



**UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY SERVICE,  
ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION**

**THE FLORIDA PUBLIC UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE**



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**BUILDING BRIDGES**  
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**COLLABORATION**  
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## COMMUNITY SERVICE, ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION THE FLORIDA PUBLIC UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*“Engagement will be activated at the point of the institutions linkage to the community, often at the local and individual level. Engaged institutions will find, among others: students involved in community service; diversifying communities; community-based education; and technology research with clients not just for clients. These characteristics describe a culture of engagement, an ivory bridge, rather than an ivory tower. A bridge firmly rooted in both the academic world and the communities it serves. A public institution of higher education is incomplete without engagement.”- NASULGC on Engagement, 2007<sup>1</sup>*

*“We build too many walls and not enough bridges.”- Isaac Newton*

American universities have three functions: teaching, research, and service. Since World War II the emphasis in American higher education has been to build teaching and research capacity, and, until recently, service was an afterthought.

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<sup>1</sup> See, the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, <http://www.nasulgc.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=224&srcid=203>

However, in the last two decades there has been a substantial growth of interest in expanding the service function and better connecting it to teaching and research based upon reciprocal partnerships with communities. Today, there is a movement across America, and globally, to increase university community service and engagement while maximizing its value for student learning, faculty research, and university development. John Delaney, President of University of North Florida particularly notes the benefit of this movement for students: “Community-based learning provides students with first-hand experiences that take them outside the walls of the classroom and into the community. Through service-learning, community-based research, focused internships, cooperative learning and similar formats, students enhance their knowledge in a particular area, often making meaningful contributions to the communities in which they participate.”<sup>2</sup>

The movement to expand community service and develop meaningful ways to engage with communities has encouraged a new paradigm regarding how universities organize, behave and benefit from their experience in collaborating with the community. John Hitt, President of the University of Central Florida has summarized this approach as follows: “Community outreach, engagement, and collaboration have been the key to the success of our university. They are essential as ideals, learning strategies, and practical ways of giving and attracting support.”

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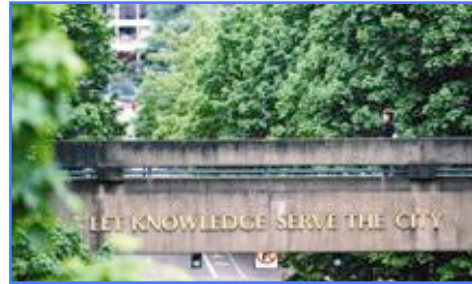
<sup>2</sup> Quotations such as this will be used throughout this report based upon interviews conducted for this project with Florida public higher education leaders during 2008.

“Education is all a matter of building bridges.”- *Ralph Ellison*

The public State University System of Florida (SUS) is a prime example of the vibrancy of community service. Among the 10 universities and college, which in 2008 collectively enrolled 301,000 students, community service is a well-established goal and widespread practice. Today there is considerable momentum to expand and extend community service and engagement among the universities. As Frank Brogan, President of Florida Atlantic University offered, “The university is not a place in the community, but it is a part of the community. The university should tap its talent and genius to help solve problems and invest in the community and the region. The roots of such efforts need to be in the academic side of the house through coordination, harnessing and focusing teaching, learning, service, and research.”

This report is a review and analysis of these practices and developments, lessons learned about them, significant challenges, and prospects for more and better community service. As we explain in the first section of this report, the language about community service can be confusing. We use the term community service as a general category to refer to the wide range of activities that universities do, and have done, to assist communities. The term community engagement, which we use often, refers to a particular and increasingly popular approach that stresses the importance of reciprocity in relations between the university and the community, and the importance of

embedding engagement in teaching, scholarship and research.



This review has been undertaken by the FCRC Consensus Center, an organization established by the Florida legislature in 1987 to help build consensus and resolve controversial public issues. Through a recurring contract with the Board of Governors, the Center assists in addressing one or two issues annually relevant to the SUS. Community service is such an issue in that “meeting community needs” is one of the four goals of the Board, but one that has been given limited attention.

In undertaking this review, all 11 campuses of the SUS were visited, over 100 university leaders were interviewed (including most presidents and provosts), and the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs of the SUS, and relevant written materials were reviewed from the SUS and each campus.

KEY SUS COMMUNITY SERVICE FINDINGS	
FINDINGS	
#1	Community service is an important goal.
#2	Community service is very diverse.
#3	Community service in the SUS is extensive.
#4	There are exemplary models of community service and engagement within the SUS.
#5	Community outreach is the wellspring of community service.
#6	The organization of community service and engagement is fragmented.
#7	Communication about community service and engagement in the SUS is inadequate.
#8	Students and faculty expect to engage in community service.
#9	Community service and engagement require leadership from many quarters.
#10	Community service and engagement have not been well documented, analyzed and evaluated.
#11	Community service is not adequately funded.
#12	Community partnerships are an important feature of community service.
#13	Universities face common challenges in managing community service partnerships.
#14	Centers and institutes are important vehicles for community service and engagement.
#15	Community engaged learning and research require strong support.
#16	Universities can help to strengthen Florida's weak civic culture.
#17	Universities support collaborative governance in several ways.
#18	Community service and engagement are assets to university development.

In light of the growth of interest in and support of community service and engagement nationally and globally, it is not surprising that this review has found a rich array of community service and engagement activities and programs at all of the SUS institutions, including many that are exemplary. We have observed both passion and pride about many of these and a strong desire to improve and expand them. At the same time, we have

found leaders to be forthcoming about shortcomings, especially regarding coordination, strategy, quality control, and financial support. We have been impressed to find many recent efforts to expand service activities and improve performance, even during the course of this review. Further, we have found that university leaders are eager to share information and ideas to strengthen the impact of community service and engagement.



*Photo Courtesy of Florida Campus Compact*

We conclude that community service is a strong, dynamic, and rapidly evolving phenomenon among the universities of the SUS system. However, much can be done to expand, improve, increase productivity and strengthen the impact of community service, advancing the values of community engagement.

“The national Campus Compact’s annual member surveys indicate that for 1998 to 2006 the percentage of undergraduate participation in community service grew from 10% to 32%, and that in 2007 one-third of all students participated in community service, averaging five hours per week.”

The report identifies important features and findings of community service as it is practiced among the SUS Florida public universities. We have also included many examples that illustrate the nature and variety of service activities.

In general, the shortcomings regarding community service in the SUS include the fact it is extensive but not well documented, evaluated, communicated, and coordinated. Within the public universities of the SUS there is a need for coordinating leadership and practices that promote productivity and maximize impact. These needs should be met in ways that preserve the enthusiasm, commitment, and creativity associated with community service and engagement. At the same time, given the economic tenor of our times, these needs call for approaches that are responsive while also being achievable and economical. Our philosophy of improvement in this regard is:

- To seek smart ways to support and improve the community service function;
- To maximize sharing so as not to re-invent the wheel; and
- To make good use of resources that already exist.

Reflecting this philosophy, we offer five suggestions:

**OPTION #1: THE BOG NEEDS TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP IN PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING COMMUNITY SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT.**

Given the strong interest in and commitment to community service that we have observed throughout the Florida SUS, and the equally strong interest in expanding and improving it, we think it

would be timely for the BOG to devote attention to the issue and consider how to best support its development and promote community engagement as it undertakes to update of its strategic plan in the coming years.

The BOG should provide greater guidance and direction in regard to Goal 4 of the current SUS Strategic Plan. It would be particularly helpful as the BOG updates the current strategic plan to clarify its own *vision, values, and priorities* concerning community service and engagement. It should also invite the SUS campuses (students, faculty and administrators and trustees), and the communities they serve as partners in a collaborative process to jointly update the goal and objectives.

As to proceeding, the BOG might find it helpful to review its recent successful experience with the inclusive stakeholder process used to update the Chapter 21 campus master-plan regulations. The BOG should consider this approach in regard to updating Goal 4 based on the results of that collaborative initiative.

“As the 2007 Pappas report, ‘Forward by Design’ suggested, ‘An effective system of higher education is one where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.’ We believe one of the critical parts that has received far less attention than it deserves based on its strategic contribution to the whole system is community service, engagement and collaboration. “



The BOG can also support community service and engagement by providing staff leadership to coordinate the sharing and collaboration between and among the public universities and to promote excellence. Further, the Board can play a leadership role with the legislature in informing them of the benefits of community service and partnerships, and to encourage their support. Additionally, the Board may want to consider creating a coordinating leadership vehicle for community service within the SUS that could be designed to function more effectively than the now defunct Leadership Board for Research and Public Service.

**OPTION #2:** THE BOG AND EACH UNIVERSITY NEED TO PROVIDE STAFF LEADERSHIP TO COORDINATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.

At most of the universities we visited, senior officials expressed the need for a high level officer to coordinate, promote and improve community service, engagement and collaboration. It seems to us it would be a worthy and reasonable goal for this to be achieved at every SUS university by the end of this decade. The BOG also is in need of such leadership since there is no existing staff person who is responsible for the support and oversight of community service. From our interviews, we believe a “soft infrastructure” coordinating strategy could best be employed by any new BOG organizational entity, emphasizing facilitation and network development approaches.

**OPTION #3:** A SELF-ORGANIZING NETWORK IS A PROMISING APPROACH TO PROMOTE COORDINATION AND SHARING ABOUT COMMUNITY SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT.

We believe a strong constituency for community service and engagement and a healthy appetite for cooperation exists within the SUS. We suggest development of a network of leaders and institutions within the SUS that are interested in strengthening community service, engagement, and collaboration. We would imagine such a network to be essentially self-organizing, but with staff assistance from the BOG. This network could tap into and make connections with related networks such as those developed by Campus Compact, the Florida Institutes of Government, university presidents, provosts, deans, librarians, university counsels, athletic directors, community relations officers, and trustees. A network guidance and coordinating group, such as a community service and engagement council, would undoubtedly be needed to assure continuity, direction, and system integration.

“Tapping and connecting the SUS creative talent pool to Florida’s growing knowledge-based economy will stimulate as well as generate the social capital we need to meet our growing community, regional and statewide challenges.”

**OPTION #4: BUILD UPON THE EXPERTNET WEBSITE AS A PORTAL TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT.**

A common obstacle regarding community service is making information more accessible about services of community assistance from each university. Many universities attempt to provide information on their websites describing service offerings and activities, but most of these sites are not easy to navigate, provide limited guidance, and sometimes include incorrect information. Ten years ago the SUS Board of Regents created a portal system called ExpertNet to help business, government agencies and community groups locate experts within the Florida state universities system. The ExpertNet website lists over 7,000 experts and briefly describes the 550 plus centers and institutes within the SUS. We suggest that an initial task for the self-organizing community service and engagement network be to develop ExpertNet as a portal to support community service, engagement, and collaboration as a foundation for better communication, evaluation, analysis and research.

**OPTION #5: FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES ARE NEEDED TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT COMMUNITY SERVICE, ENGAGEMENT, AND COLLABORATION.**

This review has been completed in one of the most troubling periods of financial retraction for the State of Florida and the SUS. In such periods, support for community service activities are often reduced or eliminated. This leads us to the conclusion that those who would advance community service and engagement will need to move quickly to create new, better, and more imaginative financial development strategies. We suggest four strategies in this regard:

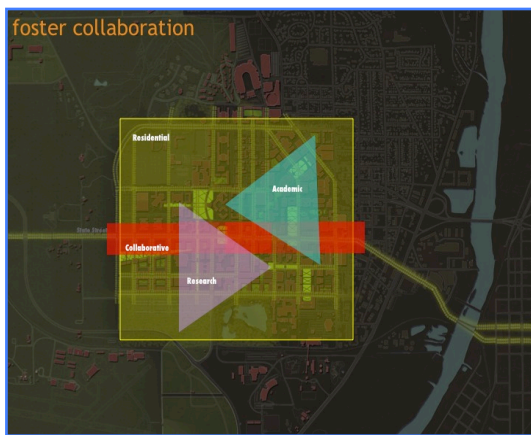
1. *Develop a Legislative Agenda.* If community service is one of the fundamental missions of public higher education in Florida, then it deserves adequate funding from the legislature. We believe the evidence suggests that community collaboration is strongly connected with innovative economic development and that the dividends for both Florida's communities and SUS campuses are considerable.

"In Fiscal-Year 2006-07, the SUS used 275 faculty person years for the public service program...and the 2006-07 expenditures for the faculty public service program from general revenue funds totaled \$70.74 million." -BOG, 2008 SUS Faculty Public Service

2. *Create New Supportive Strategic Partnerships.* Community service is an attractive area for fund-raising, especially among such groups as alumni, small businesses, and foundations. Research and development is needed within the SUS to learn how to increase support from such potential supporters.
3. *Establish a Fund for Community Service and Engagement.* To be effective, such a fund will most likely need one or several organizing benefactors who can be recognized for their support of awards. The BOG, and the network council suggested above, would need to determine how to either link or transcend university development offices in such a venture.

4. *Seek Establishment of a Center of Excellence.* Successful community service and engagement development strategies require bold and imaginative ideas about new and better ways to contribute to the common good. Florida and many other states have designated centers of excellence within the university system to promote prominence in selected areas of inquiry or fields of endeavor. Given the considerable extent of community service and engagement in Florida, its importance to the common good, the interest in expanding and improving it, and the strong need to address issues of civic capacity and regional leadership in Florida's communities, we suggest that a long-term vision and goal of the BOG be to create a Florida Center for Community Service, Engagement, and Collaboration.

This review surveyed community service and engagement through the lens of the SUS. An important next step in completing this assessment will be listening to community voices and documenting and comparing community perspectives with those of the SUS on the nature and quality of the reciprocal partnerships and collaborative engagement.



We commenced our study of community service in the SUS in January 2008 in one of

the most troubling periods of financial retraction for the Florida SUS and the state in the past 50 years. However even in this climate, we heard from presidents, provosts, faculty and staff that the SUS should press ahead with the job of expanding community service. As the 2007 Pappas report to the SUS, "Forward by Design" suggests, "An effective system of higher education is one where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts." We believe one of the critical parts of the SUS that has received far less attention than it deserves, based on its strategic contributions to the whole system, involves community service, engagement, and collaboration.

Our best and last advice for the Florida Board of Governors, the universities of the Florida SUS, and the Florida legislature is this: Now is the time to recognize the importance of university community service, engagement and collaboration because they are essential to the renewal of our economy and the improvement of our communities. These are assets worthy of greater attention and support. These are investments that are capable of even greater returns going forward.

