

Note from the Editor . . .

One frustration that most of us involved in university outreach and engagement endeavors have encountered from time to time relates to the often transient nature of our work. It is not unusual for us to be involved in successful community-campus partnerships and initiatives that have no staying power. They are good for the moment, and then they are gone.

In the research article presented in this issue of *JHEOE*, we learn about the approaches several institutions have taken to address this issue. In “Mechanisms for Institutionalizing Service-Learning and Community Partner Outcomes,” Keely Jones Stater and Eric Fotheringham discuss the results of a research project they undertook to determine whether and how institutionalization of service-learning partnerships affected the perception of program success on the part of community partners. Not surprisingly, they found that sustained institutional commitment, as reflected through budgeting and organizational decisions, had a positive impact on perceptions of success by the target communities.

Lael Gerhart, the author of “Learning Qualitative Research,” the practice story from the field in this issue of *JHEOE*, grew up on a small dairy farm outside Ithaca, New York, alongside her family’s yogurt business. These surroundings served her well as she undertook a research project looking at how urban gardens and farmers markets served as catalysts for community development in East New York. Her story traces the evolution of the project and reflects on the challenges and opportunities presented by this type of research and writing.

The idea of civic engagement has been around for a very long time. For example, at the entrance to the Classic Center in downtown Athens, Georgia, stands the statue of Athena, inscribed with the Athenian Oath, which was taken by the youth of ancient Athens when they reached the age of 17:

We will never bring disgrace on this our City, by an act of dishonesty or cowardice.

We will fight for the ideals and Sacred Things of the City, both alone and with many.

We will revere and obey the City’s laws and will do our best to incite a like reverence and respect in those above us who are prone to annul them or set them at naught.

We will strive increasingly to quicken the public's sense of civic duty.

Thus in all these ways we will transmit this City not only not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.

Of course, quickening “the public’s sense of civic duty” depends upon a clear understanding of the concept of civic engagement. This is the focus of the first of two reflective essays in this issue of the journal. In “The Devil Is in the Details: Defining Civic Engagement,” Margaret Brabant and Donald Braid distinguish between the service-learning and civic engagement concepts and present lessons learned in teaching citizenship through service-learning projects. The authors argue that in order to make civic engagement a reality, universities will need to embrace a “larger purpose, larger sense of mission, and larger clarity of direction.”

In the second reflective essay, “Acting Locally in a Flat World: Global Citizenship and the Democratic Practice of Service-Learning,” Richard M. Battistoni, Nicholas V. Longo, and Stephanie Raill Jayanandhan broaden the conversation about service-learning to reach a global audience and show how projects of this type can lead to a new global understanding of citizenship. They report on the work of three universities to promote a sense of global citizenship through local community service-learning projects and discuss practical lessons learned in these experiences.

Two new books are reviewed in this issue: *Intellectuals and the Public Good: Creativity and Civil Courage*, written by Barbara A. Misztal and reviewed by Kathryn J. Brasier, and *Creating a New Kind of University: Institutionalizing Community-University Engagement*, edited by Stephen Percy, Nancy Zimpher, and Mary Jane Brukardt and reviewed by Nancy E. Franklin. In the first book the author speaks up for public intellectuals and the important role they play in shaping and informing the public discourse, often at great personal risk and cost. The reviewer concludes that for the author public intellectuals are indeed in a category of their own and “act on their values in a way that is qualitatively different from those of experts or other professionals.” Institutions must be encouraged to find ways to identify, promote, and reward this type of publicly engaged scholar.

A cornerstone of Nancy Zimpher’s presidency at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee was the development and implementation of “The Milwaukee Idea,” a broad-based university-community

partnership. This initiative was the focus of a 2002 publication, *A Time for Boldness: A Story of Institutional Change*. The book reviewed in this issue, edited by the same authors who did the original work, adds further reflection to the impact and lessons learned from this groundbreaking effort by assembling a group of authors who were well acquainted with the effort, but who supported different perspectives. The compendium is not a starry-eyed celebration of what went right, but an honest critique of the challenges and opportunities, benefits and disappointments of those who were trying to institutionalize an early community engagement model.

Since the inception of the national Outreach Scholarship conferences, the first held at Penn State in 2001, *JHEOE* has been devoting its fall issue to articles submitted, reviewed, and accepted from these conferences. The next issue of the journal—Volume 13, Number 3—will follow this tradition and include articles emanating from the 2008 Conference at Penn State, “Innovation and Leadership for Engagement.” Please note that the Tenth Annual National Outreach Scholarship Conference, “Pathways of Engagement: Connecting Civic Purpose to Learning and Research—Locally and Globally,” will be held on the University of Georgia campus September 28–30, 2009. Come join us!

Sincerely,
Melvin B. Hill, Jr.
Editor

