

From the Editor...

Embedding Engagement in Higher Education and Communities

In a beautiful opening essay for this issue, Paul Pribbenow, president of Augsburg College in Minnesota, offers a meditation on why place matters for higher education. From both a theological and a practical perspective, he documents Augsburg's abiding commitment to place as the center of its academic mission and public purposes. He affirms that Augsburg "believes that it is called to be generous and faithful in its place." As Pribbenow describes, Augsburg has more than a story: It has a saga, formed by the sort of people, programs, and values that define an institution, anchor it in its place as an indigenous community, and provide the foundation for its future. Augsburg's saga has led it to its role as a 21st-century urban settlement, a place-based institution rooted in a particular neighborhood, seeking to serve its neighbors and neighborhood in mutually beneficial ways (*Pribbenow, 2014*). Augsburg strives to be "sticking" in its place through authentic work in teaching and learning, being actively present as a neighbor, and taking on "public work," supporting social justice and community-building. Pribbenow encourages us to ask ourselves how we can be "even more generous and faithful in our whereabouts and place."

Other articles in this issue take up this challenge of embeddedness and the evaluation of embeddedness. Rowland and Knapp, a sociology professor and a librarian, point out, through a review of literature, the relatively limited contributions of librarians to engaged scholarship. They advocate for "embedded librarianship" to enhance the information literacy of all those involved in engaged scholarship—faculty, students, research assistants, and community members.

Evaluating the embeddedness of higher education as a public good is discussed by Collins through a study of land-grant extension and its diffusion of knowledge for the public good. He clearly points out the difficulty in documenting and evaluating the construct, particularly the "inherent tension between the demand for accountability and the absence of reliable methods to demonstrate impact for public good."

What about embedding civic engagement into one's life after college? Fullerton, Reitenauer, and Kerrigan's research focuses on the long-term impact of participation in service-learning courses. Their findings confirm that outcomes of service-learning experiences are formative and continue to be realized long after

class is concluded, resulting in “shifts in perspectives, skills, and approaches, that . . . could be called positive, justice-enhancing changes. . . .” Indeed, the subjects of this study expressed gratitude for the opportunity to further reflect on their service-learning experiences of 3 to 16 years previously.

In another study of the effects of service-learning, John Dewey’s theories of social-moral development, pedagogy, and self-actualization served as a lens for investigating the import and impact of service-learning experiences as part of fieldwork in an early childhood teacher education program. In their research studying 155 preservice education teachers over 5 years of programming, Lake, Winterbottom, Ethridge, and Kelly found Dewey still vividly relevant in today’s standards-driven educational systems.

Constan and Spicer examined the results of using outreach to embed career options in precollege students’ experiences. Their article tells how a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) outreach programmer partnered with an educational effectiveness researcher to rigorously assess the outcomes of programs that increased participants’ likelihood of pursuing an education and career in STEM.

Medicare Outreach Program, a collaboration between Auburn University’s Harrison School of Pharmacy and the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), is featured as a Program With Promise. In this program, certified student pharmacists assist Medicare beneficiaries with Part D plan evaluation and selection. Hollingsworth, Teeter, and Westrick document results for SHIP, the community, and students to evaluate the program’s embeddedness or sustainability.

Two Personal Stories are related in this issue. Hicks and Ison Radtke examine community-driven design cases embedded in their respective university design programs. Although grounded in very different sites—one local and the other international—they found that “boundary-spanning methodologies” provided similar outcomes. Back and colleagues relate keen lessons learned by the research team from Texas Tech University as they trained and embedded resident interviewers to conduct over 1,000 door-to-door interviews of a stratified random sample. This article will be helpful for those performing similar activities to meet grant requirements.

The books reviewed in this issue also reflect the embeddedness of community-engaged scholarship within and across academic disciplines and diverse communities. In *Community-Based*

Archaeology: Research with, by, and for Indigenous and Local Communities, author Atalay argues that for philosophical and practical reasons, archaeology must benefit not just archaeologists but communities as well. The book features five cases of community-based participatory research (CBPR) projects that exemplify the approach. Reviewer Vega notes that CBPR is about “decolonizing scholarship and collapsing traditional barriers between scholars and the public. . . .” Coming from Canadian scholar-practitioners, long experienced in CBPR in partnership with indigenous First Nations, is a new edited volume on the topic thoughtfully reviewed by Elizabeth Tryon.

Revisiting boundary spanning, the topic of *JHEOE*'s 18(3) special issue, Parish brings us a fresh review of Ernst and Chrobot-Mason's *Boundary Spanning Leadership: Six Practices for Solving Problems, Driving Innovation, and Transforming Organizations*. The practices—buffering, reflecting, connecting, mobilizing, weaving, and transforming—offer methods for administrators, faculty, and community leaders to embed community engagement as a strategy for “reframing boundaries, weaving work and spaces together,” and enhancing teaching, learning, and scholarship. Finally, the book *Experiencing Service-Learning*, reviewed by Glenn Sterner, uses the unique vantage of undergraduate and graduate students to assist students in making deeper meaning of their experience in communities, faculty members in understanding service-learning from the student perspective, and community members in recognizing their powerful role in the student experience.

As physical entities, institutions of higher education are geographically embedded in their neighborhoods. Practicing engagement means taking critical steps outside the ivory tower to actively embed ourselves in our communities. We thank the authors, peer reviewers, and associate editors of articles in this issue for advancing the understandings that enable us to embed through our practices and policies as scholars, students, practitioners, and community members.

With best regards,
Lorilee R. Sandmann
Editor

References

- Pribbenow, P. (2014). Lessons on vocation and location: The saga of Augsburg College as urban settlement. *Word & World*, 34(2), 149–159.