"The capacity of Florida's public universities to serve their communities and regions is one of the greatest, but least appreciated asset for the renewal and revitalization of the Florida economy."



## COMMUNITY SERVICE, ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION THE FLORIDA PUBLIC UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

*“Engagement will be activated at the point of the institutions linkage to the community, often at the local and individual level. Engaged institutions will find, among others: students involved in community service; diversifying communities; community-based education; and technology research with clients not just for clients. These characteristics describe a culture of engagement, an ivory bridge, rather than an ivory tower. A bridge firmly rooted in both the academic world and the communities it serves. A public institution of higher education is incomplete without engagement.”- NASULGC on Engagement, 2007<sup>3</sup>*

*“We build too many walls and not enough bridges.”- Isaac Newton*


### ABOUT THIS REPORT

American universities have three functions: teaching, research, and service. Since World War II the emphasis in American higher education has been to build teaching and research capacity, and, until recently, service was an afterthought. However, in the last two decades there has been a substantial growth of interest in expanding the service function and connecting it to teaching and research. Today, there is a movement across America, and world-wide, to increase university community service while maximizing its value for student learning, faculty research, and university development. This movement, often referred to as community engagement, emphasizes the reciprocal benefits to students, scholarship and the community. John Delaney,

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<sup>3</sup> See, Appendix # 4, the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, <http://www.nasulgc.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=224&srcid=203>

NASULGC defines university engagement, by referring to the principles underlined in the reports issued by the Kellogg Commission. Engaged institutions have redesigned their teaching, research, and extension and service functions to become even more sympathetically and productively involved with their communities, however community may be defined. Embedded in the engagement ideal is a commitment to sharing and reciprocity. The Kellogg Commission envisions partnerships, two-way streets defined by mutual respect among the partners for what each brings to the table. An engaged university can enrich the student experience and help change the campus culture.



President of University of North Florida particularly notes the benefit of this movement for students: “Community-based learning provides students with first-hand experiences that take them outside the walls of the classroom and into the community. Through service learning, community-based research, focused internships, cooperative learning and similar formats, students will enhance their knowledge in a particular area, often making meaningful contributions to the communities in which they participate.”<sup>4</sup>

The community engagement approach to community service encourages a new paradigm regarding how universities organize, behave and benefit from their experience in collaborating with the community. John Hitt, President of the University of Central Florida, has said this about the importance of this approach to his university: “Community outreach, engagement, and collaboration have been the key to the success of our university. They are essential as ideals, learning strategies, and practical ways of giving and attracting support.”

The University System of Florida (SUS) is a prime example of the vibrancy of community service and engagement.<sup>5</sup> Among the 10 universities and one college, which collectively enroll 301,000 students, community service and engagement is a well-established goal as well as a widespread practice and today there is considerable momentum to expand and improve community service among them. As President Bernie Machen of the University of Florida noted, “The threefold mission of the University of Florida includes a commitment to service. Integral to this commitment is the engagement of our community as we recognize our responsibility to and interdependence with our city and our greater region as we maintain a vibrant, sustainable community. The university will use its resources to improve the quality of life in our area and to educate our students on the importance of current and future community engagement.” Frank Brogan, President of Florida Atlantic University (FAU) reflected on the role of the university in finding community solutions, “The university is not a place in the community, but part of a community. The university should tap its talent and genius to help solve problems and invest in the community and region. The roots of such efforts need to be in the academic side of the house through coordinating, harnessing and focusing teaching, learning, service, and research.”


This report is a review and analysis of the practices and developments, lessons learned, significant challenges, and options for more and better community service and engagement. This review has been undertaken by the FCRC Consensus Center, an organization established by the Florida legislature in 1987 to help build consensus and resolve controversial and challenging public issues.<sup>6</sup> Through a recurring contract with the Board of Governors of the SUS, the Center assists in addressing one or two important strategic issues annually related to collaboration and

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<sup>4</sup> Quotations such as this will be used throughout this report based upon interviews conducted for this project with Florida public higher education leaders during 2008.

<sup>5</sup> The State University of Florida consists of 10 universities and one college, New College, an undergraduate honors institution. While this report frequently uses the term university community service and engagement in regard to the public institutions of the SUS, such references include New College. Also general references to university community service and engagement include colleges.

<sup>6</sup> The authorized legislative title of the FCRC Consensus Center is the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium (§1004.59 F.S.). Since its authorization 21 years ago, the FCRC has assisted over 700 agencies and communities in Florida. Over two decades, its work has shifted from conflict dispute resolution to consensus building. The title FCRC Consensus Center reflects this change as well as the specialized area of expertise of the organization.



consensus building relevant to the SUS. Community service and engagement is such an issue in that “meeting community needs” is one of the four goals of the Board, but one that has been given limited attention.

In undertaking this review, all 11 campuses of the SUS were visited, over 100 university leaders were interviewed (including most presidents and provosts), the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs of the SUS were interviewed, and relevant written materials were reviewed from the SUS and each campus and from the growing literature on community engagement scholarship and practice.<sup>7</sup>

Initially, the scope of this project was confined to one area of community service by Florida public universities: how they promote and assist collaborative governance.<sup>8</sup> In particular, we wanted to learn to what extent and how universities were initiating and supporting partnerships with government, business, and the nonprofit sector in addressing critical community challenges. However, following a series of initial interviews, it was determined that questions about universities and collaborative governance could not be addressed without a more holistic understanding of university community service and the increasingly popular notion of community engagement. We were also surprised to discover the intensity of interest in community service and engagement among university leaders. As one official commented, “the academy is a three-legged stool that is built upon teaching, research, and community service. Our knowledge and ability regarding the latter significantly lags the former, and we need compensatory attention.” Accordingly, the scope of this project has been expanded to address some broader issues regarding community service and engagement in Florida public universities.


This report summarizes the major finding of this project, discusses relevant issues, and offers suggestions regarding community service in general and university support of collaborative governance in particular. We refer to the project and the report as a “review” in order to make clear that it is not a comprehensive research study. It is rather a modest, practical, and selective examination of community service as an ideal and area of practice in the public universities in Florida.

Because community service has a long tradition in American higher education, and the language associated with it is more rich than clear, some initial comments are in order regarding the language and history of community service.

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<sup>7</sup> Appendix #1 is a list of persons interviewed for this project.

<sup>8</sup> The original scope of this project is described in a concept paper included as Appendix A: The Convergence of University Public and Community Service and Collaborative Governance. As the paper explains, collaborative governance is an emerging concept and field of practice in public administration, political science, planning and health care. The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation released its *Collaborative Governance: A Guide for Grantmakers* in 2006, summarizing the features of the concept, <http://www.hewlett.org/Publications/collaborativegovernance.htm>. In 2007, a national University Network for Collaborative Governance was formed with public and private institutions <http://www.policyconsensus.org/uncg/index.html>. In 2004 Harvard University established the Weil Program on Collaborative Governance at the Kennedy School of Government <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/m-rcbg/wpcg/home.htm>. Presently, the new concept has many definitions and, multiple contexts for its application but has yet to achieve clarity and consensus. In our interviews with SUS leaders and faculty, we found the term required definition and often interpretation. Over time we replaced the term with the phrase collaborative community engagement and partnerships.



“Universities and community colleges may well be the glue that helps hold this state together, and the engagement of faculty and students in society may well be the critical piece in constructing a healthy sense of community in this state.”


- *Dr. David Coburn, former Provost, University of Florida, Director, Reubin O'D. Askew Institute on Politics and Society*

## **I. WHAT IS UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY SERVICE?**

An initial learning from this review is that the language used to describe the interactions between universities and communities lacks clarity and is often confusing. For example, such terms as community service, public service, community involvement, community engagement, community outreach, and community partnerships are frequently used as synonyms, yet sometimes these terms seem to have more distinctive meanings. The word “community” can also have multiple meanings in that it sometimes refers to geography (i.e. the city or town where a university is located, adjacent towns, a county or a region, the state, nation or the world) and sometimes refers to social interactions. To further compound things, the words public and civic are frequently used in place of community. As Frank Brogan, the President of Florida Atlantic University, has said, “When it comes to understanding the terms used to describe the relationship between the university and the community, it is like trying to nail jell-o to the wall.”

Our view on this matter is that in regard to the more casual use of language, any of these terms used to refer to the interaction between a university and community are synonyms in that they generally refer to a valued and desired relationship. The key in this is that the experience of serving, participating, being involved, collaborating, engaging, reaching out, and partnering represent valued experiences and reciprocal relationships for individuals and institutions. Further, the word community often has strong positive and normative meaning in referring to a place, experience, or group of like-minded people. A bumper sticker once captured this point in this saying: “Community is Good.”

There are differences between the words community, public, and civic that may be worth considering. While public service and community service have been used synonymously by the Florida legislature and the Board of Governors, public service has several limitations as a term in that it has a long history of reference to government employment and also to government-owned utility companies or commissions. The word civic is etymologically related to city and citizenship, implying some degree of relationship to government. Community service is the most general and inclusive of these terms, but some people dislike it because it has been used to describe a form of criminal sentencing. We think that this actually reinforces the importance of community service



as an ideal – make those who have done bad things do what is commonly recognized as good in recompense.

“Education is all a matter of building bridges.”

- *Ralph Ellison*

Two terms used often in the report are community service and community engagement. Although related, it is important to understand that these two terms have different meanings and uses. Community service is a commonly used generic term that refers to a wide spectrum of activities that are undertaken to assist a community. University community service further refers to a wide array of ways in which universities assist communities—including such diverse things as partnership projects, philanthropy and volunteering, contractual services, leadership training and student service-learning projects.

Community engagement, a term we also use frequently, represents a particular approach to and a philosophy of university involvement with communities that has recently gained currency among national foundations, higher education associations, and universities.<sup>9</sup> The Carnegie Foundation has been particularly influential, especially since 2006, with the development of a voluntary national recognition program for colleges and universities that it calls “Community Engagement Elective Classification.”

We find two particularly appealing features of the Carnegie approach. The first is that it attempts to connect the tradition of community service to teaching, student learning, and faculty scholarship, thus making it more a part of rather than apart from the university. Further, the notion of community engagement encourages the achievement of certain qualities in the relationship between universities and communities including mutual benefit, respectful collaboration, partnerships and reciprocity, all of which we think can make such relationships more productive and sustainable. As Ralph Wilcox, Provost of the University of South Florida, points out, “the term community engagement is particularly valuable because it suggests the interdependent and reciprocal nature of service and the value of partnerships, which is critical to any long-term effort.” David J. Weerts, a professor at Florida Atlantic University, places

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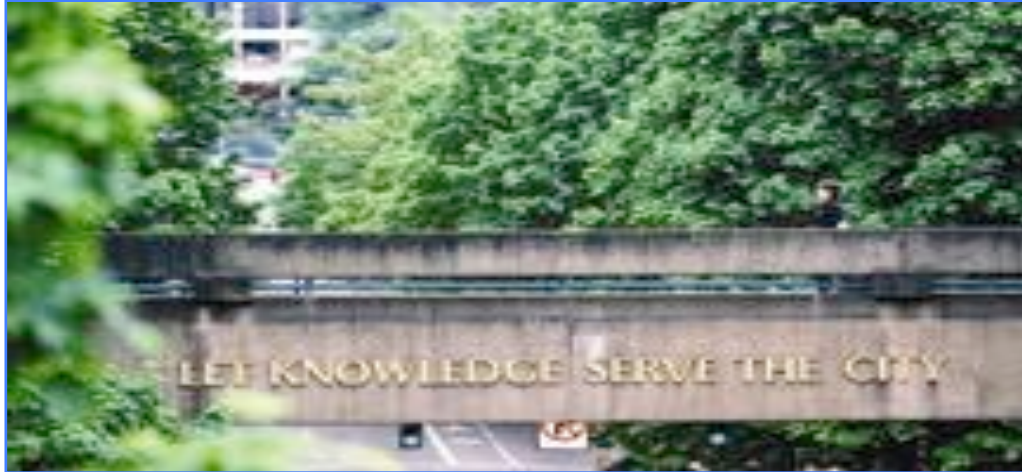
<sup>9</sup> Among definitions of community engagement are the following:

<http://www.unc.edu/cps/learn-more-other-about-engagement>. Accessed 12/13/2008.

- *Carnegie Foundation*. “Community Engagement described the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources.
- *National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges*. “By engagement, we refer to institutions that have redesigned their teaching, research, and extension and service functions to become even more sympathetically and productively involved with their communities, however community may be defined.”
- *American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) Task Force on Public Engagement*. “The publicly engaged institution is fully committed to direct, two-way interaction with communities and other external constituencies through the development, exchange, and application of knowledge, information, and expertise for mutual benefit.



particular emphasis on the importance of reciprocity: “Reciprocity is the key animating principle and represents an authentic give and take among institutional and external partners...Simply put, the engagement model expands traditional university teaching, learning, and scholarly inquiry to include external stakeholders in a community of learners.”<sup>10</sup>



While we support and promote community engagement as a desirable approach to university/community relations, we are aware of how difficult “engagement” values are to achieve.<sup>11</sup> We are also aware of how difficult it is to establish the infrastructure conditions within a university to support high levels of student and faculty engagement. Therefore, our sentiment is to encourage all that can be done within the SUS to promote the practices and values of community engagement.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, we acknowledge that there are other models and approaches to community service within the SUS that may not exhibit features of the community engagement approach, yet are relevant, beneficial, and worthy of support. Therefore, this report seeks to advance community service in general within the State University System of Florida while encouraging support for community engagement as a particularly meaningful approach.

“The term community engagement is particularly valuable because it suggests the interdependent and reciprocal nature of service and the value of partnerships which is critical to any long term effort.”

- *Ralph Wilcox, Provost, University of South Florida*

<sup>10</sup> Weerts, David J. “Toward an Engagement Model of Institutional Advancement at Public Colleges & Universities.” *International Journal of Educational Advancement*. Vol. 7, no. 2, June 14, 2007:87.

<sup>11</sup> For example see the discussion of the Carnegie community engagement classification by its consulting scholar: Amy Driscoll, “Carnegie Community-Engagement Classification: Intentions and Insights,” *Change*, Jan/Feb 2008, pp. 39-41.

<sup>12</sup> The University of South Florida, one of the earliest schools to receive Carnegie Foundation designation for community engagement outreach and partnerships, provides a good example of a university that has used the Carnegie Foundation framework, tools, and approach to develop plans and strategies to further strengthen its engagement with the communities it serves.



