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Community-Campus Partnerships for Economic Development: Community Perspectives

Anna Afshar

Formal collaborations between community groups and academic institutions to promote economic development have increased substantially over the past 10 years. The bulk of research on community-campus partnerships has focused on the experiences of institutions of higher learning, leaving a gap in our understanding of community experiences. This report draws on a variety of sources, including first-person interviews and academic literature, to bring out community perspectives on what makes for successful community-campus partnerships. The conclusions are presented as practical suggestions for community groups and campuses seeking to optimize partnerships. Four case studies describe lessons learned by participating community groups.

Community-Campus Partnerships for Economic Development: Community Perspectives

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Introduction

What are community representatives saying about the value of community-campus partnerships (CCPs) for promoting economic development? CCPs are playing an increasingly visible role in neighborhood revitalization. More and more, we in the Community Affairs Unit of the Federal Reserve System find ourselves reporting on the outcomes of these collaborations. While community-campus engagements offer potential benefits for both communities and academic institutions, it has become clear to us that there is a shortage of narrative and analytical work clarifying how well these partnerships operate from the community perspective. This paper aims to help fill that gap.

Early CCPs emerged for various reasons, including the need for some academic institutions to repair their tarnished image after aggressive real estate expansion into bordering neighborhoods. During the 1990s, growth in the number of partnerships was propelled by cuts in public funding for community development, the continued decline of many urban areas, renewed emphasis on civic engagement by colleges and universities, and emerging philanthropic support for partnerships.

Since 1995, he number of college and university presidents that are members of Campus Compact, an association of campus presidents seeking to advance higher education's civic mission, has grown from around 400 members to over 900. Their institutions currently engage in partnerships with more than 1,000 community groups. At the same time, the number of government agencies and foundations that support these collaborations through grants and other resources has also grown and includes institutions such as Fannie Mae, the Ford Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the U.S. Department of Education.[1]

There has also been a corresponding increase in scholarship on the subject of CCPs. Research from academic institutions has focused on identifying effective programmatic features and discussions of how to successfully institutionalize community-campus engagement within an institution of higher learning.[2] Grant funding for the partnerships is managed almost exclusively by the institutions of higher learning, so foundations generally report from the viewpoint of colleges and universities.

Three common challenges contribute to the scarcity of literature on the community perspective, however.[3] First, the multiple definitions of "community" (geographic, relational) make it difficult to formulate partnership-by-partnership comparisons. Second, it is hard to control for the influence of other variables on community outcomes. Third, it is difficult to measure the intangibles of community outcomes, including community-building efforts.

This knowledge gap limits the capacity of communities and campuses to leverage their partnerships for maximum impact. In attempting to bridge this gap, we examined a broad array of resources that point to community perspectives on CCPs. These resources included:

- the limited volume of literature on CCPs from the community perspective;
- the wider body of work on community engagements with external resources for the purposes of community development;
- research on CCPs from the campus and funder perspectives; and
- first-person interviews with community and campus representatives involved in CCPs.

Our resulting guidebook can be employed by both community and higher-education representatives seeking to begin a CCP or to improve upon an existing partnership. In particular, we are concerned with CCPs engaged in community economic development (CED), given the centrality of these efforts in promoting neighborhood revitalization. The paper is organized as follows:

Part 1 describes how partnerships undertake CED. We begin by defining community economic development and discussing two of its core components, community building and comprehensiveness. We then present the types of activities that partnerships undertake in order to promote CED.

Part 2 draws upon the experiences of CCPs to identify elements of effective partnerships. We discuss the merits of various partnership structures and then develop a set of components of effective partnerships. Next we elaborate on some inter-partner issues that are of particular importance to community groups.

Part 3 presents **summary observations** from the first two parts of the paper and provides a list of recommended reading.

Finally, in the appendix we present four **case studies** of partnerships that are engaged in CED. These cases were formulated from first-person interviews and offer lessons learned from the community perspective. The cases were chosen to provide a broad spectrum of partnerships in terms of the types of community groups involved and the scope of activities of the engagements.

Part 1: Community Economic Development

What is Community Economic Development?

Community economic development is the process by which a community, through its institutions, improves the economic well-being of its residents. These efforts include economic activities and community building initiatives aimed at strengthening residents' *participation* in and *ownership* and *control* of economic activity. Community groups engaged in CED also seek to influence the external institutions and public policy that affect the economic reality of local residents, primarily by forging alliances with others. Community-campus engagements can be strategic alliances community groups use to effect community change.

Economic Activities

In their 1999 study that examines the experiences of the first 90 CCPs funded by HUD, Richard Schramm and Nancy Nye explain that CED works to improve the economic well-being of residents by engaging in three categories of strategies:

- **Increasing employment and incomes,** through activities such as
    - improving access to the services that workers need, such as childcare
    - providing employment training
    - stimulating business development
- **Providing greater access to capital,** through activities such as
    - encouraging the development of credit unions and loan funds
    - making use of the Community Reinvestment Act
- **Lowering the cost of living,** through activities such as
    - increasing the supply of affordable housing or introducing health cooperatives
    - holding community taxes to a minimum
    - increasing public services

Community-based organizations (CBOs) are increasingly engaging in CED as part of their wider community development agenda. This is because most neighborhood revitalization efforts cannot be sustained unless residents also have employment with incomes that cover the cost of living. The centrality of economic activities to community development is the motivation for focusing our research on partnerships engaged in CED.

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CED and Community Building

A core principle of CED is the belief that residents can be agents of change in their communities. As such, CED involves efforts to foster the local economy as well as bolster residents' ability to sustain change beyond the life of particular initiatives. These latter efforts are defined as *community building*. More broadly, community building is "the process of strengthening the ability of neighborhood residents, organizations, and institutions to foster and sustain neighborhood change, both individually and collectively."[4]

Community building efforts center around three goals. The first is strengthening residents' influence on, or *participation* in, the process of their community's development. This includes efforts to increase the involvement of a broad representation of the community in the planning, implementation, and leadership of neighborhood revitalization. The second goal is strengthening residents' rights to receive benefits from, or *ownership* of, the community development process. This can involve the ownership of real estate development or new businesses. The third goal is strengthening residents' ability to decide priorities and the flow of benefits, or *control*, of community development. This can include, for example, the ability of residents to decide which local companies will receive contracts to relocate to a newly renovated retail district.

In their report based on the experience of veteran community development practitioners, Patricia Auspos et al. note that community building efforts encompass the following four core activities:

- **building the knowledge and abilities of individuals** through leadership training, services and support, skills development, and employment;
- **creating relationships** among residents through which the residents share emotional, psychological, and material support and can mobilize for collective action;
- **strengthening community institutions**, from formal public institutions and private enterprises to informal networks—so they can respond to local concerns and promote general well-being; and
- **creating links between institutions** so they can work collectively to improve the community.

The interrelationships between CED and community building are complex. Both activities can be mutually reinforcing. The process of convening community groups to develop an economic revitalization plan, for example, can strengthen the interaction between these groups. Or building a network of community development corporations may prompt them to organize and advocate around economic issues such as increasing access to public transportation. It is important for

community groups to develop an understanding about how economic and community building activities can be mutually reinforcing in their local context. This understanding can help CBOs develop robust programs and evaluation systems that not only attend to economic activities but also to the assets inherent in community residents, community institutions, and the networks and relationships between residents and institutions.

CED and Comprehensiveness

The literature on community development suggests that a comprehensive approach to community change is more effectual than a series of individual programs. *Comprehensiveness* includes forging horizontal links within sectors such as between a community's housing development organizations. It also includes vertical linkages between agents at the grass-roots, municipal, regional, and national levels. Two justifications are given for the value of comprehensive approaches to community development. First, as mentioned above, the combined results will produce larger impacts than the programs would independently. Second, solutions to neighborhood problems emerge from institutions and policies at all levels and in all sectors.

