

From the Editors...

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For more than two decades, much of the literature on service-learning in higher education has been dominated by presentations of U.S.-based programs and their impacts on students, faculty, institutions, and communities. With the continued, impressive expansion of service-learning across the globe, the long-standing American domination of the literature is giving way to fresh new perspectives on the character of this complex and multifaceted pedagogy. In particular, this new literature brings to the fore non-Western and non-global-North perspectives that challenge many of the norms that have heretofore defined the roles, purposes, character, and impacts of service-learning.

Through this special issue, we shine a spotlight on some of the rich and robust service-learning efforts taking place in Asia. Situated in countries where service-learning has found a strong footing (Hong Kong and Taiwan, in particular), the issue's five articles unpack some of the prevailing questions and challenges that undergird the emergent service-learning agendas in this region. In the articles, we find both familiar discussions about program implementation and new conceptualizations and operationalizations of service-learning. They reveal a growing network of scholars pushing for more and better scholarship on the study and practice of service-learning. They also reveal a dedicated and committed cadre of educational practitioners and leaders seeking to make service-learning a more central feature of their institutional academic and scholarly agendas.

Readers will note that the discussions and research presented in these articles suggest that, regardless of the country or cultural context in which service-learning is practiced, the challenges to institutionalizing service-learning in higher education are universal. As with the extant U.S.-based literature, we find in these articles faculty members and institutional leaders who are struggling to secure service-learning's academic legitimacy among their peers. We also find ongoing debates over the potential benefits and inherent

challenges of requiring students to experience service-learning.

Perhaps most interesting and enlightening is the volume's glimpse into how particular cultural norms and beliefs within this region of the world shape service-learning in its many aspects: the nature of its discourse, the approaches to its practice, and the potential for its success. Indeed, among these articles are several emergent themes that are uniquely Asian, and these, in turn, provide the broader field of higher education scholars and practitioners an opportunity to view service-learning from a new vantage point.

These articles, along with the other Asian-situated service-learning pieces that have recently appeared in international journals, provide a much-needed foundation on which to further study and practice service-learning in Asian higher education.

We are delighted that the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* has provided this space to bring these scholars' work to light. There is much to learn from the robust service-learning and community engagement practice under way in Asia and in other parts of the world. May this special issue spawn additional issues that spotlight higher education outreach and engagement programs and agendas from various parts of the globe.