## II. HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS ABOUT UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY SERVICE

The history of higher education in America is marked by a paradox regarding community service: while colleges and universities have been responsive to broad social needs, they frequently ignored or created problems in their own host communities. The broad social responsiveness of American higher education is evident in the vocational orientation of the earliest state universities, the rise of the “Normal School” movement which prepared teachers in the 19th century, and the development of 70 “Land Grant” colleges and universities supported by the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, with federal support, Cooperative Extension Service programs, begun in 1914, were established at many universities to serve rural communities; through the Servicemen’s Development Act of 1944 (the G. I. Bill), higher education expanded to meet the learning and manpower training needs of the World War II generation; and with the National Defense Education Act of 1964, colleges and universities increased their capacity in the basic sciences and applied technology to help meet the security and economic needs of the nation.

Despite the responsiveness of higher education to macro social needs, the micro social needs of the communities where colleges and universities have resided have too frequently been exacerbated or overlooked. Until the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, “town-gown” tensions and adversarial relations were common between higher education institutions and their host communities. Sometimes these tensions had to do with differences in lifestyle and social norms, but more importantly it was because of such issues as land use, real estate, traffic and transportation, public service costs, pollution and other matters. Of even greater importance, however, was the tradition of isolation between colleges and universities and their communities, as each pursued economic and physical development agendas in parallel and in relative isolation, with limited sensitivity to or involvement with the other. In Florida this was reflected in the fact that the state university system initially resisted involvement in the local government growth management and comprehensive planning reforms of the 1980’s.<sup>13</sup>

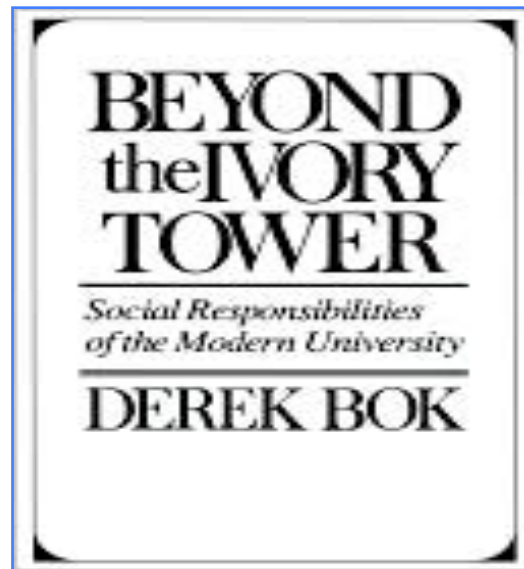
All this notwithstanding, there has also been a counter-trend in higher education, especially in land-grant and large urban research universities, to study and seek to improve communities. This has been more present in such fields as agriculture, social work, public administration, education, sociology, political science, and public health. However, it was not until the 1960s, especially with support from the federal government and large foundations, that university community involvement became more widespread. The level of this involvement continued during the 1970s, a decade of civic awakening reflected by the rise of multiple social movements, increased forms of citizen participation, and growth in philanthropy and volunteering.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> See, Pelham, Thomas, “A Historical Perspective for Evaluating Florida’s Evolving Growth Management Process,” *Growth Management in Florida: Planning for Paradise*, Ashgate Publishing, 2007

<sup>14</sup> see Langton, Stuart. *Citizen Participation in America*. Boston: Lexington Books. 1978.  
“The New Voluntarism,” *Non Profit & Voluntary Sector Quarterly*. 1981. 10:7-20

During the 1980s, university community service was advanced institutionally by college presidents and foundations. For example, in 1982 Harvard University President Derek Bok wrote a book, *Beyond the Ivory Tower*, in which he called for greater involvement of the university with the local community.<sup>15</sup> In 1985, the presidents of Brown, Georgetown, the University of Rhode Island, and Stanford created a new organization, Campus Compact, to advance university community service. In 1986 Ernest Boyer, former U.S. Commissioner of Education, wrote a paper that became the basis of a highly influential book that introduced the idea of “engaged scholarship,”<sup>16</sup> a new way of thinking about how to connect academic and community life. By the early 1990s, a number of national foundations including Kellogg, Pew, and Carnegie were providing strong support for what scholars and practitioners were increasingly calling “community engagement.”



Since the 1990s there has been a quantum growth of interest in and support of community service and community engagement practices. Today, for example, Campus Compact has grown to over 1200 institutional and individual members representing six million students, with offices in thirty-two states.<sup>17</sup> <sup>18</sup> Service-Learning activities and university-community partnerships are ubiquitous, and research related to community engagement is considerable.<sup>19</sup> National higher education associations such as the National Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities (NASULGC), American Council on Education (ACE), Association of Higher Education and the Council of Independent Colleges have promoted community service. Since 1994 the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has supported hundreds of

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<sup>15</sup> Bok, Derek, *Beyond the Campus*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.

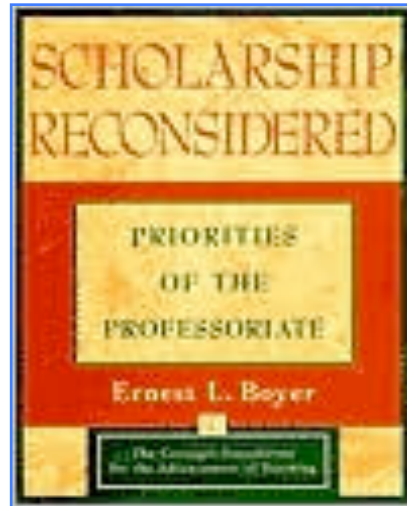
<sup>16</sup> Boyer, Ernest. *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professorate*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

<sup>17</sup> Gearan, Mark, “Emerging Communities: the college compact model,” *National Civic Review*, June 22, 2005. An interesting parallel program to College Compact has been initiated with an emphasis on College and University Boards of Trustees. See: Lang, Eugene, “Project Pericles: an exciting work in progress,” *National Civic Review*, June 22, 2005.

<sup>18</sup> The state office for Campus Compact in Florida is based at Florida State University.

<sup>19</sup> For a good summary of recent developments regarding community engagement and engaged community research in particular, see: Jean Scott, *Engaging Academics in Community Research: Overcoming Obstacles and Providing Incentives*. The Center for Urban & Environmental Solutions, Florida Atlantic University, November 2007.

university-community partnerships, a Presidential Council on Service and Civic Participation has been established, and exemplary community service performance by universities are now recognized through the President's Higher Education-Community Service Honor Roll. Meanwhile, many national foundations have supported meetings, research, programs, and awards about community service and engagement. In 2006 the Carnegie Foundation established an award classification for Community Engagement in regard to Curricular Engagement and Outreach and Partnerships. The University of South Florida was the first institution of higher education in the state of Florida to be recognized by the Carnegie Foundation for their community engagement activities.



### **III. COMMUNITY SERVICE IN FLORIDA'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

In light of the growth of interest in and support of community service nationally and globally, it is not surprising that this review among all of the SUS institutions has found a rich array of community service activities and programs, including many that are exemplary. We have observed both passion and pride about many of these and a strong desire to improve and expand them. At the same time, we have found leaders to be forthcoming about shortcomings, especially regarding coordination, strategy, quality control, and financial support for community service.

We have been impressed to find many recent efforts to expand service activities and improve performance, even during the course of this review. Further, we have found that university leaders are eager to share information and ideas to strengthen the impact of community service. So, in general, we conclude that community service is a strong, dynamic, and rapidly evolving phenomenon among the universities of the SUS system; however, as will be discussed, we do believe that there is much that can be done to expand, improve, increase productivity and strengthen the impact of community service.

## B. SUS COMMUNITY SERVICE FINDINGS


Following is a description and discussion of important features of community service as it is practiced by Florida public universities. A number of examples have been selected to illustrate each feature. These are but a few examples that might be offered in regard to each feature, and there are scores of others that could be identified. Indeed, we encourage the creation of a more comprehensive inventory in the future. The illustrations we have selected struck us as clear examples of important community service conditions and practices.

**1. Community Service is an important goal.** In early 2008, we examined the strategic plans of all the SUS universities and found that, while using different terms, all included community service as a part of their mission or as a goal.<sup>20</sup> At every institution, either the president or the provost emphasized the high priority of community service to them. For example, as President Bernie Machin, University of Florida noted, “The university will use its resources to improve the quality of life in our area and to educate our students on the importance of current and future community engagement.” At several universities, we found that strategic or business plans had recently been or were being developed in support of community service. For example, at the University of South Florida, a 2008-12 strategic plan was completed that articulated very clear goals regarding community engagement. As Dr. Linda Whiteford, USF Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Strategic Initiatives noted, “The Provost has appointed a 60 member Community Engagement Task Force to address important challenges and opportunities such as adjusting tenure and promotion policies to support faculty engagement research and service.”

“The university will use its resources to improve the quality of life in our area and to educate our students on the importance of current and future community engagement.”

- *Bernie Machin, President, University of Florida*

<sup>20</sup> The following are statements from the strategic plans from all eleven schools in early 2008: Florida A&M speaks of, “meaningful public and community service through creative partnerships.” Florida Atlantic University writes “public engagement” is part of its mission, and Florida Gulf Coast University states it, “nurtures community partnerships and values public service.” Florida International University claims “promoting public service” is one way it achieves its mission, and Florida State University speaks of, “providing broad access to institutional resources and services to the county and the state.” The University of Central Florida seeks to “provide services that enhance the intellectual, cultural, environmental, and economic development of the metropolitan region.” The University of Florida mission includes, “service to the citizens of Florida, the nation, and the world,” and the University of South Florida advocates “community engagement to build university-community partnerships and collaborations.” The University of West Florida speaks of “Developing educational partnerships and community services,” while the University of North Florida mission statement indicates that the university will prepare students “to make significant contributions to their communities in the region and beyond” with an institutional goal of affirming “the university's public responsibility through civic engagement and community-based learning and research”. (Note that several universities have revised their mission references to Community Service and Engagement later in 2008.)



The Board of Governors does not have an explicit goal regarding community service, but the last of its four goals in its 2005-13 Strategic Plan is: “Meeting community needs and fulfilling unique institutional responsibilities.” Unlike its other three goals, it includes no targets, performance standards and measures, however, it does say: “See distinctive missions on the following pages and consult institutions’ strategic plans.”<sup>21</sup>

While this lack of direction may seem problematic, it may be wise to a degree, given the nature of community service as a bottoms-up, grassroots-oriented phenomenon and because the 11 SUS institutions range from land grant to urban metropolitan universities. Asking the universities, at least at this time, to develop targets, performance standards, and measures could undermine the responsiveness to community needs that is being encouraged. Further, we found, that the universities seem to be very interested in improving the amount and quality of their community engagement as evident by the fact that most have considered or sought Carnegie Foundation classification or selected community engagement as a Quality Enhancement Program area as a part of their regional Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation.

This is not to suggest that the SUS universities might not benefit from greater direction, encouragement, and support from the Board of Governors in regard to community service. In fact, we will make this argument later in this report.

“In Fiscal-Year 2006-07, the SUS used 275 faculty person years for the public service program...and the 2006-07 expenditures for the faculty public service program from general revenue funds totaled \$70.74 million.”

- *BOG/SUS Faculty Public Service, 10-08*

**2. Community Service Is Very Diverse.** Community service means different things to different people, and that is because it refers to a wide spectrum of activities. As a university provost commented to us, “We do a lot of different kinds of community service. We see it everywhere, in every department and every school, among students, faculty, staff and administrators; in both academic life and student affairs.” For example, community service can range from a group of students at New College tutoring young students at the local Boys and Girls Club, to a student at the University of North Florida organizing a service-learning course on refugee issues, to the FSU women’s basketball team volunteering in a soup kitchen, to having business students at FIU provide consultation to small business owners in Miami, to FAMU faculty helping Gadsden County by partnering with county and local agencies to write funding grants to address critical community needs, to the Center for Environmental Studies at FAU organizing meetings about Everglades restoration, to the Small Business Development Center at FGCU sponsoring a conference on entrepreneurship for young girls, to the University of Florida

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

establishing a health clinic in a low income community, to the President of USF serving as Chair of the Tampa Bay Partnership. Beyond these examples, consider the variety of community service activities that have been suggested to us in our interviews. (See figure 1 below)

*Figure 1*

**THE RANGE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Raising money for charities	Volunteer Projects
Providing Information	Student Internships
Community Federal Work Study	AmeriCorps VISTA
Service-Learning Projects	Student Capstone Projects
Public Speaking to Classes & Organizations	Events/Special Celebrations
Contractual Services	Recognition Programs
Making Facilities Available for Community Use	Providing Meeting Space
Assessing Community Needs	Expert Testimony
Sponsoring Forums, Conferences and Workshops	Serving as an Officer in a Community Organization
Serving on Boards of Community Groups	Advising Organizations
Initiating Community Projects	Training Community Leaders
Creating New Organizations	Helping Resolve Community Conflicts

Although this is not a complete list of community service activities, it does illustrate their range and diversity. Nonetheless, there are commonalities among various activities that may help to better understand, analyze, and manage them. For example, we have found it helpful to distinguish between the following five types or categories of service activities:

1. **Philanthropy:** Charitable giving and volunteer activities
2. **Community Based Learning and Research:** Service by students related to courses and community-related research by faculty, graduate and undergraduate students
3. **Sustainable Partnerships:** Ongoing service coordinated by departments and colleges that provide mutual benefits for students and the community (e.g. internships)
4. **Contractual Assistance:** Service undertaken with grant support such as providing agenda and facilitation services for community meetings.
5. **Community Leadership:** Activities to improve the capacity of the community and to address major challenges

While these categories may be helpful in ordering and comparing similar types of community service activities within a university, they should not obscure the distinctiveness of each and every service activity. Although many community service activities are alike, no two activities are the same. So in order to fully understand any particular service activity, it is necessary to be clear about distinguishing characteristics such as: its purpose, who benefits, who serves, who sponsors it, its intensity and duration, and how it is organized. (See figure 2 below)

*Figure 2*  
**DIFFERENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Key Question</i>
<b>Purpose:</b>	Why is the service being undertaken?
<b>Recipients:</b>	Who is to benefit from the service and how?
<b>Actors:</b>	Who is providing the service and what is their role within the university?
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Who is responsible for the service initiative?
<b>Intensity:</b>	What is the extent of the effort involved in the service?
<b>Duration:</b>	What is the extent of time to provide the service?
<b>Organization</b>	How is the service activity organized?

