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Community Engagement Institute

2017 Community Engagement Institute

May 17th, 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Inclusive Collaboration in Community-Academic Engagement

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Description

Taking into consideration historical context and how it has influenced relationships with community partners. The historical legacy of a geographic place can act as an invisible barrier to the establishment of mutually-beneficial university-community partnerships. There are methods to overcome these barriers.

Location

VCU ASPiRE, 835 West Grace Street, Richmond, Virginia

Disciplines

Civic and Community Engagement | Community-Based Learning | Community-Based Research | Higher Education

Inclusive Collaboration in Community-Academic Engagement

May 17, 2017

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When we think about inclusive collaboration . . .

- Who have universities included and excluded in the past?

Historical Context

- Organizations and communities have their own individual histories,
- As well as intersecting histories

VCU History



1838

Medical Department of Hampden-Sydney College opens



1854

Medical Department of Hampden-Sydney College **becomes the Medical College of Virginia (MCV)**



1861-1865

MCV remains open through the **Civil War**, graduating 1 class each year



1917

Richmond School of Health Economy (schools of social work and nursing) founded



1920

St. Phillip School of Nursing and Hospital opens -- founded to train African-American women, existed as separate entity within MCV framework



1939

Additional areas of study added overtime, **renamed as Richmond Professional Institute of the College of William and Mary**



1968

RPI separates from W & M in 1962, Wayne Commission recommendations and implementation studies result in 1968 **merger of RPI and MCV to officially become VCU**

1917: Female students admitted to MCV professional programs as a war expedient

1947: First civilian burn unit in the U.S. is established at MCV.

1951: First African-American students admitted to both MCV and RPI. Integration was not consistent.

Richmond History

- Richmond has had a long and troubled history of slavery, segregation, discrimination, and racism that continues to permeate its neighborhoods, schools, jails, and businesses.

Becoming informed about Richmond's history, and the intersection of VCU with the Richmond community, is essential to developing mutually beneficial community-academic partnerships.

What are some ways that VCU
has impacted its neighbors?

1980

As VCU partners with the Carver community to build a better neighborhood, area businesses hope they won't be left out of the picture.

Good Neighbors?



Richmond's alternative for news, arts, culture and opinion

NEWS & FEATURES > MISCELLANY

January 01, 1980

... Virginia Commonwealth University and a neighborhood group, the Carver Area Civic Improvement League, are recommending that the city of Richmond change the zoning for the neighborhood – roughly the Marshall Street corridor from Bowe Street to Belvidere — in hopes of limiting what they term undesirable businesses ...

... They claim the proposed restrictions are unfair and could force businesses like Baskfield's to move or shut down. For VCU, the situation is complex. When VCU's monolithic Siegel Center was constructed with its front on Broad Street and its body extending into the Carver neighborhood, the university went to great lengths to make friends. Many observers point out that VCU didn't want a repeat of the conflict stirred when residents in Oregon Hill vehemently protested VCU's expansion into their neighborhood. In 1997, a partnership with the Carver community was forged to promote growth and opportunity for residents and VCU alike. By all accounts it has been a success. Carver is cleaner now, and safer, too, say business owners, and Carver could

1994, June

BURNING SECRETS; In a Virginia Hospital, A Cold War Time of Strange Experiments



[The Washington Post](#)

June 19, 1994 | [Cliff Honicker](#) | [Copyright](#)

BETWEEN 1949 and at least 1957, the Medical College of Virginia (MCV) ran a secret metabolic lab whose primary goal was preparation for massive nuclear casualties. Imbued with Cold War zeal and scientific arrogance, doctors conducted a series of potentially dangerous experiments on hundreds of unaware human subjects, most of them poor and African American. They were patients, severely burned in accidents, who became unwitting human guinea pigs in the course of their free medical treatment in "Special" burn units set up with Army research funds.

At MCV and two sister hospitals (Dooley, a charity hospital for black children, and St. Philip, a hospital for black adults), about 100 patients and/or volunteers a year were subjected to experimental burning, radiation or antibiotic treatment for what, at least in some cases, were acknowledged to be "investigational purposes. ..."