Therefore, how the problem is framed matters. Looking at a community problem from the geographic boundaries of the neighborhood approaches urban poverty as a problem for neighborhoods and their residents and does not address the external institutions and public policies that shape and affect local conditions. This can be particularly true for concerns surrounding the economic well-being of residents because employment opportunities, access to financial services, and housing affordability are influenced by local, national, and even global circumstances. Auspos et al. suggest that comprehensive approaches have several main principles that correct for the problem of localism. They identify two guiding principles:

1. **Broadening the analysis of the problem** — communities can start by considering the historical, institutional, and structural origins of problems.
2. **Forging effective alliances** — communities are then in a position to identify sources of power outside the neighborhood that can be tapped for change. The following are examples of these types of alliances:

    - national, state, and local policy groups that advocate change;
    - coalitions across neighborhoods that seek to influence public policy;
    - engaging the public sector to affect policy issues; and
    - utilizing private funding sources.

CED and Community-Campus Partnerships

Community-campus engagements can be particularly effective alliances for community groups seeking to engage in comprehensive CED efforts. Colleges and universities possess research capabilities that can contribute to a rigorous assessment of the roots of community problems. They can also leverage their own political and economic influence to help community groups achieve change, or they can effect change directly. For this reason, CBOs across the nation and even globally are increasingly forging relationships with their local academic institutions to promote CED. In order to further the goals of increasing employment, incomes, and wealth of residents while lowering their cost of living, communities and campuses can partner together in a number of different activities.

Partnerships for Community Economic Development

Schramm and Nye have compiled a list of activities that partnerships can undertake for CED. These activities fall into four broad categories, discussed more fully below: (1) building up the organizational capacity of community groups, (2) developing workers, (3) developing work, and (4) targeting campus investment, employment, and purchasing. For each activity cited, an example of a community-campus engagement is provided.

Building up Organizational Capacity

Most partnerships engaged in CED undertake some form of capacity building for community residents and organizations. Activities depend upon the organizational needs of the community as well as the goals of their economic development program. Activities include the following:

Augmenting CBO staff and research capacity. The resources of community organizations are often stretched thin. In such cases, colleges and universities can supplement CBO staff and research capacity through furnishing student interns or by taking on particular research questions as class/student projects. These activities augment the CBO capacity and provide students and faculty with real-world experience. Yale University's Professional Schools Neighborhood Clinic and Law School Clinic provide staff to some projects undertaken by local community development corporations.

Linking community groups to other organizations. Community groups and campus partners can also work together to convene multiple parties involved in CED. Often a CBO will leverage its links to other community groups while campuses provide the venue and use their political influence to bring in business and political leaders. The Los Angeles Trade Technical College has organized a job collaborative to help CBOs get into the job development arena. The collaborative also provides marketing, outreach, screening, and referral support for a one-stop workforce center.

Developing and coordinating neighborhood plans. Community groups and campuses can partner to formulate and/or implement a comprehensive neighborhood economic development program. Our case study on the Fairview-Rutgers partnership describes how residents of Fairview, New Jersey, consulted with Rutgers University to develop a neighborhood revitalization plan. Rutgers law faculty and students have also worked with neighborhood residents to establish the Fairview Village Association, which has oversight responsibility for the economic plan.

Spotlight: Augmenting Research Capacity at EBALDC

The Partners

The East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC) is dedicated to the betterment of the East Bay community in Oakland, California, through the development of physical, human, and economic assets. The University of California at Berkeley is a public institution of higher education whose mission involves teaching, research, and public service.

The Program

Through its internship program with UC-Berkeley, EBALDC provides real-world work experience for Berkeley students who, in return, provide top-quality research on such topics as affordable housing and small business development. EBALDC also partners with Berkeley on class projects where faculty and students spend a semester developing feasibility studies and recommendations for capacity building.

Lessons Learned

EBALDC says that the internship and class research projects are strongest when there is an equal exchange between what each partner gains. For example, students and teachers must be able to provide the professional expertise needed and be in the position where they value the particular real-world experience that the internship offers.

Sources: Heather Hood (director for community partnerships, Institute of Urban and Regional Development, University of California at Berkeley), June 2005; Joshua Simon (director of real estate development, East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation), June 2005.

Supporting the Development of Workers

Communities and campuses can partner to prepare the local labor force for employment in several ways. They can provide training and services that support residents':

Ability to work. Partnerships can work with residents to secure the housing, social services, health insurance, childcare, and transportation they need to be able to take a job. At Yale University, students worked with New Haven community groups to publish information on commuting options to help residents find work in the surrounding suburbs.

Readiness to work. Partnerships can also help residents gain job readiness skills; meet basic literacy, English language skills, and GED requirements; and receive needed job and career counseling. At the Robinson Community Center in South Bend, Indiana, members of the Northeast Neighborhood and Notre Dame University offer local residents GED preparation, job counseling, and job referrals.

Qualifications for work. Community groups can also work with campuses to provide assistance for securing specific types of employment, including counseling about job opportunities and access to school-to-work programs. Child-Care Circuit, a nonprofit that trains early-care providers in Lawrence, Massachusetts, partners with local colleges—most recently Cambridge College—to offer classes that help providers meet the new, more stringent state certification requirements.

Securing work. Partnerships are also helping residents find and secure good jobs by establishing job banks and placement services. Ohio State University in Columbus works with Godman Guild Association to put on job fairs, publish a monthly jobs newsletter, coordinate with city employment programs, and provide an extension agent to help with job readiness, employment training, literacy education, and substance abuse issues.

Spotlight: The *I Can* Self-Sufficiency Program

The Partners

The **San Diego Housing Commission** is a public agency that helps low-income families, seniors, and people with disabilities afford housing in the City of San Diego. The **San Diego Community College District** (SDCCD) provides learning experiences to meet the educational needs of the San Diego community.

The Program

The *I Can* **Self-Sufficiency Program** offers resources for public housing or rental assistance residents to help them attain self-sufficiency. The Housing Commission recruits residents from its housing programs and the SDCCD provides job training, career planning, and access to educational opportunities. In addition, several community-based organizations provide support services for project participants such as job coaching for new employees.

Lessons Learned

The Housing Commission credits its success, in part, to partners' commitment to power-sharing and dividing responsibilities along the lines of partner assets. The SDCCD also attributes the success of the program to the fact that all partners are fully committed to the agenda and fulfill their responsibilities.

Sources: Lois Bruhn (COPC project director, San Diego Community College District), June 2005; Ralene Friend (assistant director for resident services, San Diego Housing Commission), June 2005.

Supporting the Development of Work

Communities can also partner with campuses to develop jobs for residents by working to import, create, retain, or redistribute jobs in ways that meet the employment and income needs of neighborhood residents. These partnerships draw deeply on the technical expertise and local knowledge of the partners but can differ in scale, from a focus on developing small businesses in a few blocks of a downtown area to marketing local products around the country and even abroad.

Job creation initiatives generally involve several of the following pursuits:

- conducting regional labor market analyses and industry studies to support employment linkages beyond the neighborhood;

- training in business planning, finance, marketing, operations, and other business skills;

- providing technical assistance for small businesses;

- developing credit for businesses by connecting them to local lenders and creating lending programs and community credit unions;

- providing land, facilities, and related support through small business incubators, industrial parks, and other commercial real estate projects;

- bolstering local control and retention of profits through assistance in developing or changing business ownership to local, cooperative, or community ownership forms;

- developing business associations and other collaboratives that provide linkages to the regional labor market and make it easier for businesses to help one another; and

- creating demand for local business products.

Spotlight: The Small Business Development Loan Fund

The Partners

The **Main South CDC** operates in Worcester, Massachusetts. **SEEDCO** is an economic development corporation serving southeastern Massachusetts. The **Worcester Community Foundation** works to increase local philanthropy. **Clark University** is a teaching and research institution also located in Worcester.

The Program

Together the partners established a $300,000 small business fund. Loans are made to businesses that have the potential to beneficially impact the neighborhood and are generally short term, intended to help make the business bankable within four years. The Main South CDC provides business plan development and ongoing support.

Lessons Learned

Main South believes that the economic growth that has been stimulated through this project has helped foster neighborhood pride. In addition, the partners' commitment to this initiative has catalyzed their involvement in more expansive community revitalization efforts.

Source: Yary Jaen (program coordinator, Main South CDC), July 2005.

