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# Informing the Community-based Learning Experience with Harold McNaron and August White

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*Welcome to PDXPLORES a Portland State research podcast featuring scholarship, innovations, and discoveries pushing the boundaries of knowledge practice and what is possible for the benefit of our communities and the world.*

**Harold McNaron:** I'm Harold McNaron. I'm the teaching learning and engagement associate in the Office of Academic Innovation here at Portland State.

**August White:** My name is August White. I am a graduate assistant with the Office of Academic Innovation and the teaching learning assessment and engagement team.

**Harold McNaron:** My work in the Office of Academic Innovation is to support faculty who teach community-based learning courses, as well as to support the ways that Portland State partners with, overlaps with, supports what's going on off campus and off campus communities.

**August White:** My work with the office of academic innovation includes working with Harold in the community-based learning projects and practices, helping to figure out how we can best enhance and connect the work that we're doing on campus with the work that's being done around the city off campus. As well as with teaching and learning, helping to support faculty, graduate teaching assistants, staff, and ultimately students in a rich educational experience.

The American Association of Colleges and Universities has constructed several different rubrics under their VALUE program, which stands for Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education. The project with AACU that we're participating in is the Advancing Evidence on Civic and Community Based Education in Higher Education Project.

And this project is really designed for AACU to work with PSU, to give us really high-level feedback on student data about informing on certain performance measures, including things like written communication skills, civic engagement, things that AACU has found that future employers are looking at and graduates are really hoping to achieve with their degree.

**Harold McNaron:** The goal of the AACU VALUE rubric, and specifically the civic engagement project, is to inform how students are experiencing our community-based learning, our service learning community engagement, how that happens on campus. We

hope to take that data and to apply it to and use it for Portland State's specific focus on racial justice. We are looking at not just student civic engagement outcomes at Portland State, but how do those relate to racial justice? So how do students of color experience community-based learning at Portland State? How do queer students experience community-based learning at Portland State? So hopefully if we can get enough demographic information to overlay with the student work that we're submitting to be measured against the value rubrics we can find out and inform how we might better serve the needs of students of color, better serve the needs of other minoritized groups on campus so that we might do our work or especially our community engaged work in a more equitable and just manner.

**August White:** One of the incredible benefits of the amount of community-based learning opportunities that we have at PSU is that we have so many opportunities to provide support to the community and also to receive learning from so many places outside of the classroom, which is so rich and important. And we're really hopeful that through this project, we can have a clearer sense of what kind of community-based learning is happening on campus and how to really make sure that we are targeting that aim of committing to racial justice, trying to mitigate characteristics of white supremacy culture and really support our faculty and ultimately our students in the experience of having a rich community-based partnership learning experience at PSU

**Harold McNaron:** I'm Harold McNaron.

**August White:** and I'm August White and our project seeks to inform future community-based learning efforts on campus with a particular focus on racial justice.