

The Guest Editor's Page . . .

sus-tain-able

adj. \sə-'stā-nə-bəl\

1: capable of being sustained

2: of, relating to, or being a method of harvesting or using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged; of or relating to a lifestyle involving the use of sustainable methods.

(Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com>)

In 2010, I had the honor and privilege to serve as chair of the campus committee responsible for planning the 2010 National Outreach Scholarship Conference (NOSC) hosted by North Carolina State University (NCSU), the 10th such conference since the inaugural NOSC at Penn State University a decade earlier. A committee of faculty peers and colleagues here at NC State, each with extensive experience in university-community engagement and outreach, selected as the 2010 NOSC theme “Sustaining Authentic Engagement.” Our goal was to emphasize the importance of building university-community partnerships that address ongoing mutual needs and interests over time as focused on five critical areas:

1. Program: Programs reflecting collaborative, reciprocal, and scholarly work, and building the capacities of all partners, are the defining characteristics of sustained engagement.
2. Place: Active involvement in communities of place, purpose, and practice results in authentic partnerships that grow from academic and community attention to shared mission and vision.
3. People: Valuing and engaging diversity in people, expertise, and culture contribute to the sustainability and authenticity of our communities and campuses.
4. Process: Authentic processes used to learn, teach, integrate, and investigate in and with communities contribute to sustainable collaborations and partnerships.
5. Philosophy: Successful scholarly outreach is built on institutional philosophies and core values embedded in tenets of democracy, collaborative leadership, and mutual respect.

This issue of the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* comprised of articles that expand on ideas and programs presented at the 2010 NOSC. Following an opening letter

from Jim Zuiches, vice-chancellor for Extension, engagement, outreach, and economic development at NC State, we are very pleased to reprint with his permission the text of Penn State University president Graham B. Spanier's opening address to the 2010 NOSC participants. President Spanier reminds us that,

By engagement, [we] mean the synthesis of teaching, research, and service functions that are productively and actively involved with our communities. . . . Embedded in the engagement idea is a commitment to sharing and reciprocity—partnerships, two-way streets defined by mutual respect among the partners for what each brings to the table.

Four original feature articles then follow, each of which addresses a critical aspect of the 2010 NOSC theme. Nancy Franz of Iowa State University provides an overview of the engaged scholarship dossier context for university faculty members seeking promotion and/or tenure, outlines four steps for documenting engaged scholarship in the academic dossier, and lists best practices for faculty members building their engaged scholarship dossiers. According to Franz, "Faculty members can take four steps to prepare an effective engaged scholarship dossier. These include (1) mapping their efforts, (2) determining the impact to be measured, (3) collecting and analyzing data, and (4) telling their engaged scholarship stories."

Mary Hutchinson of Penn State Lehigh Valley critically reflects on a service-learning course based on empirical assessments conducted over two semesters. Beyond the important insights presented regarding the course itself, the author concludes,

The findings from this assessment highlight the positive impact that the English Language Learners Literacy Project partnership had on both the students participating in the service-learning activity, and the community members in the program. They also underscore the need to systematically gather information about impact beyond the methods used in this assessment.

Kim Buch and Susan Harden of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte describe a community initiative partnership between the university and the Urban Ministry Center to provide shelter to the homeless during winter that resulted in both the

formation of a new student organization to sustain the initiative and a service-learning project as part of a Citizenship and Service Practicum course. End-of-course assessments from three iterations of the course documented that the project not only raised awareness of and changed attitudes and stereotypes about homelessness, but also promoted positive civic attitudes and a desire to make a difference in their communities among participating students.

Lorilee Sandmann of the University of Georgia and Gary Miller retired from Penn State World Campus share critical reflections by four members of the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame regarding how they have sustained their own engagement over long careers as well as creating and sustaining impact on communities. Based on the reflections, the authors identify four

dispositions that are critical to all leaders. First, a leader must demonstrate a commitment not only to her or his own role, but to the institution's mission and, most important, to the social purpose that drives the institution's mission and vision. . . . Second, a leader must be willing to engage others, both inside and outside her or his organization, when creating a strategy to implement a vision. . . . Third, . . . A leader must be willing to adapt to changing circumstances and to engage the institution in adapting to changing needs. Finally, a leader must maintain enthusiasm and an inquisitive nature throughout an engaged career.

The issue continues with five articles describing successful sustained university engagement programs recognized during the 2010 NOSC as recipients of the 2010 Outreach Scholarship/W. K. Kellogg Foundation Engagement Awards. Starla D. H. Officer and Robert G. Bringle of Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis and Jim Grim of the Washington Community School and Mary Rigg Neighborhood Center describe a partnership that provided leadership in neighborhoods adjacent to the high school. Ann Chester and Elizabeth Dooley of West Virginia University write about the university's Health Sciences and Technology Academy. Priscilla Salant of the University of Idaho and Laura Laumatia of Coeur d'Alene Reservation describe the Better Together program in which faculty members and students work across disciplines to address critical issues side by side with communities. Yvonne Matthews and Ernest Bradley of Lincoln University Cooperative Extension describe the Men on Business—A College Assurance

Program, a university partnership with St. Louis Public Schools. Finally, Jay F. Levine, Glenn Hargett, J. P. McCann, Pat Donovan Potts, and Sheila Pierce from North Carolina State University's describe the Riverworks at Sturgeon City program, which is revitalizing the Wilson Bay area of Jacksonville, North Carolina, as a functional greenspace and was the winner of the 2010 C. Peter Magrath University/Community Engagement Award.

The issue closes with reviews of five outstanding books, each of which contributes to the issue's focus on sustaining authentic engagement.

So on behalf of the *Journal's* editorial staff at the University of Georgia, and my outreach and engagement colleagues here at North Carolina State University, I wish for you the reader continued success in building and sustaining authentic engagement and outreach initiatives built upon meaningful university-community partnerships. It is our further hope that the ideas and programs described in this issue will serve to strengthen such initiatives to an even greater extent.

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