Targeting Campus Investment, Employment, and Purchasing

Institutions of higher learning are large economic entities, some with multimillion dollar budgets. They can retain thousands of employees and purchase goods and services from hundreds of suppliers. Schools also often manage large real estate holdings and investments. And students and their families provide substantial revenue to the institutions as well as the businesses in surrounding

neighborhoods. The economic decisions that colleges and universities make can have a significant impact on their neighbors. The box below identifies some of the direct and indirect impacts of Boston's eight research universities on the city's economy.[5] While the university research community in Boston is larger than those found in most other cities, the figures below provide a helpful indication of the scale and scope of impact that institutions of higher learning can have on local communities.

Some of the Direct and Indirect Impacts on the Boston Economy of the Eight Major Research Universities

o   Research spending at the eight universities was more than $1.5 billion in 2000.
o   In fiscal year 2000, the eight universities spent approximately $1.3 billion on the purchase of goods and services from Boston area vendors.
o   During the next four years, construction spending at the eight universities' may average $850 million annually.
o   In October 2002, the eight universities employed approximately 50,750 people. The universities spending on payroll and on purchases of goods and services within the region supported more than 37,000 full-time equivalent jobs in industries throughout the region in 2002.
o   The universities were granted 264patents in 2000, signed 250commercial licensing agreements, and helped form 41 start-up companies.

Some of the Community Economic Development Efforts of the Eight Major Research Institutions

o   The universities offer their employees a wide range of opportunities to upgrade their skills.
o   The universities also participate in local community development efforts such as Boston University's involvement in the revitalization of Kenmore Square and Tuft University's support of the clean-up of the Mystic River watershed.
o   The universities are also involved in addressing the problems of housing affordability by building residence halls and directly financing development of affordable housing for community residents, such as Harvard's 20/20/2000 program which provides financing for nonprofit housing developers.

Source: Appleseed, Inc.

Programs to target university investment, hiring, and purchasing to local areas can have significant payoff for the community but require significant resources on the part of community-campus partners. This is especially the case where the partnership is engaged in preparing residents and small businesses to apply for employment and business opportunities with the institution of higher learning. Our case study on the partnership between Florence Crittenton Services and the University of California at San Francisco takes a bok at the resources both partners have invested in preparing local residents for university employment opportunities.

Part 2: Building Effective Partnerships

Characteristics of Effective Partnerships

Community groups and campuses partnering for the purpose of community development have learned a significant amount about what does and does not make for successful partnerships. Certain partnership structures, for example, are more empowering of community groups than others. As a result, CBOs are more likely to find these collaborations worth sustaining. There are also core components of partnerships that communities and campuses agree are necessary for CCPs to be effective and mutually rewarding. The conclusions drawn in this part of the paper apply to partnerships for a broad range of purposes, including CED.

Partnership Structures

Partnerships between communities and campuses can take on numerous forms. The evaluation undertaken by Schramm and Nye reveals that not all partnership structures are equally beneficial to communities and their residents. Specifically, this study examines numerous partnerships funded through HUD's Community Outreach Partnership Centers (COPC) and Joint Community Development (JCD) programs. Schramm and Nye cluster the partnerships into different categories, each of which, they suggest, have different prospects for long-term sustainability.

They call the first cluster the *paternalistic/theory-testing model*. Here, the academic institution poses questions about the neighborhood and then proceeds to use the community as a "laboratory" to test its theories. The campus partners with the community to gather data and/or provide students with real-world learning experience. The study found that communities generally perceive these relationships as exploitative and feel disrespected by the school—which, in the instances examined, often acted as if it knew what was best for the community but lacked an understanding of local issues. Community groups rarely find these partnerships worth sustaining.

The second cluster is the *professional/expertise partnership*, where the institution of higher learning works with the community to identify critical problems and then develops responses to these problems. This type of collaboration generates few new skills for the community and often evokes a teacher-student tone, neither of which provides much incentive to the community for continued partnership. A third cluster is a more community-oriented version of the professional/expertise partnership. In this version, the school sees itself as responding to concrete community needs and the community sets the research and action agenda. As such, the community generally has a more positive response to the relationship. However, there is little reason to sustain the collaboration after the particular assignment has ended.

The fourth and final cluster is the *empowerment/capacity-building partnership*, which Schramm and Nye identify as the most community-oriented model. Here the campus works with community leaders to analyze problems, develop agendas, and take action. This model emphasizes building the capacity and power of CBOs and residents in order to help them formulate and carry out their own planning, research, and implementation of community development initiatives—all of which provide incentive within the community to sustain these relationships over the long-term.

Components of Effective Partnerships

Below we have drawn on the experiences of community groups and institutions of higher education to distinguish a set of components necessary for effective partnerships. The community perspectives are extracted from the Engaging Communities and Campuses Summit of community leaders partnered with colleges and universities participating in the Engaging Communities and Campuses grant program.[6] The college and university perspective is drawn from the experiences of the institutions participating in HUD grant programs as recorded by Schramm and Nye. Interestingly, the community and campus experiences examined in these two studies indicate similar conclusions about the essential principles for effective partnerships. Notwithstanding, community groups often had different understandings about how these principles should be applied practically. Below we share the core components of effective partnerships, while highlighting where community groups' perspectives differed from those of campuses.

1. **Shared philosophy of community development** – Partnership success requires that community and campus partners share the same understanding about what they are trying to achieve for the community and the principles for how they will work together. The planning, design, and implementation involved in partnerships should support the larger vision of community development.

    Community groups specify two points of philosophy that they desire to see from academic institutions: the encouragement of self-determination by communities and a genuine passion for community development. The first point reflects a desire on the part of community groups to be seen as equal partners and the second point addresses the desire that the partnership not be artificial or forced.

2. **Ongoing collaboration by partners** – Effective partnerships also require full input and participation from each partner. The level of commitment to this principle is reflected in the structure of the partnership, with the empowerment/capacity-building model understandably being the most conducive for a fully collaborative process. A strong commitment to a

collaborative process at all points in the relationship—from determining partners' interests to establishing partnership goals and processes—is particularly important for keeping the partnership community-oriented where there are significant power or resource differences between the partners.

Community groups express a desire to be involved in all stages of partnership development, especially decisions that will directly affect their activities. For example, they wish to have a say over the selection of college and university students and faculty who work with them.

3. **Creation of a mutually rewarding agenda** – Another essential component of effective partnerships is recognition of the need for each partner to benefit from the relationship, a component requiring careful crafting of the partnership agenda. Some interests will overlap. But often it will be necessary for the agenda to include interests that do not overlap, and for each partner to honor these. The process of creating a mutually rewarding agenda involves having each party educate the other about their interests. It is also crucial to acknowledge where interests conflict and will not be served by cooperation between specific partners, allowing for the fact that this does not preclude cooperation in other areas.

Community groups emphasize the necessity that all interests be made explicit, as hidden agendas serve only to breed mistrust. In addition, the trust that is built between partners through the candid sharing of interests and goals can serve the collaboration well when, inevitably, it is necessary to realign certain goals.

4. **Focus on the strengths and assets of each partner and develop a thorough understanding of local issues** – This component rests on the premise that community assets, not community deficiencies, are key building blocks in sustainable revitalization efforts.[7] It requires a thorough inventory of the assets of each partner, including the skills and knowledge of community residents, the resources of community institutions, and the networks and relationships between community residents and organizations.

Campuses need to understand the full local context. Community partners say that partnership goals are more likely to be met when campus partners have a comprehensive understanding of how problems are played out in the local context.

5. **Focus on capacity building and two-way learning** – Effective partnerships focus on building up the organizational capacity of CBOs to effect change in the community. The second part of this component points to a significant outcome of partnerships: cumulative learning. One of the best sources of guidance for partnerships is the lessons learned by each partner, provided each

partner shares these with the other. This component also has other benefits. For example, the sharing of knowledge and information indicates a commitment on the part of partners to parity in the relationship.

6. **Roles and responsibilities determined by each partner's capacity and resources** — Good partnerships take into account the resources and limitations of each partner and structure roles and responsibilities based on each partner's capacity to do them well.

    A community partner's capacity for partnership activities depends on many conditions, including staff capacity to supervise the work and mentor students, resources to pay for and manage additional staff, other priorities for the use of time and resources, space and transportation constraints, and fit between an organization's responsibilities and the capacities and skills of campus partners to help meet them.

