Bowdon, M.A., & Carpenter, R. G., (Eds.) (2011). *Higher education, emerging technologies, and community partnerships: Concepts, models and practices*. Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference. 452 pp.

Review by Al Turgeon

*T*his edited book, available in both hardcover and e-book formats, offers a series of chapters describing an array of partnerships involving universities and other institutions that were facilitated by ICT (information and communication technologies) and DT (digital technologies). As evidenced throughout this volume, these technologies have significantly influenced collaborations between institutions of higher education, communities, and their partners, making these analyses extremely pertinent to higher education today. Comprising case studies, reviews, and critiques, the book's 36 chapters provide a comprehensive discussion of technology's impact on higher education and community partnerships.

Higher education partnerships have existed at least since the formation of land-grant colleges, and thus since the mid-nineteenth century, as these institutions could not have been established nor functioned without strong partnerships among individuals, private sector organizations, and government. The key technology then was the printing press, which supported affordable publications and textbooks. Today, computer hardware and software, acting together to form the worldwide web, are the emerging technologies that have made possible new partnerships among universities and their numerous and varied constituencies.

These partnerships and interrelationships are elucidated throughout the book. Each chapter is a unique discussion of an example of technology assisting in the development and maintenance of bonds between universities and communities. Topics range from discussions like Chapter 7, "Integrated Product Teams at the University of Alabama in Huntsville" by Matthew W. Turner, Michael P. J. Benfield, Dawn R. Utley, and Cynthia A. McPherson, which presents a case history in which engineering students communicated with each other and with outside groups on their senior project, to Chapter 26, "Here and Now or Coming in the Future? E-Learning in Higher Education in Africa" by James Kariuki Njenga and Louis Cyril Henry Fourie. The latter chapter describes the challenges of implementing online education in Africa given the current lack of necessary infrastructure and the resistance of African institutions to using ICT in their academic programs. The topics

in the book reflect an impressive breadth of coverage, addressing nearly every means of applying technology to link communities with higher education.

Most chapters propose applicable and intriguing ideas for partnership through technology. For example, Chapter 15, "Web-Based Information Science Education: Leveraging the Power of the Network to Re-Define the Global Classroom" by Kathleen Schisa, Anne McKinney, Debbie Faires, Bruce Kingma, Rae Anne Montague, Linda C. Smith, and Marianne Sterna, discusses the Web-based Information Science Education (WISE) consortium of graduate library and information science (LIS) programs, involving 15 member institutions around the world. Although specific to LIS education, the program provides a model for inter-institutional course exchange through which students at one member institution can take online courses from another, with the institution paying the cost from the student's tuition. The chapter provides a user per-spective on the program as well as walking through its three pillars: quality, pedagogy, and collaboration. One can only hope that this type of institutional collaboration is expanded to other programs and other institutions, as everyone—the institutions offering the courses, the institutions importing the courses, and especially the students taking the courses—benefits from such an inter-institu-tional feedback system. Inter-institutional cooperation is more important than ever in a constrained budget environment. The members of the WISE consortium, and the institutions housing these LIS programs, should be applauded for their bold leadership.

Another example of the book's range is Chapter 29, "Bridging the Gaps: Community-University Partnerships as a New Form of Social Policy" by Caroline Collins, Olga A. Vásquez, and James Bliesner. This short chapter describes a project, La Clase Mágica, through which the University of California at San Diego set up computer labs at various locations within the surrounding county to provide access to learning resources that would help members of marginalized groups prepare for higher educational opportunities. Subsequent expansion of the program to include more sites and other constituencies suggests that it has had a positive impact. The project's philosophy, commitment to collaboration, and impacts provide a unique example of technological implementation across communities.

Not all of the selections within this compendium are espe-cially helpful. Chapter 25, "From Collision to Collaboration: An Expanded Role for Project Evaluators in the Development of Interactive Media" by Karla Saari Kitalong, attempts to describe

the evaluation of Water Journey Through the Everglades, a project that uses information technologies to link experts and end users to ensure completion of its goals and objectives. The author's rambling left me with more frustration than insight. The chapter lacks concrete analysis, and thus fails to provide any valuable information or conclusions.

The contributions about the role of information technologies in community-university partnerships are insightful, providing a broad range of examples in which modern technology is used to foster linkages among higher education, communities, and their respective partners. Before these modern technologies were available, higher education outreach was a noble idea, but extraordinarily difficult to implement in ways that could touch all elements of society. That is no longer true. Even marginalized elements of our society are within reach, as several chapters demonstrate. Although the book often points to lack of funding as an impediment to further progress, the only real impediment is the limitations of our own creativity in developing and employing the available technologies as we foster partnerships to achieve our goals.

About the Reviewer

Al Turgeon is professor emeritus of turfgrass management at Penn State University.