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Enacting True Partnerships within Community-Based Learning: Faculty and Community Partners Reflect on the Challenges of Engagement

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Enacting True Partnerships within Community-Based Learning: Faculty and Community Partners Reflect on the Challenges of Engagement

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Abstract

In the past two decades, the literature on campus-community partnerships as core components of pedagogies of engagement has grown exponentially. In this article, the director and a longtime faculty member of Portland State University's capstone program report on interviews conducted with ten faculty-community partner pairs, gleaning insights on both the challenges of and lessons learned through partnering. This research adds to the literature through its use of relational methods that bring the voices of interviewees to readers, revealing a depth of connection across the institutional divide.

Portland State University (PSU) has developed the largest capstone community-based learning program in the nation, engaging more than 4,300 students in 240 capstone courses annually. At the heart of these community-based learning courses are campus-community partnerships and the engagement among students, faculty, and community partner stakeholders that results from these partnerships. The premise of partnerships in community-based pedagogical approaches rests in the belief that partnerships benefit the community, enhance learning for students, and deepen the teaching and scholarship of faculty.

Campus-community partnerships have been explicitly promoted since the 1990s, and since that time, much research has been conducted on the impacts to students of community-based learning. Relatively little literature, however, details the lived experiences of the faculty and community members who create and sustain these partnerships. Given the capstone program's fundamental commitment to relationality in all of its operations (as detailed in previous articles in this issue, including those focused on capstone nuts-and-bolts and the ethos and practices of capstone faculty support efforts), we desired to learn from our faculty and community partners in ways that both reflected and deepened the relational processes by which we seek to operate.

Review of the Literature

As we began this work, we reviewed the literature on the principles and techniques recommended in the field (Driscoll et al. 1998), incorporated the wisdom of scholars who have documented their insights on campus-community partnerships (Bringle and

Hatcher 2002), consulted existing frameworks for conceptualizing this work (Cox 2000), and examined critical elements and characteristics of partnerships (Leiderman et al. 2003; Sandy and Holland 2006). Blouin and Perry (2009) conducted interviews with leaders of community-based organizations, identifying several common obstacles to successful community-based learning from the community partners' perspectives, including lack of preparation for students' encounters with the community partners' clients, communication breakdowns (or a complete lack of communication) with faculty, and drains on organizational resources to support student learners. More recently, Morell, Sorenson, and Howarth (2015); Littlepage, Gazley, and Bennett (2012); and Curwood et al. (2011) have researched the impact of community-based learning on community partners, suggested models for mutually beneficial partnership, and offered correctives to university-dominated discourse on the value of community-based learning through a variety of methods.

Given the PSU capstone program's fundamental commitment to centering relationality, reciprocity, and mutuality in its community-based courses, we chose to ground this research in qualitative interviews with *both* faculty and community partners, so that the insights shared in this article may be deeply informed by their voices. This current article extends a previous piece published by the authors (Kerrigan and Reitenauer 2012) which offers interviewees' rich descriptions of the gifts in their partnership experiences. The contribution made by this article is the braiding of insights about challenges, lessons learned, and advice issuing from those lessons offered by educators on both the university and the community sides of the community-based learning equation.

Research Methods

In this section, we describe the methods used to gather and analyze data in this study. (The description here effectively reproduces the description that appears in Kerrigan and Reitenauer 2012, 131-132). Since our primary interest was to learn about the lived experiences of our faculty and community partners as they engaged in campus-community partnerships, the authors of this study conducted in-depth interviews with ten capstone community partners and ten capstone faculty. Our intention was to investigate the effects that capstone partnerships have on community partners and faculty members, as well as to gain insight into the qualities and characteristics of both exemplary partnership practices between postsecondary institutions and community organizations and the roadblocks that get in the way of high-quality partnering.

The authors recruited fifteen randomly selected capstone courses for participation in the study. In order to recruit a randomized sample, the titles of all of the capstone courses listed in the student bulletin were entered into an Excel file, then randomized within that program. The authors contacted the faculty member and corresponding community partner of the first fifteen courses selected through randomized sampling, inviting them to participate in the study. This letter was followed up with a phone call. Out of the fifteen randomly selected courses, ten courses were included in the study, as this number of faculty-community partner duos agreed to complete individual in-depth interviews. There was no difference in the course pairings that chose to participate and

those that declined, outside of their availability and agreement to participate. Both groups included capstones from a variety of topical areas, including courses focusing on K-12 public education, the environment, and services to persons experiencing homelessness. Those that declined reported that their schedules did not permit their participation. The researchers chose not to go back to recruit additional participants, because the data analysis showed that the themes were consistent within these ten faculty-community partner pairings, thus saturating the themes.