**3. Community Service Is Extensive.** While no one has been able to inventory and tally the extent of community service within all the SUS universities, the few metrics that exist suggest, but cannot fully document, a considerable scope of effort. For example, in reviewing online information we found that in 2007 the University of Florida reported 12,435 students provided 72,000 hours of community service. Recently, the University of Central Florida estimated that 11,400 students provided 159,500 hours of service through 500 community organizations; Florida Gulf Coast University documented 112,600 service hours in 2007-2008; and the University of North Florida estimated that 2,754 students provided 65,759 hours of service through service-learning projects. The University of Central Florida reports that 100 faculty offer service-learning courses and at Florida State University, it is estimated that between 3,000 and 5,000 students are enrolled in service-learning courses each year.<sup>22</sup> At the University of South Florida, it is estimated that nearly half of sponsored research funds related to community based research. And at the University of Florida, faculty, students, and staff donated \$1,167,446 to local charities in 2007, and since 1993 have contributed over \$11 million.



*Photo Courtesy of Florida Campus Compact*

Data is limited and incomplete regarding the true percentage of students that participate in community service activities. Estimates in 2007 range from a little over 25% at the University of Florida to 100% of all students graduating with a baccalaureate degree from FGCU. This high percentage can be attributed in part to a service-learning requirement, which has been in place since the university opening in 1997, requiring 80 hours of community service for graduation.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Dr. Laura Osteen, Co-Director, FSU Center for Civic Education and Leadership.



“Community-based learning provides students with first-hand experiences that take them outside the walls of the classroom and into the community.”

*- John Delaney, President, University of North Florida*

As to faculty community engagement, this remains one of the most difficult areas to determine; however, we think the number is considerable since there are 16,098 SUS faculty members. Consequently, a number of universities, such as Florida State, are seeking to create “engaged scholarship reporting” systems. Estimating faculty community engagement participation is also difficult, but there are a few general indicators such as annual faculty reports that have led the Board of Governors to conclude: “In Fiscal Year 2006-07, the SUS used 275 faculty person years for the public service program. This represents 2.95% of the 9,336 person years devoted to faculty initiatives.” The BOG also reports that: “The 2006-07 expenditures for the faculty public service program from general revenue funds totaled \$70.74 million.”<sup>23</sup>

Another area of service that is not well tracked, but is undoubtedly large, is student internships. While not all internships involve service, many do, and when one considers that there are 48 professional schools within the SUS, and that 4 of the 5 most popular majors for undergraduates are in applied areas (business, health, education, and engineering), the extent of internships has to be very large.


Finally, there are thousands of community service projects being undertaken among the over 550 centers and institutes within the SUS. As will be discussed later, it has been estimated that as many as half of these projects may involve efforts that are of benefit to the community.

**4. There Are Exemplary Models Of Community Service and Engagement Within The SUS.** Among the SUS universities, many programs and approaches have been recognized by both state and national awards for exemplary community service and engagement. For example in 2008 the University of Central Florida, won an award from Campus Compact for being the Most Engaged University in Florida, and in 2007 the award was given to the Florida Gulf Coast University. In 2006, the University of South Florida was the first and only higher education institution in the state of Florida to be selected for exemplary performance in Community Engagement Outreach and Partnerships by the Carnegie Foundation. In 2008, Florida Gulf Coast University and the University of Central Florida each received the Carnegie Foundation designation for Curricular Engagement and Outreach Partnerships.<sup>24</sup> Six Florida

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<sup>23</sup> Board of Governors, State University System of Florida Faculty Public Service, Last Update 10/29/08  
[www.oppage.state.fl.us/profiles/2077.htm](http://www.oppage.state.fl.us/profiles/2077.htm)

<sup>24</sup> In 2008, Miami Dade College, Northwest Florida State College and three Florida private colleges, Eckerd, Rollins, and Stetson, also received Carnegie designation classification in the area of community engagement. This is important to Florida public universities in that they often partner with Florida State Colleges (formerly community colleges), community colleges as well as with private colleges in community service activities.



public universities were selected as recipients of the U.S. President’s Higher Education Service Honor Role Award with Distinction in 2007: University of Central Florida, University of Florida, University of South Florida, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida International University and Florida State University.

In 2007 and 2008 the National Consortium of Academics and Sports selected Florida State University as the top Division I school in the nation for its program of community service by student athletes. In 2008 the University of Central Florida received an award for having the largest Junior Achievement partnership in the world.


In addition to these recognized programs, there are exemplary practices of community service among the SUS universities. Examples of many of these are found throughout this report. Also, it should be acknowledged that exemplary community service by students and faculty are now recognized and awarded at all of the universities.

**5. Community Outreach is the Wellspring of Community Service.** Community outreach is a critical feature of university engagement with the community. “Outreach is where engagement begins,” suggests Florida Atlantic University Provost John Pritchett. As a point of departure, community outreach is part *attitude, a series of practices,* and part *organizational structure* to share information with and listen to community leaders. In this regard, outreach involves initiating and maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship between the university (or parts of it) and organizations in the community.

At an attitudinal level community outreach consists of a sense of interest and openness to community leaders and organizations. As Cynthia Hughes Harris, Provost at FAMU has explained about community outreach at her university, “We have an open dialogue with the community, our interest and commitment is ongoing and it is widespread throughout FAMU.” She adds, “We continuously go to the community and ask them to ‘tell us about what you think we don’t know.’” A similar attitude prevails at UCF as many leaders there have explained to us. As one leader commented, “President Hitt has made it clear that outreach and access are priorities for the university, so we are expected to be open, to listen, and to connect with the community whenever possible.” In discussing this with President Hitt, he clarified that while reaching out to the community was essential, it was also important to be accessible, alert, and responsive whenever community leaders took the initiative to come to the university.

“We have an open dialogue with the community, our interest and commitment is ongoing and it is widespread throughout FAMU. We continuously go to the community and ask them to ‘tell about what you think we don’t know.’”

– Cynthia Hughes Harris, Provost, FAMU




Beyond attitude, there are many ways in which a university can reach out to the community. A very recent example is that of Susan Crowley, a new Assistant Vice President for Community Affairs at the University of Florida, who spent much of her first year on the job visiting mayors and city managers, among others, to discuss ways in which the university might serve them. This led to the development of many new partnerships and collaborative undertakings. Another kind of community outreach practice is that used by Florida Gulf Coast University to have administrative leaders join community organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce, in the cities and towns within their service area. Another practice at FGCU, particularly in the Colleges of Business and Education and the School of Nursing, and which is common among most universities, is to conduct frequent surveys to identify community needs.

Community outreach in most universities becomes embedded in various ways into their organizational structure. For example, at most universities advisory councils are established for various departments, schools, colleges, and centers to provide technical advice as well as guidance about community engagement. At all university levels, it is not uncommon to create community advisory councils such as the University of North Florida has done with their Community Outreach Council, involving key leaders from business, government, and the nonprofit sector. President Wilson Bradshaw of Florida Gulf Coast University points out the important roles of deans, department heads and trustees in regard to outreach. “We depend upon them all as a team to help us understand the needs and to engage with the community.”

Finally, community outreach may include events such as open houses, cultural programs, and athletic events as more informal and indirect forms of outreach. As FSU President T. K. Wetherall suggested, “Never underestimate the power of athletics as a way to reach out to and connect with the community.”

Many university colleges and centers utilize more formal events to reach out to the community. For example, Florida International University’s Metropolitan Center sponsors four breakfasts annually in Miami to discuss important issues with community leaders; additionally, the Center holds special luncheons with stakeholder groups. Also, the Metro Center partners with Miami Dade College twice a year in sponsoring a meeting for their community partners. Another example, common among most universities is to organize conferences and workshops to engage with community leaders about particular issues. The Collaborative for Children, Families and Communities at the University of South Florida, for example, is well known for these kinds of events, such as their 2008 workshop, “Planning for Tampa’s Future: A Tampa Comprehensive Plan Workshop.” The Collaborative has also provided small grants for community-engaged research to generate social and political capital, as well as financial support for local communities and their organizations.

**6. The Organization of Community Service is Fragmented.** Not only does community service consist of a wide variety of activities in universities, it is also carried out by a variety of different constituencies each of which may have their own distinctive organizational units, priorities, approaches, and traditions. For example, service activities may be initiated and managed by students, faculty, administration, staff, and alumni and by different organizations or offices within the university. So, for example, groups as different as a sorority, a school of education, an environmental class, or the office of the president may all engage in different kinds of community service activities by themselves, or, in some instances, together. Further, many



universities have branch campuses with their own service activities. FAU, for example, has seven campuses and sites over the distance of 140 miles. Consequently, there is great diversification as well as fragmentation in these activities. The positive result of this situation is that there is a high degree of responsiveness and creativity from many quarters within universities in responding to community need. However, there is limited coordination of community service and engagement activities, little connection between them, and, with a few exceptions, an absence of a strategic perspective.

Despite the fact that university community service is a pastiche of programs and activities, there is a relatively common infrastructure for managing it based on three university constituencies: students, faculty, administration and staff.<sup>25</sup> Historically, students have been most engaged in community service, especially charitable giving and volunteer projects, through the student affairs office. However, many students today are also engaged through service learning courses and internships or capstone projects with their academic departments or colleges.

Faculty, primarily become engaged with the community through their departments, their college, or a university center or institute.<sup>26</sup> These organizational units tend to engage in more long-term and structured research, consulting, or other forms of community assistance. At the same time, there is a great deal of informal individual volunteer service being undertaken by faculty, such as advising groups or providing information to them, that is not well documented or recognized.

College administrators play a very important role in arranging, managing and championing community service. Department chairs, deans, and center directors develop relationships with community leaders and institutions relevant to their fields. Over time, they create partnerships with community organizations that benefit their students and faculty while helping the community. In many cases, the longer these relationships exist, the more adept the administrators become in understanding community needs as well as in identifying opportunities for their institution.


Certainly presidents and provosts, as chief officers, influence the organizational practice of community service by providing time and resources to support certain activities. More importantly, as we will report, presidents expand the university community agenda by focusing attention on a particular community need and use their office to attract interest from within the university to help address these needs. A good example of this is the efforts of University of North Florida President John Delaney who, in collaboration with Mayor Peyton, has done much to develop and utilize university resources to help address the high crime rate in the Jacksonville area through the Jacksonville Journey initiative.

A university provost related that, “our institution has a long history of operating in silos,” a comment echoed elsewhere. While there is evidence that this is the case regarding university community service, there are also signs across the SUS system that there is interest in and efforts to increase productivity and synergy. In part, this has been reflected in efforts to reorganize

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<sup>25</sup> There is a fourth constituency for providing community service, and that is alumni. They tend to play a much smaller role than do students, faculty, and administrators/staff. We believe they are a significant untapped potential for support of Community Service and Engagement.

<sup>26</sup> They may also participate in some volunteer and giving programs coordinated through student affairs offices.



student services so as to better coordinate efforts in community service, civic education, leadership development, and service-learning in recent years.<sup>27</sup> Very recently, a number of universities have proposed or taken steps to create new institutional entities to coordinate community engagement. For example, the University of South Florida has said it “needs to have a complete central clearinghouse for community engagement.”<sup>28</sup> FAU has proposed to, “establish an Office of Community Engagement.”<sup>29</sup> And the University of North Florida proposes to soon open its Center for Community Based Learning. In each of these instances, the approach is, as President Brogan of FAU has summarized, “to ground the leadership on the academic side of the house.”

While community service is likely to expand and improve with better coordination, we have heard cautionary concerns. Professor Susan Greenbaum, a champion for community service at USF has commented, “Certainly we need a central entity for coordination, but it cannot be too bureaucratic.” Linda Chapin and Professor Jim Wright of the UCF Metro Center express a similar concern that too much coordination might squelch the entrepreneurial quality of community service. Nancy Blosser, a Trustee at FAU suggests, “The greatest danger in a coordinating unit is to be too prescriptive.” And Nancy Ellis, Director of the Center for Community Partnerships at UCF, suggests beyond strong presidential leadership, a “soft infrastructure” is what is needed to advance and strengthen community service.

**7. Communication about Community Service is Inadequate.** At many of the universities visited for this project, we would meet with a group of people who were engaged in community service. Invariably, there would be people who would say, “I am sorry, but I never heard of your program before.”

In part, this situation is understandable because universities may have many hundreds or thousands of community service projects and programs. On the other hand, lack of communication may be because no one has responsibility and resources to collect and share information about activities and programs. Further, as one person said to, “We are not clear about our purpose, our audience, and our story.” Many leaders emphasized that it was particularly important to communicate with alumni since surveys and studies of graduates indicate that they want their university to do more to serve the community, yet they know little of what service the university provides. A number of senior officials also suggested, as one put it, “We need to educate the legislature about the extent and importance of community service. This is a big story about a big part of the support system for our state and our communities. We need their understanding and support for what we are doing and what more we can do.”

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<sup>27</sup> There has been a great deal of experimentation in the focus and organization of student service activities regarding community service within the SUS in the last decade as the following titles of service offices illustrates: Florida State University, Center for Leadership and Civic Education; Florida International University, Center for Leadership and Service; Florida Atlantic University, Center for Civic Education and Service; University of Florida, Office of Community Service; University of Central Florida, Office of Student Involvement; University of South Florida, Center for Civic Engagement and Volunteerism; Florida Gulf Coast University, Center for Civic Engagement; University of North Florida, Center for Community Based Learning (proposed); University of West Florida, Office of Community/University Partnerships.

<sup>28</sup>University of South Florida. “Report from the Community Partnerships Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate’s ad hoc Committee on University Community Engagement.” p.2.

<sup>29</sup> Florida Atlantic University. “Strategic Plan – Goal 4 Task Force Report; Meeting Community needs and Unique Institutional Responsibilities.” October 2007.

In regard to communication, two needs were mentioned frequently. The first was to better document service activities and to better communicate the results. President T.K. Wetherall of Florida State University said, “A major need is to develop communication plans and programs to let people know the many good things that FSU and other universities are doing.” The second need, which many people refer to as the “portal” problem, is how to provide access to information about university services to the community in a user-friendly way. As Harold Keller, Associate Dean at USF has suggested, “Even with all we do, we still need a ‘portal’ so that those inside and outside the university can easily navigate to secure help and assistance.” This being said, we would point out that there are some good examples on university websites communicating what services have been and can be available.

“Campus Compact’s annual member surveys indicate that from 1998 to 2006 the percentage of undergraduate participation in community service grew from 10% to 32%, and that in 2007 one-third of all students participated in community service, averaging five hours per week.”