7. **Commitment to patient and long-term relationships that have institutional continuity** — The Engaging Communities and Campuses program concludes that 'good partnerships are created and sustained over time, through the cumulative effects of even the most routine interactions and outcomes."[8] Most partnerships take time to develop, moving from small to larger projects, few activities to many. Before any activities can begin, partners should spend time building trust, developing clear communication systems, and clarifying expectations and responsibilities.

8. **Commitment to continuous assessment of the partnership and a system of accountability for each partner** — Continuous, skillful assessment of a CCP is one of the most important assets of these partnerships. Regular evaluation allows the partners to learn from their experiences, helps ensure that current activities are consistent with partnership goals, and allows the partnership to continually reassess its mission and goals.

    From the community perspective, the review process must include a system of accountability for each partner. Each contributor should be held accountable for quality work and ensuring that others brought into the system carry out their commitments. In addition, communities emphasized the value of a clear evaluation process, which arms them with data and information they can use to garner more internal and external support.

9. **Careful evaluation of the expected benefits to determine whether they justify the potential costs and risks of participation** — Community groups face potential costs and risks in partnership. There are costs associated with other activities that they could be doing and risks

associated with lending their reputations to the partnership. Therefore, community groups should weigh these costs and risks against potential benefits when choosing to engage with campuses.

From the community perspective, this is one of the most important steps in campus engagement but is often overlooked. For this reason, we discuss this topic more fully below.

10. **Address issues of racial, ethnic, class, power, and institutional differences, to develop peer relationships among partners** – Bridging the two worlds of community and academic institution requires ongoing examination of how differences in race, ethnicity, class, power, and institutional cultures affect the relationships between the partners and between the community and the external environment. This is one of the most important components of effective and long-term partnerships from both the campus and the community perspective and is discussed in detail below.

Community groups indicate that campuses show commitment to this principle when community residents are treated as peers and are acknowledged for the skills, knowledge, and experience that they bring to the table. Community groups suggest that one tangible way in which institutions of higher learning can exhibit this commitment to parity is to invite community partners to share their expertise with faculty and students in traditional classes as well as classes and workshops focused on community development.

Cost-Benefit Analysis

Community groups can face risks to their reputation, organizational capacity, and progress towards their goals when they choose to engage in partnerships with colleges and universities. Often these risks are underestimated by the community group and the academic institutions with which they partner. It is important for community groups to undertake a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether the potential benefits of community engagement outweigh the risks and potential costs, and to inform academic institutions about these internal considerations. The following sections comprise a rough framework for assessing the risks and potential costs and benefits for community groups engaging in CCPs. Once again, the community perspectives are taken from the Engaging Communities and Campuses Summit.

Assessing Risks to Community Groups

The primary risk to community groups of partnering with institutions of higher learning is to their reputation and legitimacy. In effect, the community group is lending its credibility to the college

or university whose actions it cannot control. Given that the community group has probably worked a long time to gain legitimacy with its constituency, the risk to its credibility and ability to work within the community may be much greater than campuses perceive. Community groups need to be explicit with themselves and campuses about the extent to which they put their name on the line when engaging in CCPs.

Another significant risk to CCPs is whether the partnership is adequately resourced for the activities that it is undertaking. For the purposes of the following exercise, we make broad generalizations about the resources that community groups and campuses each bring to partnerships. In general, community groups provide access to community residents, and academic institutions provide technical expertise. From this starting point we can develop a framework for understanding what resources are required for a particular endeavor and for assessing whether the partnership is adequately resourced. Building on the experiences of its COPC program, HUD has defined a matrix illustrating the level of technical expertise at academic institutions and depth of resident participation required for particular types of activities.[9]

		Technical Expertise	
		High <---	---> Low
Resident Participation	High ^---	A. Activities that require both sophisticated technical expertise and substantial engagement by residents. E.g., Clinical services (health, law, social services)	B. Activities that involve relative general (non-technical) expertise and skills but require substantial engagement by community residents. E.g., Life-skills training, educational support programs.
	---v Low	C. Activities that require sophisticated technical expertise but little ongoing participation by community residents. E.g., Community development training, technical assistance.	D. Activities that require neither sophisticated technical skills nor substantial resident engagement. E.g., Student volunteerism at local organizations.

This simple matrix can help community groups assess what resources are required to undertake certain partnership activities, whether or not the partnership brings together the necessary resources, and whether the responsibilities have been appropriately distributed between partners, given their resource constraints.

Community groups should also consider the attitudes of the campus group and its level of commitment to the partnership because a higher level of commitment can help mitigate risks. A first step to assessing campus commitment is to consider the extent to which the partnership incorporates the components of effective collaboration discussed above. In addition, community groups have

cited several mediating factors that they take as indication that risks have been minimized. These factors include the following:

- the presence of sufficient, qualified staff at a campus center;
- sustained administrative interest and visible leadership supporting community engagement;
- a track record of quality prior experiences with campus partnerships generally and with a given higher institution and particular faculty;
- discussions to work through issues of trust and accountability; and
- clear expectations about who will prepare students and faculty for engagement activities.

We can summarize the issues around potential risks in the following question: "What is the risk or potential harm of engagement activity in terms of my organization's credibility, capability to produce quality services and products, and ability to maintain respectful and trusting relationships with community residents?"[10]

Assessing Potential Costs to Community Groups

For community groups, there are also potential direct costs of engaging campuses, including the following:

- the time it takes to create work, supervise student volunteers, or participate in research;
- the opportunity cost of not doing funded or billable work using the same staff resources;
- time lost to work with other constituencies (a board, donor base, or other partners);
- loss of organizational identity and privacy; and
- in some instances, a lack of respect for community groups from campus representatives.

We can summarize the issues around potential costs in the following question: "What are the actual and opportunity costs of participation—in terms of time, money, redirected staff resources, or forgone relationships, activities, and opportunities?"[11]

Assessing the Potential Benefits for Community Groups

The following is a list of the top four goals that community groups might have when they engage in CCPs. Community groups can use these as a starting point for determining their own context-specific goals. With an explicit set of goals, the community group should evaluate the potential of the partnership for meeting these goals. The top goals for community groups often include:

- developing the next generation of citizens who understand and can promote needed change;
- increasing the number of community residents who attend the partner university or college and raising the expectations of neighborhood residents (youth and adults) more generally to the idea that they can succeed in college;
- increasing community capacity to address a particular issue at the systemic level; and
- achieving outcomes that contribute to an organization's ability to meet its mission, implement its programs, and deliver products and services.

We can summarize the issues around potential benefits in the following question: "What are the potential benefits of participation in terms of having positive effect on the community, strengthening the organization's ability to meets its goals and carry out its mission, and addressing structural issues that affect the community?"

Community groups can use the above considerations to weigh the risks and potential costs against the potential benefits of engaging with a particular campus for the purposes of community development. Regardless of the size, influence, or resources of a particular school, it cannot be taken for granted that engaging in partnership will further the goals of the community group. Community groups and campuses should also have an ongoing dialogue about the desirability of a partnership. This will allow campuses to suggest mitigating factors that the community organization may not have identified. This can also allow both partners to determine whether risks and potential costs can be further mitigated through the design of the partnership, such as the nature of the organizational structure, the distribution of roles and responsibilities, etc. The willingness of academic institutions to engage in ongoing, open discussion about these considerations can build trust and mutual understanding that in and of themselves can become mitigating factors.

Addressing Race, Ethnicity, Class, and Power

Community groups and academic institutions both attest to the fact that issues of race, ethnicity, and class affect the dynamics of every community-campus engagement. Differences in resources, power, and institutional cultures among partners also impact working relationships.

Partners who are not willing to talk about these differences in an open and ongoing way often lack an understanding of how these town-gown differences affect interaction among faculty, students, residents, and community leaders. In worst-case scenarios, a failure to address these issues can perpetuate community dependencies rather than transform their abilities to improve the welfare of residents. Moreover, participants that are unwilling to examine town-gown differences are more likely to lack a sophisticated understanding about root causes of community problems, which undermines the ability of groups to address systemic or structural factors. On the other hand, community groups point out that partners who choose to educate themselves about town-gown differences "make it more likely that community/campus interactions will be respectful at an individual level and insightful at issue and policy levels." [12]

Given the pervasiveness of these issues and the importance of addressing them, community partners in the Engaging Communities and Campuses program indicated that they value campus partners who recognize and address town-gown differences. Community partners pointed to a set of indicators of parity in CCPs that reveal the potential for robust partnerships. Campuses that address issues of parity have been found to have a better understanding of underlying resource and cultural differences. And academic institutions that understand these differences are more likely to value community processes, interests, capacity, and assets. Community groups suggest the following indicators of parity:

Early consideration of sustainability. Community partners express their strong preference for long-term, sustainable partnerships rather than short-term, one-time projects. According to CBOs, community engagement work requires a sustained effort that develops and deepens over time.