The two researchers engaged in separate analyses of the data so that themes could be confirmed and verified. The researchers employed Creswell's (1994) and Patton's (2001) protocols for data collection and coding and engaged in the process of data analysis as suggested by Creswell (1994). The researchers first read through all of the interview transcriptions carefully to get a sense of the whole and to note initial ideas about the data. Second, each researcher looked through the data one interview at a time and answered the question, "What is the underlying meaning of this interview?" Next, the researcher made a list of the core underlying topics and clustered similar ones into topical themes. Patton describes these initial stages of analysis as a process of identifying, coding, and categorizing the primary patterns in the data.

The researchers then tested these themes by looking at the data to see if they could be organized according to these themes. Patton (2001) identifies this as a process of content analysis, in which topics are defined and labeled. After organizing the data, the researchers categorized the data accordingly and looked for relationships between the themes in order to make final decisions about the themes and their coding. The data were analyzed and recoded until a coherent and comprehensive thematic analysis had taken place. The two researchers compared and contrasted their thematic findings and confirmed the results.

In gathering data about the nature of these partnerships, the roles involved in them, and the positive and negative impacts, we hoped to capture the stories, the lessons learned, and the best practices informed by those lessons. As other articles in this issue address quite thoroughly the successes of various partnerships, this article will focus solely on the challenges identified by seasoned faculty and community partners, as they give voice to the hidden challenges of partnerships, which are often overlooked in the institutional promotion of community engagement.

Results

Throughout the interviews, participants spoke freely and with great interest about the ways their partnerships had begun, their thoughts and feelings about partnering, and the meaning contained within their collaborations. They shared their joys, successes, challenges, frustrations, and insights. Through our analysis of the rich material provided by our interviewees, we identified that they offered insights regarding both stumbling blocks and advice for faculty, community partners, and students engaged in this work. For the purposes of discussion, we have organized the themes that emerged from the data in this way:

1. Common Stumbling Blocks in Partnerships
   - Scheduling
   - Aligning Organizational Timelines
   - Communication Breakdowns
   - Focusing the Partnership on High Priority Projects: "Does the Community Really Need Glasses?"

2. Advice for Future Partnerships
   - Advice for Faculty: Be engaged, listen, and act with humility
   - Advice for Community Partners: Be aware of the time commitment and clarify priorities
   - Advice for Students: Do the homework to be "in choice" about engaging in community-based learning, be flexible, and be reliable

Each of these themes is discussed below.

Common Stumbling Blocks in Partnerships

Scheduling. The first and most prominent difficulty documented through the interviews was scheduling. Participants' comments about scheduling usually referred to the enormous task of matching the schedules of students at a large urban university with the schedules and needs of community partners. Most students at our institution work at least one part-time job, many are juggling childcare and family obligations, and almost all have multiple demands on their time, including their other coursework. Faculty and community partners were unanimous that this was the primary challenge in their partnerships, as evidenced by the following quotes, the first from a community partner and the second from a faculty member:

> The challenge is getting the scheduling done. It's getting the students, the tutors, placed. It's very hard. We try to get it done at the beginning of the year. We wait about a month so the [public] schools can settle down…The hardest thing is getting their placement[s] done because they have these very, very different schedules…We get university students who have part-time jobs, who don't necessarily live near the schools where they are tutoring…We work really hard at the beginning of each term when we have to place the tutors.

> The challenges come with scheduling and calendaring. [The community partner is] in the field four days a week, so I have [four] groups of capstone [students], each one dedicated to one day of the week. [The community partner is] out every day…coordinating a huge number of teachers and classes and volunteers, and they're very good at it. In fact, sometimes I am amazed at how good they are at [it], but it always means that things are slightly bordering on chaos. The main difficulty is…scheduling.

Aligning organizational timelines. One component of the challenges related to scheduling is aligning the organizational timelines of the campus and the community.