**8. Students and Faculty Expect to Engage in Community Service.** A number of university officials have expressed the opinion in our interviews that there is a generational change underway in terms of the expectations of students and faculty regarding community service. As a college dean observed, “Community service has become an important criterion in selecting students, but it is also one of the criteria we see students using to evaluate us.”

The growth in expectation about community service is supported by a number of findings. For example, a survey of attitudes of college freshmen that has been taken for 40 years, found in 2006 that “the importance of helping others” at 66.7% is the third highest value among freshmen, and the highest it has been in 20 years. Further, the percentage of students who said there is a very good chance that they would participate in community service in college increased from 16.99% in 1990 to 26.8% in 2006.<sup>30</sup> In a similar vein, a report from the Corporation for National and Community Service states that, “While volunteer rates among young adults declined between 1974 and 1989 (20% and 13.4% respectively), the number of young adults who volunteered about doubled between 1989 & 2006 (13.4% to 26.4 %).<sup>31</sup>

Among high school students, the U. S. Census Bureau reports that in 1999, 52% of all K-12 students engaged in some form of community service, and that the rate among 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students was 61%.<sup>32</sup> Among college and university students, Campus Compact’s annual member surveys indicate that for 1998 to 2006 the percentage of undergraduate participation in community service grew from 10% to 32%,<sup>33</sup> and that in 2007 one-third of all students participated in community service, averaging five hours per week.<sup>34</sup>


<sup>30</sup> See Pryor, J. K., et al. “The American Freshman: Forty Year Trends: 1966-2006” [www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/40yrtrends.php](http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/40yrtrends.php)

<sup>31</sup> Corporation for National and Community Service. Volunteer Growth in America: A Review of Trends since 1974.

<sup>32</sup> [www.allcountries.org/uscensus636\\_community\\_service\\_participation\\_of\\_students](http://www.allcountries.org/uscensus636_community_service_participation_of_students)

<sup>33</sup> Op.cit. Campus Compact, 2006 Service Statistics.

<sup>34</sup> Op. cit. Campus Compact, 2007 Member Survey.



In addition to students, it also seems that younger faculty are interested in and expect to be engaged in community service. At Florida Gulf Coast University, a former dean observed, “Our emphasis on community service has been an important factor in recruiting faculty.” This may also be important in regard to recruiting administrators in the future. For example, the newest president among the SUS institutions, Wilson Bradshaw, also of FGCU, came to his position with a strong background in community service. As he said, “Community service has been and is a priority to me. In Minnesota I was active in Campus Compact and always tried to advance community service in my previous position. My goal is to do the same at FGCU.”

“Community service has been and is a priority to me. In Minnesota I was active in Campus Compact and always tried to advance community service in my previous position. My goal is to the same at FGCU.”

*-Wilson Bradshaw, President, Florida Gulf Coast University*

**9. Community service requires leadership from many quarters:** University presidents, as a number of people have suggested to us, play important roles in promoting community service. These roles may vary. Some presidents may engage in more than one role, and some presidents may excel in one or several.<sup>35</sup>

A threshold role for most presidents is to promote and support community service on campus by doing such things as encouraging, recognizing, and rewarding student and faculty community service. A president’s promotion of an appropriate faculty rewards system in relation to tenure and promotion for community engagement can be a powerful form of leadership. By leading charitable campaigns and by providing an example by volunteering in various service projects themselves, a president can be a powerful catalyst for community services. A stronger role for presidents is to be involved in **community outreach** efforts to establish and strengthen relationships with community institutions and leaders. Former University of Florida President, Charles Young, for example, was well known for his efforts to invite community leaders to his home to discuss how they might work together to address community needs. Some presidents go even further by providing **community leadership** in serving as officers of community organizations. This has particularly been the case concerning economic development. FIU president, Modesto Maidique, for example, has served as President of the Beacon Council, Miami’s economic development organization. President John Hitt of UCF and former USF President Betty Castor were co-founders and co-chairs of the Florida High Tech Corridor Council and current President Judith Genshaft continues to serve with President Hitt in that role. President Genshaft also serves as president of the Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce. President Hitt of UCF summarized his approach to community engagement by sharing something he

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<sup>35</sup> Op.cit Campus Compact, 2007 Service Statistics, p. 2. In 2007, Campus Compact reported in a community service survey that college presidents were engaged in the following ways: providing financial support, 78%; participating in campus events, 77%; serving on community boards, 68%; speaking or writing about community engagement, 52%; and meeting regularly with community partners, 52%.

learned many years ago at a workshop for new university presidents at Harvard University. “What they taught me, and what I have since come to appreciate is that the president is the living logo of the university. So, a president should be pretty serious about what he or she selects to do in community service and how well it is done.”

Another role played by university presidents in support of community service has to do with **capacity building** within the community. Again, President Hitt of UCF was particularly clear about this matter. “Several decades ago when I worked in Texas,” he commented, “you could turn to a handful of people to receive community support; but that has changed. When I came to the Orlando area, I realized that leadership was much more dispersed, so we concentrated on outreach efforts to connect with and involve area leaders, but we also created leadership training programs at UCF to help produce a new generation of leaders who would serve the community, and support our university.”




*Statewide FSU/UCF Consensus Center Advisory Council discussing Board of Governors Initiatives*

There is one other area in which university presidential leadership is important, potentially in **improving** the quality and impact of community service. This involves **organizational leadership** in seeking to strengthen, focus, and improve community service through better strategic thinking and planning, as well as determining how to better manage and coordinate the disparate dimensions of community service. As will be described later in this report, President John Delaney at the University of North Florida and President Frank Brogan at Florida Atlantic University have recently developed exemplary initiatives in this area.

The above notwithstanding, it should not be assumed that presidents are the only source of leadership for community service. For example, although community involvement has been a





priority of USF President Judith Genshaft, she was quick to point out that others have played very substantial roles in advancing various elements of community engagement, “including many who preceded my term as president beginning in 2000.” President Genshaft cited as examples of other significant points of leadership, the Collaboration for Children, Families, and Communities, begun in 1996 and which serves as a linkage point in providing faculty expertise and student service to address community needs. She also stressed the importance of administrative and faculty leadership such as that provided by former Provost David Stamps, “which has been ably continued by his successors,” and by the Faculty Senate, led by Professor Susan Greenbaum. “Here at USF, and I suspect this may be so elsewhere, successful community engagement requires strong leadership from many quarters,” according to President Genshaft.

“Here at USF, and I suspect this may be so elsewhere, successful community engagement requires strong leadership from many quarters.”

*-Judith Genshaft, President, University of South Florida*

**10. Community Service Has Not Been Well Documented, Analyzed And Evaluated.** Until very recently it has been the case that community service has not been well documented, analyzed or evaluated by the SUS universities. However, in the past several years, a number of schools have undertaken inventories of their service activities in preparing for a Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement designation, or in developing Quality Enhancement Programs (QEP) for community engagement as a part of the Southern Association Commission on College & Schools accreditation process.

These designation programs, we have found, are of great interest to the SUS universities and have encouraged many of them to look at their community service more carefully. USF President Judith Genshaft has said that, “While we were proud of our community service activities, we found the Carnegie Foundation designation criteria were helpful to us in thinking about community engagement in a more integrated way.”

Several universities have involved outside resources in helping them to review their community engagement programs and activities. For example, UNF has involved a consultant from the Carnegie Foundation to help them, and FAU has drawn upon leaders from the Michigan State University and the University of Indiana at Indianapolis. One value of involving outside resources, suggests President Brogan of FAU, is that, “it helps with the task of establishing some relevant metrics for planning and evaluation.”

An important and positive development we discovered at many of the universities was the establishment of review and/or planning committees for community service. For example, at the University of South Florida this led to the development of a business plan to implement improvements, and at FAU a section of the university’s new strategic plan was developed including objectives and action steps.

At most of the universities within the SUS, basic annual statistics are kept regarding student volunteer hours, money donated to charity, and, in some cases, the number of service-learning courses and students engaged in them. At Florida State, for example, service-learning courses are identified for student registration.

Many departments, centers, and schools, we have observed, publish reports summarizing their service initiatives, but there is little information, if any, about the extent of service internships or volunteer service by faculty, administrators, and staff. Further, there is little indication of analysis or evaluation of the various types of community engagement to determine their impacts, there is no mapping of activities across departments, schools, and centers, there is little evidence of assessments being undertaken regarding quality, and there are few examples of efforts to benchmark practices to share lessons learned.

The University of North Florida has taken steps recently to improve its information gathering under the leadership of its Northeast Florida Center for Community Initiatives. Its initial surveying in 2008 provided the following helpful information about community engagement at UNF during 2007: there were 120 service-learning courses through which 2,784 students provided 65,759 hours of service; 265 faculty were involved in volunteer projects and 140 faculty served as board members or consultants to 233 organizations; there were 60 courses that offered internships; and 46% of graduating seniors participated in a service-learning project.<sup>36</sup>




*Photo Courtesy of Florida Campus Compact*

Beyond basic data collection and analysis about community service, it is particularly important to estimate its overall impact and value to the community in terms that are clear, understood, and appreciated. Universities have done a good job in this regard in estimating their economic impact. For example, FAU has estimated that it generates \$1.2 billion in economic activity to its region and USF has estimated its impact to be \$3.2 billion.<sup>37</sup> President Wetherall of FSU has observed, “We have economic figures for impact but little understanding of the impact of social

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.unf.edu/acadaffairs/Comm%20Impact/>

<sup>37</sup> [www.usf.edu/about-usf](http://www.usf.edu/about-usf)



investments in the community.” Further, as DeeDee Rasmussen, Director of the Florida Campus Compact suggests, “We need a standard mechanism through which we can measure, not only the learning outcomes for the students who serve in our communities, but also the impact of their work in the community.”

The diversity of university community service is compounded by the fact that universities provide services to a wide range of recipients that are referred to generally as “community.” These references most frequently suggest geographic gradations such as the local community, adjacent communities, the regional community, state, nation, or world. However, the recipient of community service may also refer to demographic groups or interest groups, e.g. the African-American community or the community of renaissance scholars.

“We have economic figures for impact but little understanding of the impact of social investments that universities make in the community.”

- President T.K. Wetherall, Florida State University

Beyond illustrating the richness of the idea of community service within universities, recognizing these differences in the meaning of “community” may be beneficial in attempting to better understand and improve community service. More particularly, classifying service according to types of “communities” served may make it easier and more productive to inventory, analyze, and evaluate the impact of various types of activities within a particular university, but also within an entire system such as the Florida SUS.

One additional point regarding the analysis of community service is that we have heard of no efforts to address issues of quality. As one dean said to us, “We do a lot, but no one has any idea of how well we do community service or if we could do anything better.”

**11. Community Service Is Not Adequately Funded.** A point made frequently to us by university officials is that community service could achieve greater synergy, impact, and quality if it received more and better-secured funding. In fact, we found that a number of universities have developed proposals to create coordinating offices for community engagement but have not been able to obtain funding for them. The University of South Florida has articulated this situation as follows: “Limited ‘hard money’ funding inhibits ability to leverage other funds. Unstable, year-to-year state funding through grants necessitates spending time and resources creating strong relationships with state and federal funders to stay in business. Fee-for-service contracts also present institutional barriers as they do not yield salary savings or large indirect fees that could help pay administrative costs (such as rent, utilities, office supplies, administrative time, and non-billable time).”<sup>38</sup>

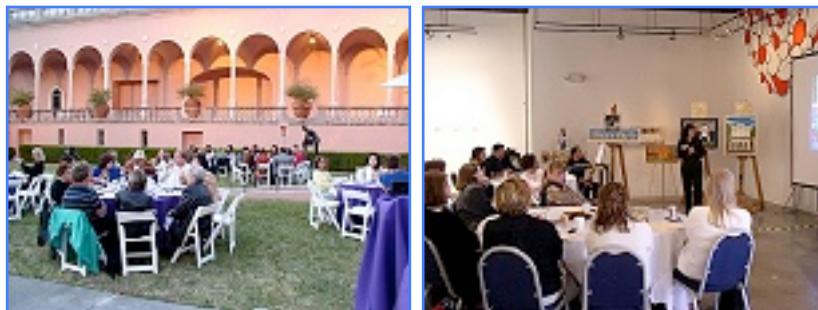
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<sup>38</sup> University of South Florida. *Report from the Community Partnerships Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate’s ad hoc Committee on University Community engagement.* p.2.

The difficulties in funding community service at each university are both internal and external. A structural challenge is that community service is funded through a variety of budgetary sources. For example, service-learning and internships are supported through Education & General (E&G) funds, student volunteering activities through student services, the community service work of centers through sponsored research funds, and various special projects through the university foundation or the office of the president. “This diversity in funding,” observes one university leader, “makes it difficult to achieve any sense of coherence among the things we are doing in the community and it limits the potential of our impact.”

A related internal problem is that, in comparison to other interests within the university, community service activities are not viewed as of a sufficiently high priority for increased support or, in times of budget cuts, for protection. Diverse and operationally dispersed, community service is all the more vulnerable as it seldom has a strong enough policy advocate to advance or protect it as one of the critical missions of the universities when it comes to budgeting.<sup>39</sup> This difficulty is further compounded internally when it comes to fund-raising since university financial development priorities have seldom included community service on an equal footing with buildings, new academic programs, and athletics. As one administrator quipped, “unless we count football as community outreach, I don’t see any additional support for community engagement.” While this is a common problem, as Dr. Whiteford, USF Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Strategic Initiatives noted, “USF exemplifies a growing trend in that community engagement figures prominently in its strategic plan that reads in part, ‘to establish a unified institutional structure to facilitate and promote community engagement, social enterprise and global collaboration in education, research and service learning, including mechanisms for managing fiscal and human resources for student exchange, study abroad and international field placement programs, and faculty research, teaching, outreach and professional development opportunities.’”


After discussing the issue of funding community service with many university leaders, our sense is that the need to adequately fund community service is a core leadership matter for presidents and trustees. “Faculty members will always hustle to serve,” suggested a university official, “but at our university, nothing can happen to scale without the president and trustees.”