Petitioning Richmond City Mayor Dwight C. Jones and 2 others

End VCU/MCV Parking on Richmond's African Burial Ground

 [Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice, & Equality](#)

LETTER TO

Richmond City Mayor Dwight C. Jones
Virginia Commonwealth University President Michael Rao
Virginia Defenders of Freedom, Justice, & Equality Virginia Defenders

I urge you to immediately close the VCU-owned parking lot that covers Richmond's African Burial Ground, the city's oldest municipal cemetery for Black people.

It is now universally accepted that all or part of this historic site lies under the parking lot located at 15th and East Broad streets. It is unacceptable that Virginia Commonwealth University, a publicly funded state institution, continues to encourage commuters to park their cars on this sacred ground.

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Swan Song

William Byrd Community House and the changing nature of Richmond's nonprofit landscape

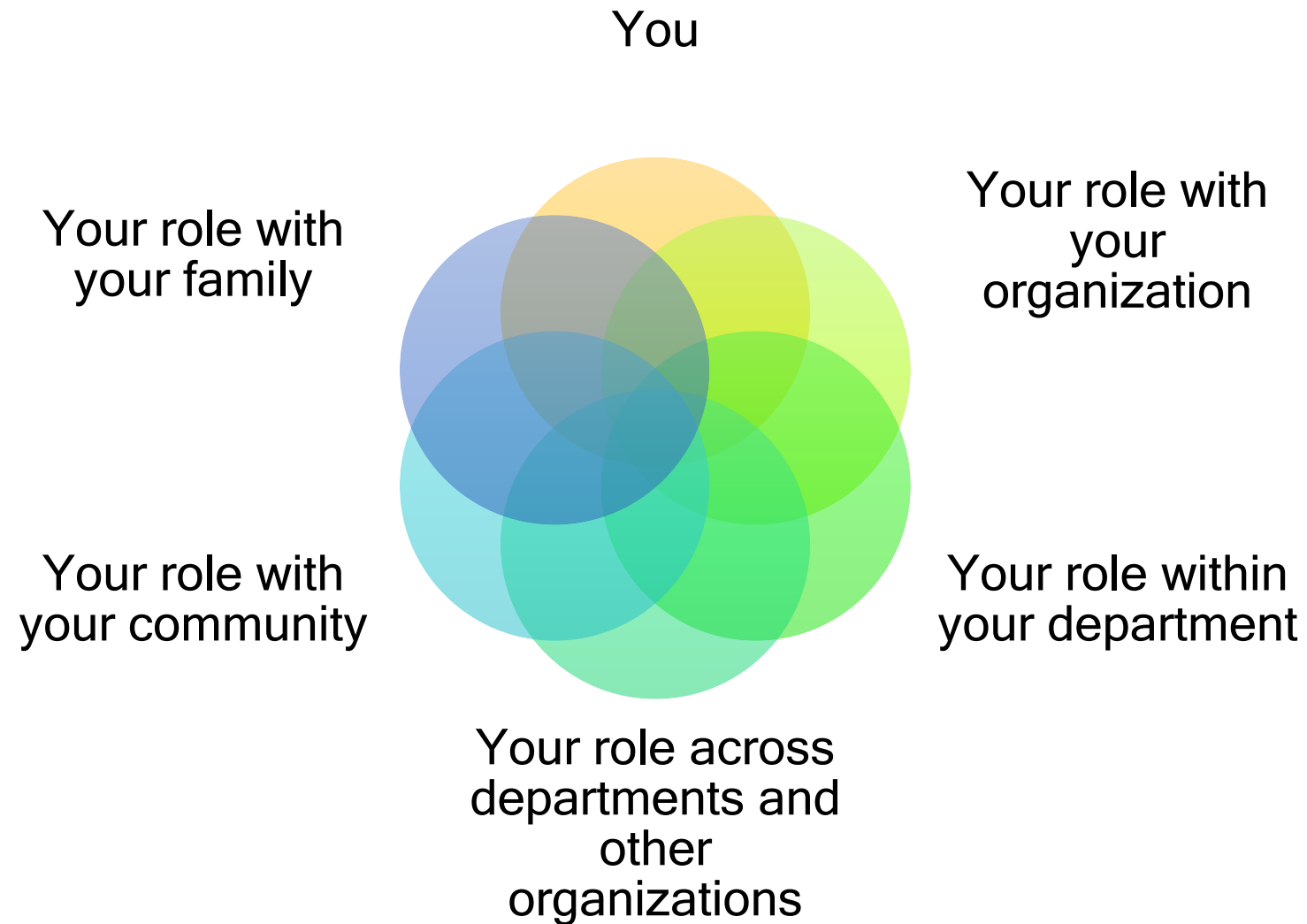
by Mark Robinson

December 10, 2015 10:58 AM

income families. In 2013, the \$8 billion program suffered a \$400 million cut.