Processes and staffing that distribute authority and funds across partners. Through such efforts, campus partners indicate respect for the competency of community partners, demonstrate commitment to the community, and help build organizational and community assets.

Stepping up into advocacy roles in support of community interests. The willingness of colleges and universities to take on advocacy roles for community partners, especially in settings where community residents do not necessarily have access, is a significant indication of the institution's commitment to empowering the community.

Welcoming community partners into teaching roles on campus. Community partners appreciate it when institutions of higher education tangibly demonstrate their belief that community leaders are equal members by inviting them to co-teach a course, train faculty members, or help design curricula.

Schramm and Nye point out that overcoming town-gown differences can be a formidable task, particularly where there is a history of a school's indifference to, or even negative impact on, a

community. For this reason, they point out steps that some partnerships take to promote parity among partners, including the following:

- selecting key participants that can bridge the gap between community and campus;
- focusing on two-way learning;
- focusing on listening and responding to community needs;
- applying fairness in resource sharing, especially funding; and
- allowing the community group to operate independently (without the university name) if necessary.

All of the above can prove to be useful suggestions. That said, an effective approach to addressing the resource and cultural differences between a specific community and campus must, of course, emerge from discussions about the specific history and dynamics that exist within their relationship.

A Note for Institutions of Higher Learning

A look at the community perspective on building effective engagements with campuses would not be complete without a discussion of the ways in which some communities have been disappointed by these partnerships—if nothing else, this can help new and ongoing partnerships avoid similar experiences. In their 2002 article, David Cone and Paul Payne indicate that their experiences with CCPs and the literature on community building suggest that most community groups see universities at best as irrelevant and at worst as an obstacle. While this conclusion is debatable, their two chief recommendations for how campuses can re-conceptualize their institutional strategy for engaging the community are informative.

First, they argue that schools need to move away from instrumental partnerships where the relationship is limited to a particular project. A project-by-project approach, they explain, fails to recognize the need for a partnership to build upon the successes of the past and relations of people that have worked toward a common end. They suggest that academic institutions need to examine the history of their partnerships with their communities to assess whether the school has made genuine efforts to develop meaningful relationships. One way that schools can do this is by assessing how well they have implemented some of the suggestions for effective partnerships provided in this paper.

Schools can also examine whether their partnerships have been helpful or harmful to communities. There are several ways in which campuses have engaged in destructive dynamics with community groups, leaving the latter wary of working with these institutions. From the Engaging

Communities and Campuses project, community groups shared scenarios in which they felt used by colleges and universities:

- when academic institutions have received funding based on their location and do not share the resources or use them to directly benefit the people behind the data;

- when students are consistently assigned a community as a laboratory without significant preparation and an understanding of context;

- when faculty structure activities without first assessing a community's interests or needs or otherwise fail to plan with community representatives;

- when partners fail to hold faculty and students accountable for completing meaningful work, so that the accountability becomes the responsibility of the community partners or does not occur at all; and

- when a higher education institution takes a position directly counter to a community's stated interests, without informing or engaging community partners about the position.

Cone and Payne also suggest institutions of higher learning need to systematically identify constraints in working closely with the community and see if/how each of these constraints may be overcome. The campus has the responsibility to recruit the support of key leadership within the school as well as realign institutional structures and resources to foster dynamic interaction with the community. That said, re-conceptualizing CCPs must begin with open and candid discussions with community groups. This will allow all partners to understand the community's experience with the school. It can also allow trust to deepen between the community and the academic institution, whatever the starting point.

Part 3: Summary Observations

Community-campus partnerships can be among the most strategic alliances that community groups form to impact the economic well-being of neighborhood residents. The proliferation of formal collaborations between CBOs and academic institutions over the last decade has provided hundreds of partnerships with knowledge about what has and has not worked. A significant amount of work remains to be done, however, to collect and present this information in a way that will be helpful for groups seeking to engage in or improve upon CCPs. This is especially true for lessons from the community perspective, the focus of this paper.

A good part of the knowledge currently available to us has been reviewed in this paper. The following observations summarize the most poignant lessons learned about effective community-campus partnerships from the community perspective. After each section, we recommend resources that offer in-depth discussion of each topic.

Partnerships for Economic Development

❖ **Community-campus partnerships should work towards understanding the interrelationships between community economic development and community building efforts.** An understanding of these interrelationships—including how they play out in the specific local context—can allow for more robust program design and evaluation.

❖ **Successful community-campus partnerships for community economic development attend to local problems while addressing the external systems that influence local conditions.** As such, community groups can benefit from tapping into the economic, political, and institutional resources of colleges and universities to influence the external institutions and public policy that affect local economics.

Recommended Resources:

Auspos, Patricia, Prudence Brown, Robert Chaskin, Karen Fulbright-Anderson, Ralph Hamilton, and Anne C. Kubisch. *Voices from the Field II: Reflections on Comprehensive Community Change.* Aspen, Colorado: The Aspen Institute, 2002.

Building Higher Education Community Development Corporation Partnerships. Washington, D.C.: Office of University Partnerships, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1999.

Hyland, Stanley E. "Issues in Evaluating Neighborhood Change: Economic Development and Community building Indicators." *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research,* Volume 5, Number 1 (2000): 209-217.

Reardon, Kenneth M., ed. *Promoting Local Economic Development: Community University Collaboration.* Bolton, Massachusetts: Anker Publishing, forthcoming.

Building Successful Partnerships

❖ **Community and campus experiences indicate that the most community-oriented partnership model is the empowerment/capacity-building model.** This model emphasizes building the capacity and power of CBOs and residents in order to help them formulate and carry out their own planning, research, and implementation of community development initiatives.

❖ **Effective community-campus partnerships are based upon all partners' commitment to a shared philosophy, collaborative process, and a mutually beneficial agenda.** A shared philosophy on community development helps direct the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. A collaborative process allows for community and campus concerns to be addressed, while fostering learning and capacity-building for the partners involved. Partners must also address the institutional interests of all parties in order for the collaboration to be sustainable.

❖ **Community and campus groups should allot time for relationship building early on, and as an ongoing part of the partnership.** Effective and sustainable partnerships require trust and cohesion among their members, clear goals and objectives, effective communication, and parity among partners—all of which necessitate that partners spend time getting to know and trust each other.

❖ **Community partners must learn to skillfully gauge whether the potential benefits of partnership outweigh the risks and potential costs.** Academic institutions should appreciate the fact that the community group lends its reputation and legitimacy to the school when it chooses to engage in collaboration with the school. CCPs must also learn how to best mitigate risks and potential costs in the design of organizational structure, role responsibilities, etc.

❖ **Community and campus partners must learn how to have ongoing, candid discussions about race, ethnic, and institutional differences as well as power and economic inequalities.** It is important to address these issues and go beyond superficial understandings or assumptions about how they play out in community-campus partnerships, as well as the larger society.

❖ **Each academic institution needs to examine the history of its relationship with the community and, as appropriate, re-conceptualize its community engagement.** Campuses need to move beyond instrumental partnerships, and systematically identify and overcome constraints to developing a close relationship with community groups.

Recommended Resources:

Campus Compact, http://www.campuscompact.org.

Cone, David, and Paul Payne. "When Campus and Community Collide: Campus Community Partnerships from a Community Perspective." *The Journal of Public Affairs*, VI (2002): 203-218.

Cruz, Nadinne L., and Dwight E. Giles, Jr. "Where's the Community in Service-Learning Research?" *Michigan Journal of Community-Service Learning* (Fall 2000): 28-34.