*Photo Courtesy of Florida Campus Compact*

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<sup>39</sup> JoAnn Campbell, “The Bridging Role of the Community Service Director on the Engaged Campus,” <http://www.ohio16service.org/pdf/CSDBridgepaper.pdf>



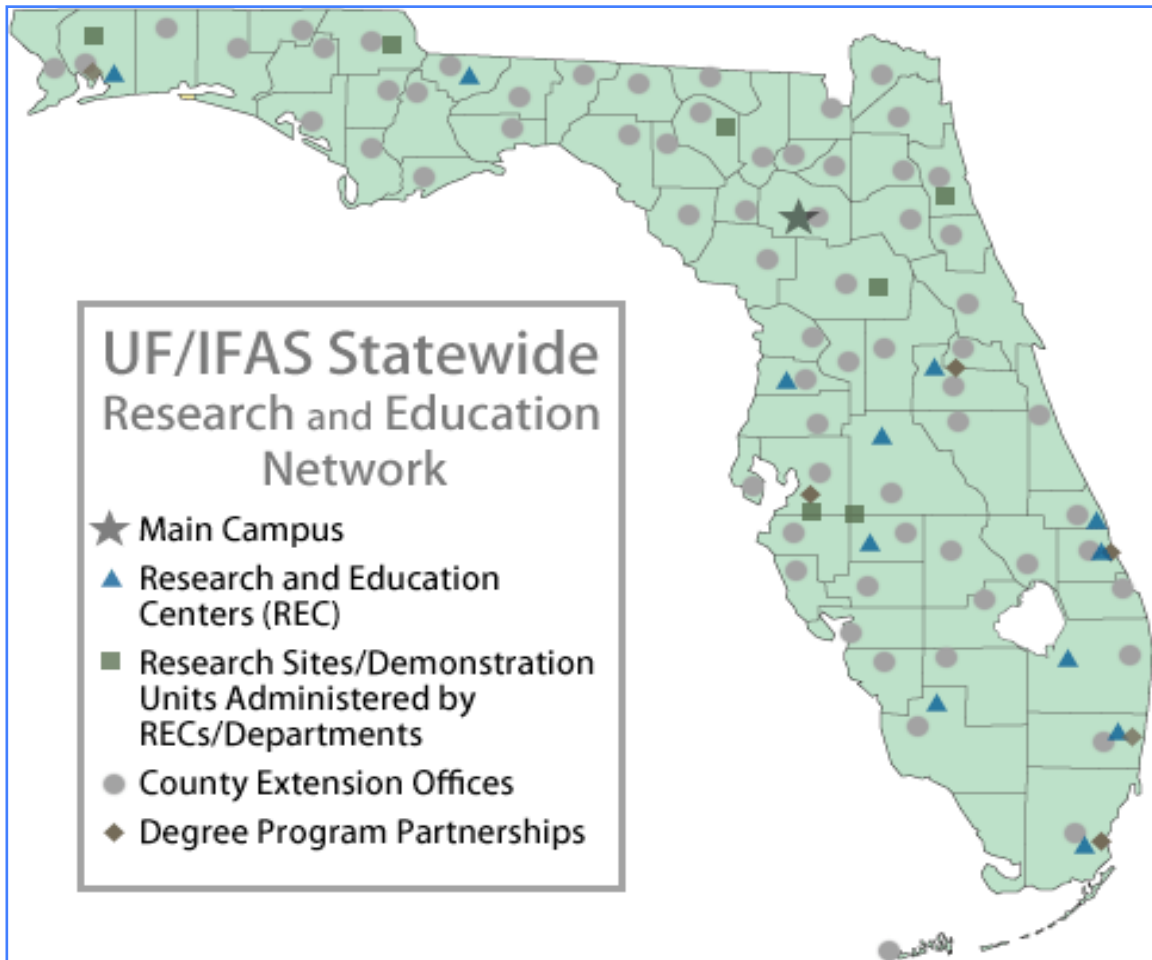
**12. Community Partnerships are an Important Feature of Community Service.** The development of partnerships is a prominent feature of how universities engage with and through their community organizations over time. What is particularly interesting in most universities is the number and variety of such mutually beneficial arrangements. A 2007 study by the national Campus Compact, for example, found that among universities it surveyed, the average number of partnerships in one year was 77.<sup>40</sup> The greatest number of partnerships, in order of frequency, was with nonprofit groups (93%), K-12 education institutions (88%), faith based groups (68%), government agencies (62%), other higher education institutions (42%), and for-profit business (38%).<sup>41</sup>

Community partnerships which may vary in duration and intensity are particularly prevalent among professional schools. An example of a long standing service partnership is the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Service (IFAS) that offers a wide variety of services to rural and other communities through sites in 67 counties plus 13 research and teaching centers. Schools of education, of which there are eight within the SUS, also have a long tradition of partnering with school systems for student internships, mentoring, and other service activities. Small Business Development Centers, located on most of the SUS campuses, partner with business, economic development, and nonprofit institutions in offering training and consultation to aspiring business owners and managers who need to improve their skills. Another example of such partnerships can be found at USF where medical students established a free clinic for the community.

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<sup>40</sup> National Campus Compact 2007 Service Statistics. [www.compact.org/about/statistics/2007](http://www.compact.org/about/statistics/2007) p.6.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. p. 7



It is customary among centers and institutes to develop partnerships in providing community service. The John Scott Dailey Florida Institute of Government (IOG) based at Florida State University is a good example of this. Established by the Florida legislature in 1981 to help improve local government management, the IOG has five affiliate offices at other universities and partners with 14 state agencies, seven associations, and four technical and research institutions. The FSU FCRC Consensus Center partners with the UCF Institute of Government in providing consensus building and facilitation services in the Central Florida Area and with FAU Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions in providing regional visioning services in the Treasure Coast region. The FAMU Black Infant Health Alliance has partnered with local governments and nonprofits in the region as well as with the University of Southern California’s “Birth Project” to focus efforts to increase the number of healthy births through service to women, teens, mother-to-be and babies.




*Florida City and County Managers Developing University Partnership Strategies at a FSU Institute of Government Conference.*

Although there are few statistics regarding the number of community service partnerships among public universities in Florida, we estimate that the number may reach as many as 3000, which is an extraordinary number of institutional connections and one significant indicator of the contributions to community institutions through the SUS universities.<sup>42</sup>

**13. Universities Face Common Challenges in Managing Community Service Partnerships.** Because partnerships are so extensive and important as vehicles for community service and engagement, it is important to recognize that it takes time to develop effective relationships and that there are common challenges in managing them. According to DeeDee Rasmussen of Florida Campus Compact, “Partnership should not be treated as static but rather as dynamic processes that are created, defined, redefined, and ended according to ongoing assessment and dialogue.” An initial challenge in building a service partnership is to clarify expectations as to the purposes and mutual responsibilities of the relationship. This is very important, suggests Nancy Ellis of the Center for Partnerships at UCF, “Because other people may not have a clear understanding of the nature of university- community partnerships.

<sup>42</sup> Our rough calculation is based, in part, on a compilation of the national Campus Compact statistics. For example, in 2007 they reported 1,144 numbers of colleges and universities (including all of the SUS institutions) with a total FTE student population of 7,422,272, which is an average of 6,488 per institution. The average size among the 11 SUS institutions is  $301,000 \div 11 = 27,363$ . Since the average number of partnerships for campus compact members (which have an average student FTE of 6,444) is 77, the computed average based on this formula for community partnerships at Florida SUS institutions would be 308 and the total would be 3,388. A report from the University of Central Florida, supporting their strategic plan in 2005-06 roughly corresponds to this estimate. At the time, UCF had a FTE student population of approximately 48,000 and reported that students contributed 186,000 hours through over 500 civic partners. Dividing 48,000 UCF students by the 6,488 Campus Compact average and multiplying by 77, the average Campus Compact number of partnerships, suggests that UCF would have 569.6 partnerships - which roughly corresponds to their estimate of over 500 “civic partners.”



Sometimes they expect we will solve problems they have instead of building a relationship of shared benefit and responsibility.”

Another important challenge that arises frequently has to do with faculty. Often, in working with community groups, faculty may be impatient and unwilling to take the time to build a collaborative relationship. As one person said, “often faculty will not devote enough time and, even when they do, some are not good listeners.” Further, there are some faculty who may be perceived by community members as arrogant and condescending. As one dean has said, “We cannot afford to have professors who think they ‘know it all’ interact with the community.” Therefore, selection, training, and oversight are all important considerations in assuring that faculty who engage with the community have the attitudes and skills to be effective.

The point that has been made above about faculty is also relevant to student interns, who should be carefully selected, given adequate orientation, and supervised. David Jaffee, Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Studies at University of North Florida, points out the importance of having adequate management and supervision of interns. “We try to strengthen cooperation and coordination between departments and schools to maximize student learning, assure adequate placement, supervision and community contribution.”


One additional partnership challenge that has been reported in our interviews is when to conclude a partnership. Nancy Blosser, a Florida Atlantic University Trustee asks, “How do we decide and exit from service activities that no longer deliver sufficient value to the community and the university?”

“Because other people may not have a clear understanding of the nature of university-community partnerships. Sometimes they expect we will solve problems they have instead of building a relationship of shared benefit and responsibility.”

*- Nancy Ellis, Center for Partnerships, University of Central Florida*

The common challenges summarized above illustrate the importance of developing policies, procedures, assessment tools, metrics, and good benchmarking to assure that these challenges are managed well.





**14. Centers and Institutes are Important Vehicles for Community Service.** There are over 500 centers and institutes among the public universities of Florida and many, if not a majority, of them provide community service of one kind or another. What is significant about large numbers of these centers is that they contain opportunities for advanced learning, research, as well as community service. As one person suggested to us, “Most of our centers are a matter of service-learning going to graduate school.”

Centers and institutes are significant assets to Florida’s public universities in many respects. A study of SUS centers and institutes found that in academic year 2005-06, they attracted nearly a half billion dollars and employed the equivalent of 2,733 faculty and staff.<sup>43</sup> Further, faculty at centers and institutes account for 20% more research dollars than did faculty overall.<sup>44</sup> Significantly, less than 20% of the income for centers and institutes comes from the Florida legislature, thus making them significant revenue producers for the Florida SUS.

Centers and institutes play several vital roles within a university. First, as suggested above, they are magnets for funding for research, but also for community service functions. Second, they are an outlet for faculty interests and, frequently, are important resources in helping to recruit and retain talented faculty. Third, centers and institutes are natural laboratories for integrating research, teaching, and service, especially for upper-level and graduate students and directly contribute to the competitive standing of departments and colleges.

Centers and institutes are created for many reasons, including special interests of one or several faculty members; interests and needs of a department or school, especially in creating field-study opportunities; in response to a community need; and/or in response to one or more funding opportunities. There are numerous examples of centers that engage in high levels of community service that have been created for each of these reasons; yet over time, those that survive and grow are particularly responsive to community needs and funding opportunities.

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<sup>43</sup> See Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), Florida Legislature, Report No. 07-35, University Centers and Institutes Report Many Benefits; the Oversight Process Needs to be Strengthened, August, 2007, p. 2.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, p. 3.




While there are no statistics about the numbers of SUS centers and institutes involved in community service, we estimate that conservatively, it may include 25% of them; and, if economic development support is considered as a form of community service then the number of centers and institutes engaged in community service is likely to exceed 50%.<sup>45</sup> As will be discussed later in this report, we encourage greater documentation and analysis of service activities to better determine the nature and extent of impacts on the economy and community life.

“A study of SUS centers and institutes found that in academic year 2005-06, they attracted nearly a half billion dollars and employed the equivalent of 2,733 faculty and staff. Further, faculty at centers and institutes account for 20% more research dollars than faculty overall.”

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<sup>45</sup> The OPPAGA report cited above found that 2/3 of the centers and institutes they studied reported, “benefits that helped improve citizens’ lives.” The Florida Expert.Net website identifies 109 centers and institutes that refer to community in their title or materials, lists 1,923 funded projects that refer to community, and identify 298 faculty experts. A 2001 study estimated that 50% of the work of centers and institutes involved public service, training, and teaching. (See Tim Lynch, Julie Harrington, “Economic Impact of Centers & Institutes in Florida’s Public Universities” Center for Economic Forecasting and Analysis. Florida State University, [www.cefa.fsu.edu](http://www.cefa.fsu.edu)).



A study of SUS centers and institutes found that in academic year 2005-06, they attracted nearly a half billion dollars and employed the equivalent of 2,733 faculty and staff. Further, faculty at centers and institutes account for 20% more research dollars than did faculty overall.

### **15. Community-Engaged Learning and Research Require Strong Support.**

Community-engaged learning and research represent one of the greatest areas of innovation in higher education today, and every university within the SUS provides service-learning courses for students and encourage community based research by faculty. Florida Campus Compact, which has done a great deal to promote service-learning and community engaged scholarship, defines service-learning as a teaching method that uses community involvement to apply theories or skills being taught in a course. As DeeDee Rasmussen notes, “Engaged scholarship should be a symbiotic partnership between the campus and community, whereby student learning is enhanced and the real needs in the community are simultaneously addressed.” Community based research involves research that addresses issues of community interest and need and may involve ameliorative action.

While there is growing interest in service-learning, actual numbers of service-learning courses as a percent of courses at most universities is still relatively modest. For example, at Florida Gulf Coast University, which has a strong emphasis on community engagement, there are 37 service-learning courses, 5% of the total offered, which involves 15% of the faculty and 17% of students.<sup>46</sup> Associate Vice-President for Curriculum and Instruction Peg Gray-Vickrey reported that FGCU is moving away from an hours-based graduation requirement to a course-based requirement. As a move toward that goal, FGCU has one required service-learning course for all graduates (i.e. The University Colloquium: A Sustainable Future).

“Engaged scholarship should be a symbiotic partnership between the campus and community, whereby student learning is enhanced and the real needs in the community are simultaneously addressed.”

*--DeeDee Rasmussen, Director, Florida Campus Compact*

As to community-based research, a small percent of faculty at most universities are engaged, in part because there are few incentives to do so, and many academics have prejudices regarding the quality of such applied research.