Most poor families have moved – or been pushed – out of the immediate neighborhood as VCU students have moved in, drawn to its less-expensive rentals and proximity to campus. Busing children to the nonprofit from around

Woven identities and histories . . .



1994, May

**Richmond
Times-Dispatch** Archives

**WELL-PRESERVED FIND AT MCV
BONES GIVE CLUES TO 1800S PRACTICES**

Author(s): MIKE ALLEN

Times-Dispatch Staff Writer **Date:** May 11, 1994 **Section:** Area/State

A muddy, stinky well full of bones -- discovered two weeks ago during construction at the **Medical College of Virginia** -- is giving researchers clues to some of the grim practices of 19th-century surgeons. . .

Owsley has just finished a study of **medical** discards excavated in New Orleans in 1987 and said he plans to head south to study the **VCU** trove several weeks from now.

"To me, it's very exciting," he said. "A collection like this is quite rare. It can tell you about the history of medicine and the development of surgery."

L. Daniel Mouer, the founder of **VCU's** Archaeological Research Center, has already started playing detective.

East Marshall Street Well Project

“ . . . Although covered by the media in 1994, the discovery of the well remained largely unaddressed until awareness of the well’s history was included in Dr. Shawn Utsey’s documentary, ‘Until the Well Runs Dry,’ which examined the issue of grave robbing and use of black cadavers in medical education in the 19th century.”

Based on analysis conducted of the skeletal remains and artifacts discovered:

- 44 individuals of age 14 or older,
- 9 children under age 14
- Primarily African or African descent
- The well was from pre-Civil War period (1790-1850)

2015

Richmond richmondmag.com mag

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Into the Light

Twenty-one years after the discovery of an old medical school well filled with the bones of men, women and children — most of them African-American — a descendant community grapples with how to right a wrong.

by Tina Griego

September 8, 2015 3:01 PM

In April, VCU launched an extraordinary series of public conversations to tell Richmond the story of the bones, which are still at the Smithsonian. The university's goal, met with both praise and skepticism, is to allow the African-American community to guide the manner in which these individuals, denied their humanity in life and in death, should be memorialized.

Summary

The historical legacy of a geographic place can act as an invisible barrier to the establishment of mutually-beneficial university-community partnerships.

To overcome these barriers:

- The first step is to make conscious the varying 'blindspots' (i.e., implicit associations) that we all hold as individuals as a result of interacting in culture across time
- The second step is to grow your own awareness of the historical legacy of a geographic place: <https://rampages.us/ceinstitute/richmond-neighborhoods/>
-
- The third step is to enter communities with respect, sensitivity, and authenticity.

This video illustrates the ways in one successful initiative has built a sustained and mutually beneficial partnership across these individual and geographic (ie., historical community) diversities:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JlnBHt9lxmE&feature=youtu.be>

More Information

East Marshall Street Well Project

<http://emsw.vcu.edu>

<http://emsw.vcu.edu/about/>

VCU Historic Timeline

<http://175.vcu.edu/timeline/>

Headlines

<http://www.styleweekly.com/richmond/as-vcu-partners-with-the-carver-community-to-build-a-better-neighborhood-area-businesses-hope-they-wont-be-left-out-of-the-picture/Content?oid=1385453>

<https://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-896587.html>

http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/radiation/dir/mstreet/commeet/meet5/brief5/tab_p/br5p2a.txt

<https://www.change.org/p/end-vcu-mcv-parking-on-richmond-s-african-burial-ground>

<http://richmondmagazine.com/news/news/swan-song/>

<http://emsw.vcu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5206/2014/11/Well-RTD-Archives.pdf>

<http://richmondmagazine.com/news/features/into-the-light/>