest or where the partnership functions.
- A willingness to accept the accomplishments and failures in the growth process
- A partnership that is willing to invest both time and money in the community of interest to bring about community capacity building

### **What are the factors that contribute to successful community-university partnerships?**

- Trust
- Respect
- Commitment
- Shared decision making
- Equitable sharing of resources
- Shared vision and mission
- Developed operating principles
- Long and short-term goals

### **What are the barriers that interfere with successful community-university partnerships?**

- Partners unwilling or not skilled in developing mutually beneficial goals
- Partners who do not recognize or appreciate each others strengths
- Universities who are not willing to learn from the community
- Unresolved conflicts
- Hidden agendas

**What ideas, recommendations and strategies can build capacity of funding agencies to engage in successful community-university partnerships?**

- Funders should be regarded as partners
- Funders should be included in organizational discussions
- Partners must learn the constraints of funders
- Partnerships should do a better job at proving their case

**What ideas, recommendations and strategies can build the capacity of communities to engage in successful community-university partnerships?**

- If we are going to build successful community-university partnerships, we must have an agreed upon/working definition of “community.”
- There must be a level of engagement that will allow for the discussion of the needs of the community.
- The university must be willing to hear the community when their needs are communicated.
- There must be a realization that building the capacity of the community-based organization who is a partner will ultimately build the capacity of that community of interest.

**What ideas, recommendations and strategies can strengthen the ability of campuses to collaborate across disciplines, professions, and departments when engaging in community-university partnerships?**

- Take the temperature of both campuses for readiness
- There must be a deliberate attempt to connect the two campuses
- The two campuses must develop a shared vision
- There must be open discussions concerning the goals of the two campuses in order to develop common goals
- Articulate campus values
- The undergraduates should be viewed as a pipeline for the health science campus
- Plan joint activities
- Develop a mentoring program
- Realize that the process is important
- The campuses must learn to partner with each other

**How can we improve our collective learning about community-university partnerships, and translating that learning into action?**

- We must share what we know (e.g. develop a “how-to”)
- We must develop a common language from the bench and trench information
- We must develop a respect for other positions
- We must provide opportunities to develop a checks and balance for the translation process
- We must learn how to integrate the qualitative and the quantitative findings to better translate the learning into action

**Recommended resources:**

- Prevention Research Center of Michigan Web site - [www.sph.umich.edu/prc](http://www.sph.umich.edu/prc)

- Publication: Forging Collaborative Partnerships to Enhance Family Health: An Assessment of the Strengths and Challenges in Conducting Community-Based Research. Authors: Dr. Cleo Caldwell, Dr. Marc Zimmerman, Dr. P. A. C. Isichei

## **The Service-Learning Perspective**

*Timothy K. Stanton, Panelist*

### **Introduction to my work:**

Tim Stanton serves as director of the Public Service Medical Scholars program (PriSMS) and senior lecturer in Health Research Policy in the School of Medicine at Stanford University. PriSMS enables medical students to engage in service and research through partnerships established with organizations locally, across the US and overseas. As lecturer, Stanton instructs graduate and undergraduate service-learning courses that focus on public decision-making in local communities and the process and practice of community service. These courses place students in internships with Bay Area organizations Stanton has worked with since 1985.

From 1985 to 1999 Stanton served as associate director and director of Stanford's Haas Center for Public Service. The Haas Center involves more than 3,000 students annually in a wide variety of public and community service activities and organizes faculty, students, and community leaders to develop curriculum that combines community service-based learning in partner organizations with academic study. From 1977 to 1985 Stanton directed and taught courses within the Human Ecology Field Study Program at Cornell University.

Prior to entering higher education Stanton founded and directed a community-based service-learning program for high school and college students in Marin County, California. He consults extensively in community service-learning development for organizations such as the National Commission on Resources for Youth, The U.S. Department of Education, Joint Education Trust (South Africa), and Campus Compact.

### **How do you define a successful community-university partnership? What are the indicators of success?**

Successful partnership: A community organizer friend says that he knows he is functioning in a successful collaboration when he does not always have to be in the room when decisions are made. He trusts that his interests are well enough understood and will be looked after by his partners when he cannot participate in a meeting, just as he understands and will look after the interests of his partners, if they are absent. Although there are numerous ways to assess the strength of service-learning partnerships, ultimately I believe the same measuring stick should be used to evaluate them – do all the partners understand and respect each other's interests and what has brought them together in partnership, and do they trust that these interests will be respected and cared for when they cannot be present to advocate for them in partnership decision-making.