John Cavanaugh, former president of the University of West Florida suggested that “to assure the growth and survival of service-learning and community research, faculty involvement in these areas must be positively encouraged in hiring, promotion, and tenure.” He said that it took “four hard years of work” to build faculty and union support for changes in by-laws and

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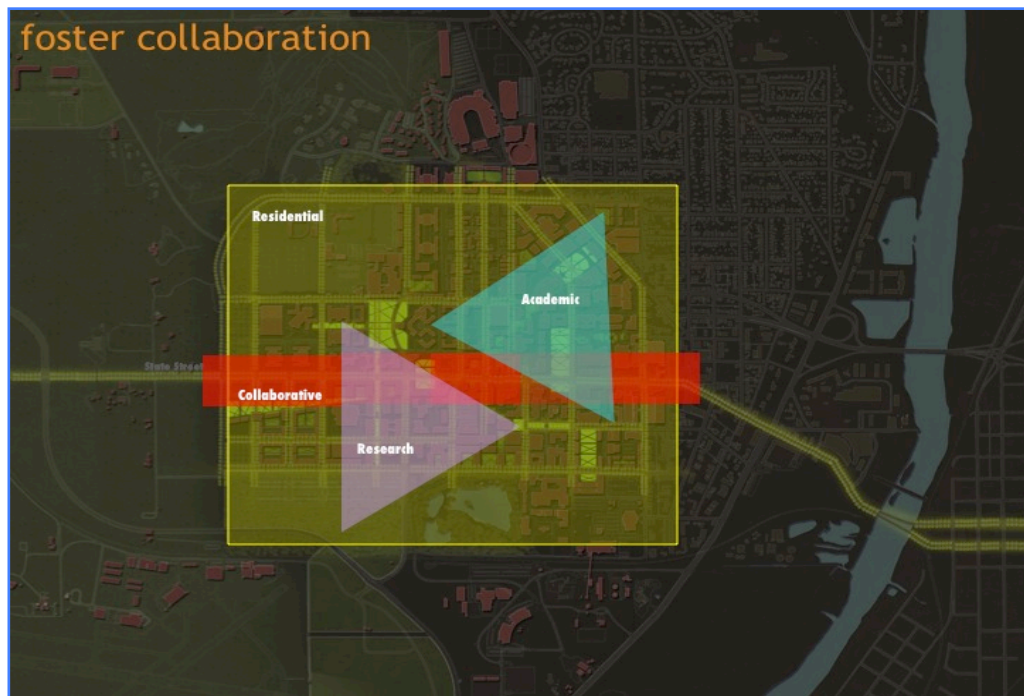
<sup>46</sup> Florida Gulf Coast University. “The Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement: 2008 Documentation Reporting Form.”


agreements that were supportive. More recently USF included in their job advertisements an explicit mention of community engagement as a preferred quality in candidates for jobs at USF.

Through our interviews we have found that most of the SUS universities are engaged in efforts to strengthen support for service-learning and engaged research. A number of leaders at the University of South Florida reported that the use of mini-grants, faculty orientation, and faculty workshops, were all helpful in advancing community engagement. Marilyn Crotty, Director of the Institute of Government at UCF, observes that “The capacity of institutes and centers to obtain grants for community work provides support for student engagement, faculty research, and long-term partnerships.”

At many campuses we visited, a number of people acknowledged the help they had received from Florida Campus Compact in developing service-learning and promoting engaged scholarship. Among the services of the organization, their annual conference, awards program, workshops, mini-grants, scholarships to attend conferences, and consulting assistance were all mentioned. John Cavanaugh, who served on the Florida Campus Compact Board until last year said, “Campus Compact does a great job and deserves all the support it can get.”

**16. Universities Can Help to Strengthen Florida’s Weak Civic Culture.** In our interviews we asked university officials what they thought were the greatest problems in their community that their university could help address. While there certainly are a host of problems in Florida due to its rapid population growth in the past 50 years (Florida gained 13 million residents between 1950 and 2000), we were surprised that most leaders pointed to a condition rather than a problem — what people referred to frequently as the lack of a sense of community, civility, or civic culture. The features of this condition are personal and institutional as well as attitudinal and behavioral.





David Colburn, former provost at the University of Florida and Director of the Reubin Askew Institute on Politics and Society suggests, “We cannot get a lot of things done in Florida because our problem of community is so profound.” Because of its size, traditions, and growth patterns, he suggests, “Florida is four regions in search of a state.” The high level of fragmentation and lack of cohesion in Florida is caused by many factors not the least of which have been phenomenal population growth since the 1950s, the size and physical shape of the state, and the fact that Florida ranks last among the states in terms of the native population. From 2001 to 2005 for example, the rate of people moving into Florida was seven times greater than those being born here. Other important factors that make community building more difficult in Florida are: the transitory nature of the population and the fact that a majority of people are as interested in where they came from as they are in Florida itself; the high degree of leadership turnover; and weak but very competitive political parties that have been engaged in strong adversarial politics for three decades. The result of all this is a state with too much apathy and communities with pent up frustration and anger.

Another important challenge in building a workable civic culture in Florida is the high degree of diversity in the population. Florida is certainly well known for its relatively large population of African-Americans, Hispanics, and elderly. The consequence of this situation as David Colburn has written is that “The state’s complex racial, ethnic and age diversity promises to add further to its lack of identity and to obstruct consensus on public policy.”<sup>47</sup>

The impact of these dynamics is that while Florida has grown fast physically, it has not had a commensurate maturation in its civic infrastructure. It has few and inadequate mediating institutions, limited social integration traditions, and it lags in such traditional social indicators as volunteering, philanthropy, and nonprofit organizations.

“While Florida has grown fast physically, it has not had a commensurate maturation in its civic infrastructure.”

Rates of volunteering in Florida are 30% below the national average; Florida ranks 49<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states and the District of Columbia in regard to the number of those who volunteer; the state ranks 45<sup>th</sup> in terms of the amount of time people volunteer; and Florida’s largest city, Miami, has the lowest volunteer rate among the nation’s 50 large cities.<sup>48</sup> While there were 65,714 nonprofit organizations in Florida in 2006<sup>49</sup> a recent study of Florida nonprofits concluded, “Though sizeable, Florida’s nonprofit sector is proportionately smaller than its counterparts elsewhere in the nation.”<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Colburn, David R. *From Yellow Dog Democrats to Red State Republicans: Florida and its Politics since 1940*. University of Florida Press. 2007. p.219.

<sup>48</sup> Corporation for National and Community Service — *Volunteering in America: Volunteering in Florida*.

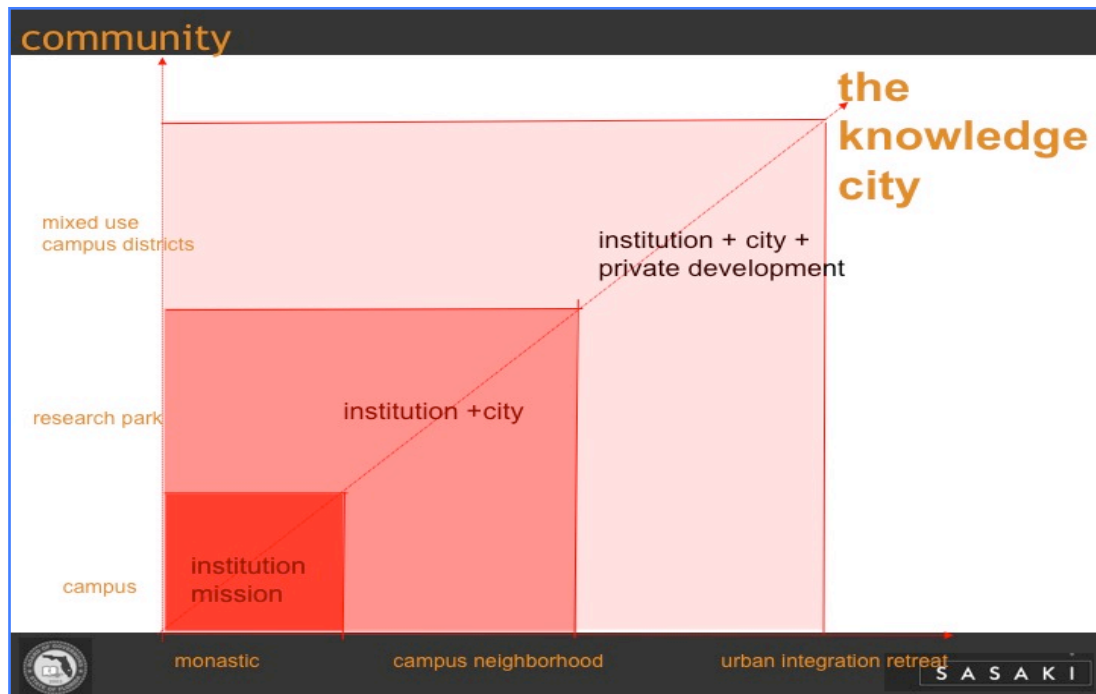
<sup>49</sup> Urban Institute, National Center for Charitable Statistics, *Number of nonprofit organizations by state*, 2006.

<sup>50</sup> Salamon, Lester, Stephanie L. Geller, S. W. Sokolowski, *Florida Nonprofit Sector: An Economic Force*. A Joint Report of The John Hopkins Center for Civic Society Studies and The Florida Philanthropic Network, February, 2008, p.3.

When it comes to philanthropy, although there has been 153% growth in foundations during the 1990s, today, “Florida foundations assets are proportionately 40% below the U. S. average (\$22.7 per \$1000 of gross state products vs. \$37.07 for the nation as a whole).<sup>51</sup> In regard to overall charitable giving, Florida is 5% below the national average, 7% behind California, and 20% behind New York.<sup>52</sup> Further, Florida ranked 39<sup>th</sup> among the states in the percent of taxpayers who make charitable gifts. As to bequests, although Florida is second in terms of size of estates, “the state ranks only 24<sup>th</sup> in the percentage of estates including charitable bequests.”<sup>53</sup>

Public universities in Florida are doing much to help strengthen the civic culture in all regions of the state. Within universities there are widespread efforts to provide leadership training for students, efforts to help them appreciate diversity, and programs of civic education. Every public university also provides services to their adjacent communities to help to train community leaders; strengthen community organizations, government, and business; increase communication among diverse groups; and create networks to help solve community problems. It is encouraging to see, also, that new organizations are being created within the SUS system, such as the Bob Graham Center for Public Service at the University of Florida and the Lou Frey Institute of Politics and Government at the University of Central Florida to help address the strong civic challenges we face.

It is clear that public universities have become major contributors to civic infrastructure and cultural improvement in Florida. What is not as clear is if existing efforts are sufficient, productive, integrated in meaningful ways, and adequately supported. We also wonder who is responsible for addressing these questions.



<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p.16.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p.10.

<sup>53</sup> Philanthropy in the Sunshine State. The Florida Philanthropic Network. Winter Park, 2003. p.15.

**17. Universities Support Collaborative Governance in Several Ways.** When we began this review we were particularly interested in one area of university community service (referred to as consensus building and collaborative governance) which dealt with multi-sector collaborative leadership initiatives and partnerships to address important issues of public policy and practice.<sup>54</sup> What we have found is considerable interest and growth in this relatively intense level of community engagement as well as in community service in general. As we have observed growth in student volunteering, fund raising, service-learning, and engaged research by faculty; we have also seen a parallel growth among universities to address challenging public issues in collaboration with partners from business, government, and the nonprofit sector.

As university leaders have suggested to us, their universities play different roles as they collaborate with leaders from other sectors to address challenging policy issues in their communities. Thus, a university may assume such roles as a *neutral convener*, a *problem-solving partner*, or a *regional leader* in addressing issues that affect the community.




*Neutral Convener:* In this role a university may draw different parties together and provide a neutral forum for them to address a critical issue and even provide professional facilitation expertise. Instead of helping to directly solve a problem in such instances, the university provides a place, planning support, information, and, often, facilitation. Chancellor Mark Rosenberg explained that he designed the Metropolitan Center at Florida International University for just such purposes when he was its provost. “What we needed in Miami at the time,” he said, “was a neutral, trusted and respected host who could provide credible information if asked, and an open space for dialogue among diverse community leaders.”

President Mike Michalson of New College has observed “a lot of polarization, especially around development issues” in Southwest Florida. “It seems that people become locked into their stereotypes and positions and need a buffer to help them communicate. I think we can play that role.” Wilson Bradshaw, President of Florida Gulf Coast University, stated, “I hope our university can play the role of convener and help people envision a better future for Southwest

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<sup>54</sup> See Appendix B.



Florida.” He noted that the area has both full-time and seasonal residents, which contributes to a unique civic culture with a broad range of needs.

“I hope our university can play the role of convener and help people envision a better future for Southwest Florida.”

*-Wilson Bradshaw, President, Florida Gulf Coast University*

*Problem-Solving Partner:* Universities, especially through colleges and centers, help address particular problems of importance to their communities and regions. However, at various times political, business, and nonprofit organization leaders come together to address a particularly critical problem, and through that process the university will step forward to offer resources and assistance.

“FAMU has focused on health as our community engagement priority,” according to President James Ammons. “Along with community partners, FAMU has initiated the Black Infant Health Alliance to address the high infant mortality rate among African-Americans in the surrounding region and throughout the state. In addition, FAMU has also developed the Coalition on African-American Men’s Health.”

In a partnership with the City of Orlando and the Microsoft Corporation, the University of Central Florida located its School of Film and Digital Media and The Florida Interactive Entertainment Academy in downtown Orlando. The city contributed \$4.4 million to renovate its Expo Center which the university rents for \$1 annually. Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer has said this was, “a linchpin for efforts to revitalize the downtown and diversify the region’s economy.”

Another example of serving as a problem-solving partner is that of the University of North Florida in assisting the City of Jacksonville in addressing the high crime rate in the city. In addition to helping support neighborhoods and creating scholarships for low-income students, the university helped provide a task force of community leaders with information and ideas for developing a comprehensive community strategy.

“FAMU has focused on health as our community engagement priority. Along with community partners, FAMU has initiated the Black Infant Health Alliance to address the high infant mortality rate among African-Americans in the surrounding region and throughout the state.”

*-James Ammons, President, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University*






*UWF President John Cavanaugh in 2007, Vice Co-Chair of the Governor's regional Committee for a Sustainable Emerald Coast*

*Regional Leader.* FAU President Frank Brogan has suggested, “Florida is experiencing a regionalization of issues.” Increasingly, he explains, the issues that cities and towns need to face, such as water, traffic, employment, and crime, go beyond their boundaries. “An important role for our universities is to be a leader as well as a good partner in bringing people together to develop regional solutions.” A case in point is the creation of the regional Committee for a Sustainable Treasure Coast, co-chaired by the presidents of FAU and the Indian River Community College. The committee, which included representatives from all sectors in a three county area, developed a vision to guide its future as well as action plans to achieve this vision. The university provided information, research, and facilitation through its Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions and the FSU Consensus Center. Another regional visioning committee, the Committee for a Sustainable Emerald Coast focused on four counties in West Florida and was co-chaired by the presidents of the three public higher education institutions in the region.