The university's course scheduling process is generally completed nine months before the course offering. Most community partners simply don't work that far in advance, don't know the exact nature of their programming at that time, and can't predict changes in staffing that far into the future. Faculty and community partners seemed to accept this as an ongoing challenge and simply do their best to estimate the schedule that will work most effectively for all parties. As one community partner stated,

> I wish we didn't have to set it up for the catalog so far in advance. It's really hard when [the faculty] has to [plan] it almost a year in advance. We are not sure what we're going to be doing a year from now. I mean we have a really good idea, but that's a little bit difficult.

Of all of the challenges identified by both faculty and community partners, these two (scheduling in general and navigating the differences in the flow of organizational timelines) were far and away the most frequently cited obstacle in campus-community partnerships in capstone courses, which echoes a common theme throughout the research on partnerships. This connects directly to "the problem of time" (Wallace 2000, 133) between university calendars and organizational experiences of time. This incompatibility is cited repeatedly as a major source of challenge to campus-community collaborations.

Communication breakdowns. A third concern in some of the partnerships was communication, often due to a change in staffing at the agency. When the primary contact person at an organization left, it was difficult to establish the same level of communication with the new community representative. Frequently, the new hire didn't know the norms, routines, and schedules that had been established for the partnerships. Sometimes this was due to a lack of communication, and sometimes it became apparent that the new hire didn't value the partnership as a high priority. Faculty revealed that, from their perspective, the primary contact at the agency is the key to a successful student experience. When this person leaves the organization, faculty reported experiencing many unforeseen challenges:

> What ends up happening…is that you have your main contact and that main contact doesn't communicate to the rest of the organization what's going on. It's remarkably changed since [my main contact] was replaced. The community partner wasn't fully communicating and keeping other people in the loop…so my students felt like…outsiders when they were coming in and tutoring…They [have been] over there for two terms and some of them still feel like…outsiders….I'm working with the current contact on ways to remedy that. I think that the communication aspect is really important.

Working on high priority projects: "Does the community really need glasses?" A fourth concern was expressed in terms of the effort it took for faculty and community partners to develop and sustain community partnerships. Both faculty and community members detailed the amount of time it took to communicate in-person, over the phone, and via e-mail. At a deeper level, faculty and community partners documented

that the real underlying issue was making sure that the partnership was addressing the most pressing issues facing a community organization while furthering genuine and meaningful student learning. The time and effort allocated to partnerships was seen as deeply valuable when faculty, community partners, and students knew that the work in the community was real and was considered a priority for the community partner. Faculty and community partners alike were passionate that the investment of time and effort made by community partners be acknowledged, recognized, and honored. Both groups knew that the community partners' time was incredibly valuable and, as a result, that faculty needed to be keenly aware that community-based projects must be deeply valuable to the community partner, as well as to students. Interviewees from each perspective affirmed their beliefs that the processes used to determine what students did at the placement site had to demonstrate respect for the mission, values, resources, and needs of the organization. Nearly every community partner and faculty interviewed stressed this point.

The following quote illustrates the care with which one faculty member discussed this issue of valuing the community partner with her students:

> The three criteria [for the student's final project] are that…[it] furthers the mission of the agency, [it is]…supported by the staff and folks of the agency, and…[it is]…something about which the PSU students are really excited….It needs to be integrated with what [the community partner] believe[s] is a priority right now. I use this…funny example; students get it when I share the story. If you came to our house for dinner, you would see that [my partner and I] have lots of different kinds of glasses…handmade blown glasses, pottery glasses…that kind of thing…When my…sister came to visit…the second time, she…pulled me aside with the equivalent of a Nordstrom bag [and] showed us that she bought us matching glasses, and she made a point to say "I know the last time that we were here, you didn't have glasses that match, and I just wanted you to have these." It sort of typifies that my sister missed the boat and that she was perhaps coming out of a loving place, but nevertheless is giving us something that we didn't really need or want….I tell that story to students so that they can get the idea that you may think [the community partner] needs new chairs, but if they don't think they need new chairs, then they don't need new chairs….Whatever ideas you were coming up with when you think about [whether] this idea furthers the mission of the agency, that is why our second criterion is in there, that it needs to be supported by the folks and the staff of the agency. I want the students to be doing something that is, in fact, meaningful and appropriate and desired by the agency.