### **What are the factors that contribute to successful community-university partnerships?**

Factors that contribute to successful service-learning partnerships: I think the CCPH principles cover this ground effectively. One addition would be a principle addressing the need for partners to understand and support each other's need to build capacity (knowledge, skills, and political support) necessary to engage effectively in the partnership, which is an ongoing issue in most cases.

### **What are the barriers that interfere with successful community-university partnerships?**

Barriers: To be brief, anything that inhibits partners from addressing the principles: lack of time, funds, requisite skills (both generic to partnership work and specific to tasks to be undertaken), support from institution/organization leaders, community politics, etc.



**What ideas, recommendations and strategies can build the capacity of funding agencies to engage in successful community-university partnerships?**

Ideas for funding agencies: I would recommend that funding agencies encourage jointly prepared proposals from community and campus organizations seeking to partner. In my experience most partnerships are proposed, sponsored, and funded through universities, which tends to enable institutional priorities to drive the partnership and leaves the community partners feeling disempowered. I might go further and recommend that funding agencies solicit requests from community organizations to build their capacities to engage in partnership work with universities and become the prime partnership sponsor soliciting work by universities.

**What ideas, recommendations and strategies can build the capacity of communities to engage in successful community-university partnerships?**

Ideas for communities: I would recommend capacity building in the following areas: orientation to the culture of universities and political context of their university partners; orientation to standards/principles of scholarly research expected of students; practice in translating community information needs into questions of interest to academics; skills in supervising student interns/service-learners; etc.

**What ideas, recommendations and strategies can strengthen the ability of campuses to collaborate across disciplines, professions, departments, when engaging in community-university partnerships?**

Ideas for collaboration among university schools, departments, etc.: The first need is a capacity building one in parallel with that recommended for the community, in the following areas: orientation to the culture of the partner community and political context of community partners; orientation to standards/principles of service, advocacy, community-based research, etc. expected of partner staff and student volunteers to be placed with them; practice in translating community information needs into questions of interest to academics; skills in supervising student interns/service-learners; etc.

I think it is unlikely that effective community-based collaboration among departments and schools will take place if campuses do not have a central office or program for community partnerships and service. At least at large research universities, there is simply a basic need for faculty and staff engaged in community-based research or teaching to know what their like-minded colleagues are doing across the institution. If there is a central community engagement office or resource, it should be encouraged to develop an accessible database of engaged departments/programs and sponsor programs/events where colleagues can gather and get acquainted with each other's work and with engaged community partners. Without this knowledge and trust-building there can be no collaboration. For example, though such campus community building work at Stanford our Medical School-sponsored free clinic is now working effectively with the Law School's neighborhood legal services group sharing referrals, etc.

In addition, Stanford's Haas Center has worked to establish and strengthen an organization within the community most students and faculty serve, which will be able to organize and broker service and research initiatives coming from across the University, thereby encouraging collaboration. Finally, universities can use financial incentives to encourage collaboration (e.g., pilot program development funding for collaborative partnership efforts).

## **How can we improve our collective learning about community-university partnerships, and translating that learning into action?**

How to improve collective learning? Staff and faculty working in community partnership work should be encouraged to think of themselves as engaged in service-learning, and provided structural and pedagogical supports necessary for doing so effectively. This means there should be regular time to meet and reflect together on the partnership and their experience with it, analyze their reflections together, and collaboratively plan actions that follow from this analysis. Important data for this reflection should be feedback obtained from students and clients on their experience of the partnership.

Further, staff and faculty should be encouraged and supported to engage in scholarly inquiry into the work of the partnership both as formative or summative evaluation of the effort and as a means to heighten it's image on and off campus and thereby build political and financial support for it.

### **Recommended resources:**

Campus Compact, Providence, RI, Introduction to Service-Learning: Readings and Resources for Faculty, 2000, <http://www.compact.org>

Community Higher Education Service Partnerships (CHESP), Joint Education Trust (JET), South Africa <http://www.jet.org.za/chesp/default.asp>

Community Partnership Medical Scholars Program: description and funded projects described on Public Service Medical Scholars (PriSMS) website: <http://prisms.stanford.edu>

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