Leiderman, Sally, Andrew Furco, Jennifer Zapf, and Megan Goss. *Building Partnerships with College Campuses: Community Perspectives.* Washington, D.C.: The Council of Independent Colleges, 2003.

Lessons Learned from the Community Outreach Partnership Centers Program. Washington, D.C.: Office of University Partnerships, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2003.

Maurrasse, David J. *Beyond the Campus: How Colleges and Universities Form Partnerships with Their Communities.* London: Routledge, 2001.

The Office of University Partnerships, U.S. Department of Housing and Development, http://www.oup.org.

Endnotes

[1] For more information on foundations that sponsor CCPs, see *Foundation Resource Guide*, Washington, D.C.: Office of University Partnerships, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2002.

[2] Sally Leiderman, Andrew Furco, Jennifer Zapf, and Megan Goss. *Building Partnerships with College Campuses: Community Perspectives*. Washington, D.C.: The Council of Independent Colleges, 2003, 4.

[3] Nadinne L. Cruz and Dwight E. Giles, Jr. "Where's the Community in Service-Learning Research ?" *Michigan Journal of Community-Service Learning* (Fall 2000), 28.

[4] Patricia Auspos, Prudence Brown, Robert Chaskin, Karen Fulbright-Anderson, Ralph Hamilton, and Anne C. Kubisch. *Voices from the Field II: Reflections on Comprehensive Community Change*. Aspen, Colorado: The Aspen Institute, 2002.

[5] *Engines of Economic Growth: The Economic Impact of Boston's Eight Research Universities on the Metropolitan Boston Area*. New York: Appleseed Consulting, 2003.

[6] Leiderman et al.

[7] John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight. *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing Community Assets*. Chicago: ACTA Publications, 1993.

[8] Leiderman et al., 16.

[9] *Lessons Learned from the Community Outreach Partnership Centers Program*. Washington, D.C.: Office of University Partnerships, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2003, 7.

[10] Leiderman et al., 10.

[11] Leiderman et al., 10.

[12] Leiderman et al., 13.

Case Study: NorthEast Neighborhood Alliance & Rochester Institute of Technology
Service-learning and neighborhood revitalization

The NENA-RIT partnership grew out of an already-established neighborhood revitalization plan. This helped the partnership undertake initiatives that support the community's goals as well as remain focused during times of transition.

Background

In 1993, several residents and community groups from northeast Rochester, New York, met to discuss solutions to the problems of poverty, housing affordability, and the lack of business ownership that existed in their communities. They formed the NorthEast Neighborhood Alliance (NENA) and established a 35-member council with a 51 percent resident majority to act as the coordinating body for planning and implementation. Early on, the council made a commitment to ensure that residents would have ownership of all resources, processes, and rules involved in neighborhood planning.

The following year, NENA began work on its Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP), a neighborhood revitalization strategy that it built on the ideas of community self-reliance and the accumulation of wealth. The plan centers around 6 spheres: economic development, housing and energy conservation, public safety, health and human services, youth, and governance. Among the alliance's most significant initiatives under the SNAP have been the development of an urban community farm and the establishment of a land trust, which has since purchased a neighborhood restaurant and a 2.7 acre plot now used for urban agriculture and community gatherings.

In 1999, NENA invited a small group of faculty and staff from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) to explore the possibility of working together on neighborhood revitalization. RIT was not an obvious choice given its suburban location 8 miles from the neighborhood. But after initial discussions, both NENA and the university were interested in partnering, and RIT agreed to the guiding principles of the SNAP.

Partnership Structure and Activities

In the early partnership steering committee meetings, NENA and RIT took time to familiarize themselves with each other's history, resources, and leadership structures. The steering committee then drew up a partnership mission statement, the core principles of which include equal power-sharing and long-term commitment. With this in place, a broader planning group was formed to identify opportunities for collaborative work.

Under a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service, RIT introduced 9 new or re-designed service-learning courses linked to NENA activities— including classes in business consulting, interior design, science and technology studies, and social work. In addition, five new faculty became participants in the partnership, and five independent study projects were completed by students. Additional project and course ideas emerged over time, with each proposal being reviewed by NENA for approval. From RIT's perspective, these learning activities have augmented its co-operative education program (RIT places students in paid professional positions for 10 to 20 weeks) by providing students new avenues for real-world application of classroom learning.

NENA's Executive Director, Shirley Edwards, shares that several student projects have been of particular value to the community. Student improvements to the community's geographic information system maps have been of enormous value to the planning process. NENA is eager to put to use the series of interior design features proposed by students that make use of innovative technologies to reduce costs of housing rehabilitation. The community group is already employing a student-developed business plan for the Greater Rochester Urban Bounty (GRUB), the neighborhood's cooperative farm.

In 2003, the partnership launched the Community Outreach Partnership Center, funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, to expand, enhance, and coordinate the service-learning activities. RIT students also volunteer their time mentoring neighborhood students, and university faculty, staff, and students volunteer their time to plant and weed at GRUB.

Key Challenges

According to the university's Project Director for NENA-RIT, Ann Howard, the partnership has faced at least two sets of fundamental challenges. The first relates to the unpredictability of conditions around the partnership. In particular, NENA has experienced a significant loss of funding, including funds that supported paid staff. The partnership has sought to address this by bringing in RIT faculty, staff, and students to share in some of the problem-solving and decision-making that had previously been handled by paid staff. The partnership has also seen significant turnover of community and university leadership. The focus on the SNAP principles has helped the partnership stay focused in these times of changeover. In addition, RIT is currently exploring ways to further institutionalize the partnership within the university.

The second set of challenges centers on how to manage various relationships— between community and university, faculty and community leaders, students and faculty, and students and residents. These issues include how decisions are made, how to ensure that university interests do not eclipse neighborhood priorities, and the sharing of limited resources. In April 2004, Gus Newport, a community building expert and Rochester native, facilitated a series of community building workshops for the neighborhood. These workshops served to bring the issue of power-sharing between stakeholders into focus. A new series of community–building workshops, again led by Newport, was initiated in the spring of 2005. These workshops focused on building new leadership potential among neighborhood

residents and renewing the SNAP planning process.

Lessons Learned

The working out of the NENA-RIT partnership has underscored the value of using the SNAP as a framework for the activities and guiding principles of the partnership. This framework provided RIT with an exceptional introduction to the values and goals of the community. It also provided the various participants with a common understanding of community development from which to build partnership activities and evaluation processes. It has also acted as an anchor for the partnership during times of transition.

Edwards expresses that another lesson learned has been the need to make time to work out the details of the partnership. NENA leaders and RIT faculty meet at least once a month to discuss the progress of various initiatives and where the community would like to go next. In addition, NENA leaders and RIT representatives sit on the partnership advisory committee that meets monthly. The NENA leader explained that this commitment is vital to being able to work out the nuts and bolts of the numerous projects underway. In addition, it provides the opportunity for partners to fully understand the evolving needs of the community and speak candidly about how well specific projects are meeting community needs. Partnership participants have recently recognized that the SNAP requires constant care and attention in order to assure the collective understanding and commitment required for successful neighborhood plan implementation. As with any effective planning process, there must be formal mechanisms to introduce new community and university participants to the vision and goals embodied in the neighborhood plan and mechanisms to ensure the plan remains fresh and reflective of neighborhood change.

The NENA-RIT partnership found itself working with a well-established neighborhood plan. This allowed the partners to bypass some of the growing pains experienced by other community-campus partnerships in

their early stages. Community groups and campuses may want to consider whether establishing a framework for neighborhood development that is as focused, detailed, and demanding as the NENA SNAP will help smooth their own process and give them a solid foundation to rely on as they face future challenges and transitions.

Sources

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Howard, M. Ann. "Neighborhood Revitalization as the Framework for a Comprehensive Community Service Learning Program." Working paper, Department of Science, Technology, and Society/Public Policy, Rochester Institute of Technology, 2005.

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Case Study: Emerson Park Development Corporation & University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Participatory action research and neighborhood revitalization

EPDC-UIUC is one of the longest-standing community-campus partnerships in the nation. The partnership's commitment to play by the community's ground rules, combined with its participatory action research approach, has helped build a relationship that is community-focused and encourages the sharing of roles and responsibilities.