Advice for Future Partnerships

In sharing about the challenges they had experienced in partnerships, interviewees also easily related lessons learned through the ways they had addressed those challenges, and they offered advice out of those lessons to faculty, community partners, and students. In fact, interviewees were most keen to share these lessons learned in their

interviews, evidencing a clear sense that communicating these lessons could and would lead to improved partnering in their own and in others' partnerships.

Advice for faculty. The first piece of advice for faculty, shared by both groups of interviewees, was for faculty to be engaged in the process of facilitating the connection between the students and the agency. Community representatives had deep respect for faculty who were actively involved in the work of the agency before students were placed there. Community partners reported that some faculty had previously volunteered, participated on the board of directors or other committee(s), or spent ample time at the agency before requiring their students to perform service at the site. This was seen as a tremendous asset to the partnership because of the deep understanding the faculty had regarding the mission, goals, and inner workings of the organization. Agencies reported having had negative experiences with other institutions of higher education that had simply assigned students to volunteer for a set number of hours in the community but did not facilitate the connection, the logistics, or, especially, the relationship building necessary for a true partnership. One community partner strongly advised faculty in this way:

> Be engaged yourself. Know exactly what the students are doing. [My faculty partner] has even come and worked as a volunteer one summer to see what the experience was like to tutor. Introduce yourself personally….It hasn't happened with PSU students, but…I've had people call me and say, "Gee, my intercultural communication teacher wants me to interview some people about African refugees," or they want us to set up a conversation partner thing, [and], "Could you introduce us to someone from another culture?" That infuriates me….That's a very hard thing for us to be able to do. You know you have to be able to create a relationship with the people with whom you are going to interact….So I find that…having this really good one-on-one relationship between the supervisor who is managing the program and the agency and the [faculty] is always a very good idea.

This sub-theme of faculty engagement also included advice for faculty in building effective relationships with community partners. Faculty suggested the benefit of occasional face-to-face meetings or lunches to develop the partnership and to "check in." Faculty usually tried to meet with the community partner in person to plan for the course and to debrief after the course was over. Ongoing communication with the community partner via telephone and e-mail was advised throughout the term. Experienced faculty frequently stated that it was essential to create systems for regular check-ins with the community partner.

Community partners concurred, saying that their number one piece of advice was for faculty to truly listen to what the community partners' needs are and to balance that with student learning and curricular needs. This feels much better to community partners, in contrast to situations in which a faculty member or administrator goes directly to an agency with a concrete project already established seeking transactional access to the agency and its partners rather than true partnership. As one community partner stated:

> I think the faculty has a really good handle on what he wants done. And I think he knows he's working partially for us, and he's willing to listen to exactly what we need and tailor his class to both our needs [and his], and that's really helpful. We've had classes come in the past who've said, "This is what we are doing. Can we do it for you?" And, well, we're like, "Well, you can, but it's not that useful for us." So it's nice to have [the faculty] say…right up front, "What will be useful to you?

Finally, community partners suggested, in varying language, that faculty enter community partnerships with humility. There was a keen sense in many of the interviews that postsecondary educational institutions have a tendency to enter partnerships from a place of privilege, expecting that community partners will enter from a place of gratitude. Community partners vastly articulated a preference for actual collaboration infused with a spirit of humility and reciprocity. As one community representative remarked:

> It definitely relates to other faculty that I've interacted with: at times they are a little presumptive. There is this [sense of], "Oh, you should be happy that we are going to have students do things [for] your agency." The difficulty in running a social service agency is that there is so much going on, [that] to absorb some projects can be difficult….There are some faculty that need to approach the organizations with a little more humility. Not just assume that the social service agencies are going to be so grateful that they are going to bend over backwards for you.

Advice for community partners. Experienced community partners and faculty also had suggestions for organizations considering partnerships with postsecondary educational institutions. The first piece of advice was to acknowledge that campus-community partnerships are time-consuming. Most community partners were surprised how much time their partnerships required in order to plan the project, set up viable schedules with students, visit classes for guest lectures, maintain communication throughout the term with faculty, provide feedback to students and faculty, and plan for future collaborations. Faculty and community partners believed it was essential to acknowledge that time commitment up front so that community partners can thoughtfully discern if they want to enter into partnership in the first place. Several participants stated explicitly that community partners need to weigh the benefits the partnership might yield with the time it takes to work thoughtfully with students through community-based learning.

The second piece of advice was to make sure the project has intrinsic value to the community partner. This emerged out of the first acknowledgement of the time involved in these partnerships; community partners must ensure that there is a value-added return on their investment of time, energy, and other resources. Partners were advised to be clear in defining their needs and expectations, as well as flexible and open to hearing innovative ideas for collaboration. As one experienced community partner suggested,

> I think it's important that it be useful for [the community partner]. Make sure you state your case right up front…not the other way around. Not the university coming to [the community partner], saying, "This is the project we are doing; will you be our client?" I think that's probably the most useful thing for a community [partner]: be flexible, but it needs to be useful for you.

Third, if a community partner determines that a partnership seems valuable, they were advised to make sure they had mechanisms in place to manage student volunteers. This included having established structures to orient, train, supervise, and give feedback to students. These processes were described as essential components of effective campus-community partnerships. Both faculty and community partners suggested that agencies most benefit from community-based learners when the agency is organized and has clear expectations for students.

Faculty and community partners both remarked on the unique nature of having college students serve in the community. Community partners urged community organizations *not* to see students as simply "worker bees" or free labor, but rather to recognize students as learners and agencies as co-educators who have the power to inform their learners about important social and political issues. Faculty encouraged community partners to understand the complex lives of and competing demands on the typical urban college student, including the many roles they play in juggling work and family commitments, which frequently require special considerations in the scheduling of their time.

Finally, faculty and seasoned community partners consistently advised new community partners to effectively communicate within their agencies, and with students and faculty. This advice paralleled the suggestion for faculty to be actively engaged in partnerships and to communicate effectively and regularly with their collaborating agencies. Participants suggested that community partners communicate frequently and consistently within their organizations about the role of the students; communicate with students regarding their work and the community partner's expectations around it; and communicate with faculty to keep all parties informed about logistics, insights, and potential changes in the partnership.

Advice for students. Community partners and faculty had four essential pieces of advice for students: discern if this specific community-based project is a good fit in the student's life at this time, be flexible, be reliable, and be open to different ways of learning and contributing to the world. Faculty and community partners wanted students to take greater initiative in learning about the various community-based learning courses offered each term and to be "in choice" regarding how they wanted to spend their time rather than simply defaulting to a schedule-fitting course. This included taking stock of their interests, passions, desired careers, and schedules *before* registering for a course and beginning community work.

The second suggestion was to be flexible and acknowledge that this is a real-world project rather than a lecture-based course or even a controlled case study in a laboratory. Students need to know that in a true partnership, plans, staffing, funding,

and other elements may well change—and that all of these shifts require a high level of flexibility and adaptability on the part of students. One faculty member illuminated this need for flexibility as she described two different capstone course experiences:

> This is the real world. You cannot expect things to go according to a schedule. I just recently finished a capstone class where it became evident after the third week that everything that I had planned had to go totally out the window because of factors that I could not control with the community partner. And [the students] were really, really, very flexible about going with it. And it became the most [Paulo] Freire[-like] class I'd ever taught, because I had to stand up there and go, "Okay, we were just confronted with this new problem. What do you want to do?" And we [had] a huge brainstorming session…and they…[came] up with solutions, and we…[came] up with a plan. I was… basically the facilitator of a staff meeting half the time. That's what it felt like. My students were doing all of this really thoughtful work. [In] another class that I was teaching [with] the same community partner…the students expected me…to fix a lot of these problems they were experiencing….They didn't understand….They kept on blaming the community partner for all these problems….You can't change their nonprofit structure. [It's vital] to really understand what you can control and what you can't control and be flexible.

The third request was for students to be reliable and professional. Community partners were desperate to communicate to students how much they depend on students' showing up and acting professionally. Community partners talked about the importance of "real people," "real issues," and "real money at stake." They were clear that they rely on students to serve clients, to teach children, to assist owners with their small businesses, and to register voters. Each of these tasks requires students to take initiative while acting in mature, responsible, and reliable ways. In the words of one community partner, "Be reliable. We really, really do depend on them. Try to be as reliable and cooperative as possible….Try to understand that the agency is not a university, that we're not a school, that we're not always available for them the way a teacher is."