Background

When industry began to leave the city of East St. Louis, Illinois, in the late 1950s and 1960s, the once-thriving urban area lost over half of its manufacturing jobs. This decline in the city's economic base led to a sharp drop in population and an increase in abandoned housing in the East St. Louis neighborhood of Emerson Park. The municipal government faced a shrinking tax base at a time of cuts in federal and state aid and decided to suspend many services. By the late 1980s, the local government had stopped fixing broken street lights and potholes and had discontinued garbage collection in the Emerson Park area.

In the mid 1980s, a group of Emerson Park residents began to partner around much needed neighborhood revitalization. Under the leadership of community member Ceola Davis, residents implemented clean-up projects, including the demolition of several abandoned buildings, and some residents trained in direct-action organizing. In 1987, Wyvetter Younge, state representative from East St. Louis and chair of the legislature's higher education finance committee, challenged the publicly funded University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) to establish a research and outreach program in her community. The university president responded by creating the University Extension and Minority Access Program and, by 1990, UIUC had completed nearly 40 studies on East St. Louis.

When newly hired assistant professor Kenneth Reardon conducted an evaluation of the University Extension and Minority Access Program in 1990, however, he discovered that the research had been conducted without local participation and the work had provided few benefits for the community. The university then changed gears and adopted a participatory action research approach—a collaborative process that seeks to create positive social change. When the UIUC began to seek out potential neighborhood partners, Davis, who headed the Emerson Park Community Development Corporation (EPDC), saw an opportunity to further her organization's goals. She agreed to partner, provided the university agree to a series of conditions that would give the community control of the research agenda. The University accepted the stipulations and the two partners formed the East St. Louis Action Research Project (ESLARP).

Partnership Structure and Activities

Ms. Davis set out a series of conditions known as the *Ceola Accords* that direct the nature of the partnership: 1) the community will remain in control of the research agenda, and residents will be actively involved in each step of planning and implementation, 2) emphasis will be placed on program development and implementation, 3) the university will make a stronger commitment to raise funds for revitalization efforts, and 4) the university will establish a nonprofit to sustain planning and development efforts.

The first task of the new partnership was to complete a comprehensive neighborhood stabilization plan. In January 1991, local residents formally adopted a program that included plans for neighborhood beautification, housing rehabilitation and development, substance abuse and public safety programs, economic development and job generation initiatives, and community organizing. The partnership started with smaller projects while pursing capacity building initiatives that would allow the community to take on increasingly large-scale projects. For example, the EPDC acquired a 501c3 status in 1995, allowing it to apply

directly for grants, donations, and other funds. In addition, in 1996 the EPDC hired its first full-time, paid executive director, Vickie Kimmel Forby, UIUC alumna and former ESLARP participant.

One of the most significant coups for the community was persuading the East St. Louis city council to relocate a proposed MetroLink light rail station to Emerson Park. University research from the architecture, urban planning, history, and other departments combined with effective community organizing convinced the city that an Emerson Park station would provide residents with much needed transportation to regional employment. Other successes included establishing the Neighborhood Family Housing Program, which secured financing for and built several homes in the area; the implementation of YouthBuild, which funds construction training to help unemployed residents earn union apprenticeship status; and the renovation of Cannady Park, which required major physical redevelopment. Most recently, the EPDC has established a successful charter school and specialized vocational programs in entrepreneurship, music production, and construction.

Key Challenges

The partnership has found it difficult to attract enough resources to effect significant neighborhood change. Numerous initiatives under the 1991 neighborhood plan relied upon external funding, but despite strong neighborhood support for the proposals, dozens of funding agencies chose not to invest in it. Emerson Park residents decided to demonstrate their commitment to the plan by undertaking numerous improvement projects on their own, including cleaning up illegal dump sites and improving the physical appearance of area homes. In response, the State Treasurer established a revolving loan fund to purchase home improvement supplies. Then, after the EPDC obtained 501c3 status, it was able to attract a $35,000 grant from Urban Resources to create a pumpkin patch and Christmas tree farm. The success of these projects demonstrated that

EPDC could manage federal funds responsibly, and the organization was subsequently able to win larger Urban Resources grants for organizational development and HUD HOME grants for housing rehabilitation. The successes of the partnership to date have helped to garner additional resources and recognition for the EPDC. For example, the EPDC was awarded $1.1 million for infrastructure improvements when it was designated a Regional Empowerment Zone in 1999. The rerouting of the MetroLink station, moreover, attracted significant media and academic attention, augmenting the EPDC's credibility and influence.

Lessons Learned

Strong community and university leadership has been a key factor in the success of the partnership and the positive impact that it has had on Emerson Park. Davis and other community leaders pioneered resident involvement in neighborhood improvement at a time when it was difficult to obtain external resources and funding. Their efforts gave the EPDC-UIUC partnership focus, and, in time, partnership efforts attracted additional funding and momentum for neighborhood revitalization. The early commitment of UIUC's president and then the leadership of key university faculty helped to institutionalize the partnership within the university, allowing both the community and university to benefit from the cumulative experiences of faculty and students.

Centering the EPDC-UIUC partnership on the community's ground rules and a participatory action research approach has helped build a working relationship that is community-focused, encourages the sharing of roles and resources, and is action-oriented. As a result, university research and service have concretely contributed to the revitalization of the Emerson Park neighborhood. Moreover, the neighborhood-university collaboration has enriched the learning experience of students and faculty— so much so that numerous students have opted to make a vocational commitment to community development. The mutual benefits

for the community and university have fostered a long-standing partnership that has been able to build upon prior experience and successes. Additionally, ESLARP is now a nationally recognized model that has been adapted for use by other community-campus partnerships.

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Case Study: Florence Crittenton Services & the University of California at San Francisco
Job training and placement

Numerous factors contribute to the success of the employment training and placement program administered by Florence Crittenton Services and UCSF. Among the most important of these factors are the strong commitment and participation of each partner.

Background

After the Hunters Point Shipyard closed in 1973, the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood in San Francisco saw unemployment climb and the quality of life fall sharply. Today, the area of 35,000 residents has an unemployment rate around 19 percent and the city's highest concentration of persistent poverty. Residents face significant challenges to obtaining good jobs and increasing their incomes, including a poor school system and physical isolation—the neighborhood is separated from the larger city by a highway and has few modes of public transportation.

In the wake of welfare reform in 1996, a group of community leaders and local nonprofits that were working on workforce and economic development created a plan to help residents gain access to employment and business opportunities. The group formed the Southeast Neighborhoods Jobs Initiative Roundtable. By 1998, the Roundtable had analyzed the community's needs, established a network of strong nonprofit partners, and was looking for workforce partners.

In 1999, the University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) broke ground on a new 43-acre campus in the adjacent Mission Bay neighborhood, raising questions about the impact the expansion would have on nearby areas. As a result, the university began seeking out ways to improve the surrounding environs and engender neighborhood support. UCSF approached the Roundtable about exploring ways in which the two groups could partner. For the next two years, UCSF representatives participated met quarterly with the Roundtable, and the two worked together to develop a detailed employment and economic development strategy. From these interactions emerged a three-part program. The first consists of an initiative to make local businesses more competitive in the university procurement process. The other two programs provide job training for residents and match them up with employment opportunities throughout the university.

Partnership Structure and Activities

One of the employment programs, known as the Community Outreach Internship Program (COIP), provides training, placement, and job support for clerical and administration positions within the university. Participants are recruited largely from the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood through Florence Crittenton Services, a member of the Roundtable. The program centers on a 10-week training course and a 5-month paid internship administered jointly by Florence Crittenton and UCSF and financed through grant funding. After the program, participants either go into permanent jobs at the university or enter the institution's temp pool. Last year, the internship was put on hold because of a lack of funding, but the university continued its commitment to the program by agreeing to hire qualified participants directly after the training course. Post-training, participants receive guidance and support from a job coach at Florence Crittenton and a job mentor at the university.

The COIP program requires full collaboration between the partners. Florence Crittenton and UCSF work together to maintain a training curriculum that (1) meets the job skills requirements of the university, (2) helps participants determine whether a career in administrative work at a large university is a good fit for them, and (3) addresses participants' needs for soft skills such as time management and goal setting. The partnership has benefited tremendously from the institutional expertise of Florence Crittenton, direct involvement of a university human resource manager, and university support made possible by the existence of a

Community Relations Office. Both Florence Crittenton and the Community Relations Office participate in applying for grant funding.