Finally, community partners and faculty simply asked students to be open to new ways of being of service in the world. They saw great potential for students to contribute their skills, serve as activists, become great teachers, get engaged, and make a difference in the community—but all of these hopes can be achieved only if students are open to moving beyond seeing the capstone as simply a requirement, to understanding it as an opportunity to learn, grow, and contribute. One community member encouraged students in this way:

> Just be open. And recognize that there are different ways of learning. Having the opportunity to learn experientially or learn via relationships can be very powerful, but in that you have to be very open to people who are different than yourself and not be too quick to judge even when you have some initial [difficulty]…. Really take the time to reflect, to question, and [to] challenge yourself.

Discussion

We found the results of the study—the thoughtful and earnest comments of faculty and community partners who have, in some cases, been engaged in community-based learning for many years – to be revealing on several counts. First, in terms of both the tone and the content of the interviews, there was a deep sense of the human element in partnering, in the best possible way. Interviewees spoke about the stakes involved in the partnership equation not only in organizational or institutional terms, but as individuals with their own interests and commitments invested in their partnerships. As reported in the earlier article focused on these data:

> When faculty and community partners were asked to describe their partnerships in a word or phrase, they used language such as "real," "earthy," "organic," "a dance," "good friends," "a positive learning experience," "a tandem," "progressive," "harmonious," "inspiring," "very stimulating," "incredibly rewarding," and "illuminating." One participant said that his community partnership is "a give-give; I always learn and they always learn." (Kerrigan and Reitenauer 2012)

Even in interviews directing participants to share the challenges and difficulties they had experienced in collaboration, there was a genuine sense of mutuality that emerged, which we might hope to find but which practitioners in the field know is not a foregone conclusion.

Indeed, participants offered examples of how avoidable breakdowns in partnerships had occurred because and when relationships had not been sufficiently established, and because and when communication patterns in the partnerships appeared to be merely transactional rather than intended to allow each participant to grow in knowledge and mutual respect for the other. This insight arose in interesting ways when participants discussed their advice for capstone students, as they endorsed the idea that capstone students would be well served to investigate their capstone options and understand their own personal and professional capacities, desires, and growth areas when choosing a course. In so many words, participants understood and articulated that community-based learning courses work best when all parties in them understand that they are engaging in an inter- and intrapersonal dynamic, a course full of moving parts (which is to say, human beings) that finds its fullest expression in an awareness of that relational dynamic and an intentional focus on it.

A powerful expression of the fundamentally relational dynamic of capstones echoed through the interviews when both faculty and community partners discussed the implications to collaborating organizations when the university, for any reason, changes its commitment to an organization, whether through shifts in university priorities, low enrollment in or cancellation of courses, or other factors. Community partners repeatedly voiced how much they come to rely on the presence of students who are fulfilling the mission of the organization and serving clients in both direct and indirect ways. Both the community and the university need to be aware of this

dynamic of impact on capacity and be in constant communication in order to prepare for any fluctuation in the partnership.

In their advice to other potential community partners, organizational representatives who participated in this study firmly communicated the need for agencies to insist that campus-community partnerships benefit them in ways that they self-define as beneficial, and they suggested that faculty (as representatives of their institutions) operate with humility and a true desire for mutuality. They also spoke movingly of their commitment to students and understanding that student learning can and must sit at the center of the community-based learning endeavor. In fact, even while discussing the structural difficulties of partnerships and the ways they reflect the structural inequities built into the institutional systems (resulting in the need for the services those organizations provide in the first place), community partners in this study revealed great enthusiasm for the community-based learning proposition and belief in the possibility of ever more-functional partnerships to emerge from genuinely relational practices.

Conclusion

We find it quite notable that throughout the interviews faculty and community partners regularly spoke to the vital nature of supporting each other's interests in the community-based learning paradigm. Missing from these interviews was a sense of an unbridgeable chasm between campus and community. Instead, even while giving voice to the challenges of partnership, both faculty and community partners expressed personal and organizational desires to work through those challenges, for the benefit of students, faculty members, community partners, and their constituents alike.

Throughout these interviews, both faculty and organizational participants chose anecdotes and used language that supported the idea that true partnership—a situation in which all parties freely choose to come together with mutually-understood needs and goals and communicate sufficiently to support the structures and processes developed to address those needs and goals—has been the form they have aspired to and which has best served all of the stakeholders in the process. Further research into the tensions and challenges involved in building true partnerships—particularly in an unstable economic and political climate in which there is both much competition for funding and other resources and an increased urgency for community problem-solving—will help practitioners and students recognize and share ideas for how we, community members all, might come together with common purpose to co-create the world we want to inhabit.

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