Approximately 87 percent of participants finish the COIP program and find employment with the university. The partnership is entering its tenth year and currently 10 to 15 participants go through the program twice a year. The partnership provides rewards for all those involved. The participants earn a good salary and benefits through a stable employer. In many cases, these participants may not have been able to make the transition to full-time employment without the support made possible by the program. Through the partnership, Florence Crittenton has access to a large, established employer. Its partnership with UCSF has also facilitated a similar program with California Pacific Medical Center. The university, in turn, gains access to a well-trained job pool with relatively low turnover and is able to foster good will with the community.

Key Challenges

The first challenge to collaboration between the Bayview Hunters Point community and UCSF was concern about the university's intentions. These concerns stemmed from the neighborhood's history as a dumping ground for unwanted infrastructure projects – the area is the home of the city's sewage facility and the former shipyard is now a Superfund toxic site. The university has worked to overcome these concerns through demonstrating a long-term commitment to improving the neighborhood. It has institutionalized a Community Relations Office, encouraged the involvement of key university staff in community-partnerships, and engaged in long-term relationship-building with the Roundtable.

There are also significant financial costs to the COIP program, including the cost of training courses and the internship stipends. The grant-writing process involves its own challenges as both partners are applying for funds from the same pool. This requires significant coordination on the part of the partners to work out the timing and division

of the applications. Moreover, it has been a challenge to attract increased private funding to grow the program, as well as to attract additional university funds.

Lessons Learned

According to the Associate Director of Florence Crittenton, Gwen Henry, a key reason why the partnership works well is the frequent and candid conversations between program organizers. She and her staff meet bimonthly with key representatives from UCSF's Community Relations Office and the Human Resources Office to discuss program details and grant applications. The conversation is frank and sometimes impassioned, but this allows the partners to work out the bumps along the way. This type of engagement is made possible by the mutual commitment of both institutions to see the program be successful.

Henry also believes that the partnership's ability to adequately address the interests of both the community and the university has contributed to the program's success. The program's creator is also a manager in the university's Human Resources Office. Her understanding of the university's employment needs as well as the type of training and support community residents would need to make the transition into the workplace was a vital force in helping to shape an effective program. Building on her initiative, the partners engage in a process of constant evaluation and modification in order to make the program as effective as possible.

It also appears that the Roundtable and university have chosen an appropriate scale and focus for the employment program. UCSF is a large institution with thousands of employees. An institution of this size can yield its financial and political influence in a multitude of ways. But the success of the Florence Crittenton partnership suggests that focusing on one community and building up momentum from a small program may be a beneficial approach. The program participants have the potential to see significant personal benefits, which can affect the lives of others in their community. The limited scale and scope have also allowed the partnership to

develop an effective and sustainable model that can be expanded or modified for use in other communities.

Sources

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Case Study: Fairview Neighborhood - Rutgers University

Capacity building and neighborhood revitalization

The Rutgers-Fairview Partnership illustrates how local colleges or universities often initiate community-campus partnerships. The university's commitment to being a resource to the community has helped the partnership transition from a campus-led initiative to an increasingly resident-driven partnership.

Background

Constructed in 1919 to meet the housing demands of the nearby York Shipbuilding Corporation, the neighborhood of Fairview, New Jersey, has seen considerable urban decline over the years. In 2002, 10 percent of homes were unoccupied in the borough of Fairview, a community of approximately 13,000, and Yorkshire Square, the commercial center of the neighborhood, contained many storefront vacancies. For many years, the Fairview Historic Society has been working to reverse this trend.

When the Wachovia Regional Foundation approached Rutgers University in 2002 about a three-year, $450,000 Neighborhood Development Grant, the university sought out a local community within the city of Camden with which to partner. The campus became interested in Fairview because of the community capacity that already existed in the Historic Society and other community groups and the particular challenges facing the neighborhood – Fairview was one of the last cities in Camden without a neighborhood development plan. Ultimately, the university, the foundation, and the Historic Society agreed to form the Rutgers-Fairview Partnership.

Partnership Structure and Activities

Under the provisions of the grant proposal, the partnership was to establish a one-stop community development center to provide consulting to small business owners and legal assistance to community groups. The center, the "Rutgers Fairview Neighborhood Project," opened with paid staff and commitment from faculty of the business and law schools to provide professional services. Other goals under the grant proposal included developing a plan to increase educational opportunities for local children and adults and the launch of a community policing program. Law school faculty and students also provided the legal assistance necessary to establish the Fairview Village Association, a nonprofit organization that acts as a coordinating body for community development efforts. Throughout the partnership, the university has also provided leadership and community building workshops for neighborhood residents.

The school also focuses on strengthening community representation in the planning process. Soon after the partnership's inception the university sought to broaden resident representation by establishing a steering committee made up of different community and university stakeholders. The committee consists of subcommittees around each of the focus areas of the grant— community safety, housing design, human development (youth and senior programs), and business and economic development. The committee and subcommittees report back to, and get feedback from, residents at town meetings.

The steering committee has come up with several new initiatives. Town residents agreed to pursue the revitalization of the downtown business district through implementing the National Trust's Main Street Program, a model for economic development of a retail district. In addition, the steering committee has participated in producing a comprehensive neighborhood plan, with help from Rutgers' business, law, and urban planning faculty. This plan was initiated by the city of Camden, which has asked local communities to develop their own neighborhood plans to be incorporated into the city plan.

Key Challenges

While various Fairview neighborhood organizations had been engaged in community development efforts prior to the Rutgers-

Fairview Partnership—most notably the Historic Society and nonprofits working with youth—these groups did not represent the full economic, racial, and age spectrum of the community. As the university sought to deepen its own community relations, it began to see an opportunity to catalyze relationships across the neighborhood, particularly across geographic and racial lines. One way it did this was by encouraging groups to work together on the issue of community policing. The University also took an active role in increasing resident participation in town meetings and other planning forums. According to Andrea Schlafford, chair of the steering committee, the Associate Provost Felix James and the other university representatives have been particularly good at fostering relationships across the community.

Another challenge for the neighborhood has been the lack of coordination across community development efforts. The partnership has helped to reverse this in several ways. The steering and subcommittees have been forums that have helped bring together the different groups and individuals working towards community development. In addition, the new Village Association will coordinate activities related to the neighborhood plan and any other real estate and housing development efforts. Moreover, the partnership has helped catalyze the formation of the Fairview Partnership for Youth, which links the various youth-related activities throughout the city.

A remaining challenge for the partnership is how well it will transition when Rutgers closes the neighborhood center next year at the end of the Wachovia grant. At this time, the university will move the remaining staff person in-house. This will be a significant test both of how well the partnership has empowered the community to take on leadership responsibilities and of the long-term commitment of the school.

Lessons Learned

Community members cite Rutgers' long-term dedication to Fairview as one of the reasons for the partnership's progress. The university indicated that it was in this for the long haul by committing key university leaders and faculty, and by agreeing to long-term activities with the community. This, in turn, has helped residents trust that it is worth their time and effort to cultivate the relationship. The true test of the university's commitment will come when the neighborhood grant ends in 2006. That said, Ms. Schlafford affirms that Rutgers has demonstrated to Fairview that "they are part of the community and are here to stay."

A key component of the partnership appears to be the buy-in and involvement of top university leadership, including the personal involvement of the Associate Provost and support from faculty within the business and law schools, which has allowed the institution to commit significant resources to the collaboration. The university has also determined to use its resources to build up neighborhood capacity and respond to specific community needs, rather than push its own agenda. It is this posture that allowed the school to see an opportunity to help bridge the gap between different segments of the community.

The Rutgers-Fairview Partnership illustrates the fact that community-campus partnerships are often initiated by a local academic institution. Rutgers' long-term commitment to being a resource to the community has contributed to the ability of the partnership to make the transition from a campus-led initiative to an increasingly resident-driven partnership. To date, the commitment and work of various community groups, residents, and the university have contributed to stronger neighborhood capacity, including improved networks between the various stakeholders working towards community development, as well as tangible economic outcomes.

Sources

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