President John Hitt of UCF has explained to us that he has long sought to make the university a leading player in economic development for the region. “Whenever we saw an economic challenge or opportunity, we have always been willing to lead, share leadership, or support leadership.” He clarifies further, “I believe that economic development is a proxy for quality of life, so this has been my priority issue of concern in terms of community engagement in our region.”

**18. Community Service is an Asset to University Development.** An ironic finding of this review is that while obtaining adequate funding for community service is difficult to achieve, it appears to us, from what we have heard, that community service is a strong and promising asset in attracting students, faculty, and financial support. We earlier commented on the importance of community service for prospective students and faculty, now we suggest that it should also be considered strategically as a fund-raising asset. What may be the most idealistic feature of our universities, may also be very relevant to the budgetary bottom-line.



In a time as economically challenging as the present, universities might well consider that community service activities are a wise investment that can return unanticipated dividends. UCF President John Hitt shared with us his experience in raising over \$100 million in pledges, state matching funds and land for the medical school from the community and local governments. The pledges have made it possible for the first 40 students to attend the medical school free of charge. As Dr. Hitt commented, “We tried to do everything we could to help the community for many years, especially in strengthening the economy and quality of life, and when we asked them to help us, they were there.”

David Weerts, a professor in the FAU College of Education, recently published a national review of university community service that suggested community engagement is particularly relevant for institutional advancement in two respects. He points out that community “engagement has the potential to garner greater support for higher education among public officials.”<sup>55</sup> Additionally he notes that engagement activities appeal to donors today who are concerned about the relevance and impact of their donations. He notes, “Engagement shows great promise as a lever to inspire donors to make transformational gifts to higher education.”<sup>56</sup>

The University of South Florida offers a very practical suggestion and strategy regarding funding for community engagement: “Develop an infrastructure that assists with obtaining recurring external funds, this may include help from appropriate USF revenues (development and government relations)...a larger share of indirect returned to faculty, improved Sponsored Research infrastructure, and technical writers and evaluation specialists to help write grants.”<sup>57</sup>

### **C. ADVANCING COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Listening to the many voices across the SUS landscape during a time of economic adversity, we have become convinced that advancing community service is not only the right thing to do, it is also the smart thing to do and now is the time to do it. As one provost offered, “If we continue to fund these efforts on a shoe-string, we will miss the opportunities of these partnerships contributing to and enhancing our mission.” The challenge going forward for those in the SUS system who believe in the power of community service will be persuading legislators, academic leaders, and trustees that their continuing and increased investments in community service and partnerships will provide a strong pathway to a better future and pay strong dividends for each campus and the system.

## **IV. OPTIONS FOR ACTION**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**


This review has found that community service, community engagement, and collaboration are extensive throughout the public universities of Florida. We have also seen a considerable amount of innovation and reform underway within the SUS. Those who have the

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<sup>55</sup> Weerts, David. “An Engaged Model of Institutional Advancement at Public Colleges and Universities.” *International Journal of Educational Advancement*, vol. 7-no. 2, p.91.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> University of South Florida. “A Plan for Increasing USF’s Community Engagement.” p.3., 2006.



most control over service initiatives are also interested in sharing best practices to expand and improve performance.

However, it should be noted that this review has surveyed community service and engagement through the lens of the SUS. An important next step will be to listen to community voices in order to document and compare community perspectives about the quality of SUS partnerships, engagement and reciprocity. The BOG and/or Florida Compass Compact might consider undertaking a study modeled after a 2007 study “Community Voices: A California Campus Compact Study on Partnerships.”<sup>58</sup> This 2007 study featured surveys and 15 “place-based” focus groups involving 99 partners with 8 college campuses. It considered their perspectives regarding effective partnership characteristics as well as views about the benefits, challenges and motivations they have experienced in partnering with academic institutions.

“As the 2007 Pappas report, ‘Forward by Design’ suggested, ‘An effective system of higher education is one where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.’ We believe one of the critical parts that has received far less attention than it deserves based on its strategic contribution to the whole system is community service, engagement and collaboration. “

The greatest shortcomings we have found regarding community service are that it is not well documented, evaluated, communicated, coordinated and supported. Within the public universities of the SUS there is a need for coordination, leadership and practices to encourage productivity and maximize impact. These needs should be met in ways that preserve the enthusiasm, commitment and creativity associated with community service and engagement. At the same time, given the economic tenor of our times, these needs call for approaches that are responsive while also being achievable and economical. Our philosophy of improvement in this regard is:

- To seek smart ways to support and improve the community service function,
- To maximize sharing so as not to re-invent the wheel, and
- To make good use of existing resources.

## **B. OPTIONS FOR ACTION**

With this philosophy of improvement in mind, we suggest five related options that offer a general architecture for improvement without being too prescriptive.

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<sup>58</sup> Marie Sandy, Elaine Ikeda & Barbara Holland, “Community Voices: A California Campus Compact Study on Partnerships.” 2007, See, [http://www.cacampuscompact.org/download/programs/Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.cacampuscompact.org/download/programs/Final_Report.pdf)

## 1. The BOG Needs to Provide Leadership in Promoting and Supporting Community Service.

A complaint often recounted in our interviews was that the BOG has not provided sufficient clarity or direction in regard to their Goal 4 which calls for “meeting community needs” and “fulfilling unique institutional responsibilities.” As one person reported to us, “This term is so undefined that when we tried to plan how to meet it, we felt like the tribes that wandered in the desert.” Another consequence of this terse goal, suggests a dean, is that “Goal 4 could be read to reflect the diminished value of community engagement within the SUS.”

Given the strong interest in and commitment to community service throughout the SUS, and the equally strong interest in expanding and improving it, we think it would be timely for the BOG to devote greater attention to the issue and consider how to best support its development and enhance its quality as it undertakes the update of its strategic plan in the coming years.

Although a few have suggested to us that community service and engagement could be an area of performance in the “compacts” negotiated between the BOG and the universities, many more have advised against this, suggesting that what is needed is not accountability or oversight as much as strategic direction and support. One provost suggested that, “the BOG’s number one mission should be to unite the system to achieve excellence rather than to try to consolidate system control. In the current climate, where many university officials are uneasy about compacts, using them in relation to civic engagement could be more a millstone than a help.”

While we see both difficulties as well as potential opportunities in using compacts, we believe there are a number of other things that the BOG can do that would be particularly beneficial in supporting community service, engagement, and collaboration.

The first thing the BOG can do is to provide greater guidance and direction in regard to Goal 4. It would be particularly helpful as the BOG updates the current strategic plan to clarify its own *vision, values, and priorities* concerning community service as well as to invite the SUS campuses as partners, including students, faculty and administrators, as well as representatives of the communities they engage with, to join in a collaborative process of updating goals, objectives and strategies. The BOG might consider its successful experience with the inclusive stakeholder collaboration it convened in 2008 in order to update the BOG campus master plan regulation as a model for its approach to the Goal 4 update.

“As one person reported to us, ‘This term (meeting community needs) is so undefined that when we tried to plan how to meet it, we felt like the tribes that wandered in the desert.’”



In regard to priorities, it would also be helpful to increase attention to the need for greater civic capacity building and regional collaborative leadership since these are such important challenges facing the state over the coming years.<sup>59</sup> The BOG can also support community service by providing staff leadership to help manage the sharing and collaboration between and among the public universities and to promote excellence. Further, the Board can play a leadership role with the legislature in informing them of the benefits of community service, engagement, and partnerships and to encourage their support.

To provide the leadership suggested above may require the BOG to consider assigning or reassigning responsibilities for community service support and oversight to an appropriate committee or committees. Additionally, the Board may want to consider appointing a coordinating leadership vehicle for community service within the SUS that could be designed to function more effectively than the now defunct Leadership Board for Research and Public Service.

<sup>59</sup>See, Urban Land Institute, "Building Florida's Future: State Strategies for Regional Cooperation." 2005 <http://www.uli.org/CommunityBuilding/~//media/Documents/CommunityBuilding/ULIFloridaReport.ashx>

## 2. The BOG and Each University Need to Provide Staff Leadership to Coordinate Community Service Activities.

At most of the universities we visited, senior officials expressed the need for a high level officer to coordinate, promote and improve community service, engagement and collaboration. Ronald Berkman, Provost & CEO of FIU was particularly persuasive on this matter, having previously studied and promoted service partnerships within the State University of New York system. He shared his opinion that, “The greatest lesson learned, that I found, was that effective service partnerships require one highly placed person to be responsible for their coordination and quality.” It seems to us it would be a worthy and reasonable goal for this to be achieved at every SUS university by the end of this decade.

The BOG also is in need of such leadership since there is no existing staff person responsible for the support and oversight of community service. We encourage the appointment of such a person as well as a research associate, and the establishment of an organizational entity to achieve greater coordination, information sharing, research, and support for community service. From our interviews, we believe a “soft infrastructure” coordinating strategy could best be employed by this new BOG organizational entity, which would emphasize facilitation and network development approaches. As President Genshaft of USF suggested regarding coordination efforts for community engagement, “The organizational challenge is to coordinate but not dictate.”

“The greatest lesson learned, that I found, was that effective service partnerships require one highly placed person to be responsible for their coordination and quality.”

*-Ronald Berkman, Provost & CEO, Florida International University*

## 3. A Self-Organizing Network is a Promising Approach to Promote Coordination and Sharing about Community Service.

A dozen years ago, the very first meeting of the Reubin Askew Institute on Politics and Society at the University of Florida was devoted to the topic “Building Community in Florida.” Then governor Lawton Chiles, proposed that “Florida needs to build a constituency for community.”<sup>60</sup> The conference concluded by offering a series of recommendations, including: “Develop joint ventures and cooperation between varied groups involved in community building in Florida.”<sup>61</sup> We think this approach made sense then and it still does. Further, as we have

<sup>60</sup> “Governor Lawton Chiles about Why Community Building is Important,” *Building Community in Florida*, Gainesville, The Reubin Askew Institute, 1997, p.6.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, p.14.

visited all the public universities, we believe there is a strong constituency for community service and engagement within the SUS and there is a healthy appetite for cooperation.

We recommend capitalizing on these conditions to develop a network of leaders and institutions within the SUS and within the communities and regions they serve that are committed to strengthening community service, engagement, and collaboration.<sup>62</sup> Such a network could:

- Benchmark and share best practices in such areas as community engagement scholarship, tenure and promotion policies, service evaluation, and coordination strategies;
- Provide mutual assistance;
- Undertake joint ventures;
- Create training opportunities;
- Build an engaged scholarship research agenda;
- Foster connections with business associations, philanthropies, and related networks both in Florida and nationally; and
- Advocate for greater support for community service and engagement in the SUS as well as in coordination with Florida public colleges, community colleges, and private colleges.

We would imagine such a network to be essentially self-organizing, but with staff assistance from the BOG and staff it might hopefully provide. We would also hope that this network might tap into and make connections with related networks such as those developed by: the Florida Campus Compact, state colleges, community colleges and independent colleges; the Florida Institutes of Government and associations of university presidents, provosts, deans, librarians, university counsels, facility directors, athletic directors, community relations officers, and trustees. A network guidance and coordinating group, such as a community service and engagement council, would undoubtedly be needed to assure continuity, direction, and system integration. While staff support would be needed for this kind of a coordinating group, the norm would involve a high degree of shared, paired, and rotating leadership.



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<sup>62</sup> Consideration should be given as to whether such a network might also include public and private colleges and community colleges.

To design and develop such an enterprise would undoubtedly require a series of exploratory meetings. We suggest using the organizing and facilitating skills of potential network partners in doing this, and to explore linking such meetings to relevant conferences such as those provided by the Askew Institute, Florida Campus Compact and others.

#### **4. Build Upon the ExpertNet Web Portal to Support Community Service.**

As described earlier in this report<sup>63</sup> a common obstacle regarding community service is that information about available services is inaccessible. Many universities attempt to provide some information on their websites describing service offerings and activities, but most of these sites are not easy for community leaders to navigate, and they provide limited guidance as well as incomplete service information.

Ten years ago the SUS Board of Regents created a portal system called Florida ExpertNet (<http://www.expertnet.org>) to help business, government agencies and community groups locate experts within the Florida State University System. It is a statewide portal of applied research expertise in Florida's public universities. The portal features leading edge research, principal investigators and their funded projects, centers and institutes, commercial licensing and a speakers bureau. For example, Florida ExpertNet lists over 7,000 experts, briefly describes more than 550 centers and institutes within the SUS and identifies a number of available speakers.



Because ExpertNet is currently supported by the BOG, we think it has considerable potential to support community service and engagement. Therefore, we suggest that one of the initial tasks for the self-organizing community engagement network should be to help develop ExpertNet as a portal to support community service, engagement, and collaboration. Such an effort can also be a catalyst and possibly a template for creating a consistent and powerful system-wide, as well as university-based, information-gathering system that can provide a foundation for better communication, evaluation, analysis and research. The proposed BOG research associate suggested earlier, could provide direct assistance to this effort.

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<sup>63</sup> See, Finding #7, *infra*.



## 5. Financial Development Strategies are needed to Promote and Protect Community Service, Engagement, and Collaboration.

This review has been completed in one of the most troubling periods of financial retraction for the Florida SUS and for the state. As fate, and we, would have it, this review also strongly suggests a greater investment in the advancement of community service, one of the first areas from which universities usually withdraw support in times of economic hardship. This leads us to the conclusion that those who would advance community service, will need to move quickly to create new, better, and more imaginative financial development strategies. This period of downturn in the economy provides a unique planning opportunity for so doing. We suggest four strategies to consider in this regard.

*a. Develop a Legislative Agenda.* If community service is one of the fundamental missions of public higher education in Florida, then it deserves adequate funding from the legislature. As the appointed advocate for higher education in Florida, the BOG is responsible for informing and advocating for educational priorities. Accordingly, we suggest that, working with the staff and the network that has been proposed, the BOG develop a legislative agenda to seek increased support for community service, engagement, and collaboration going forward. A compelling reason to seek legislative support at this time is the capacity of the SUS universities to generate innovative economic development and to provide greater assistance to meet critical community needs.


*b. Create New Supportive Strategic Partnerships.* This review suggests that community service represents an attractive magnet for financial development, but development offices have not been as aggressive and creative as they might in exploring its potential. This is particularly the case with constituents such as alumni, participants in lifelong learning programs,<sup>64</sup> small businesses, and philanthropies. The BOG needs to encourage and support research and demonstration efforts throughout the SUS to determine how giving opportunities can be structured in regard to supporting community service, engagement and collaboration for such constituencies.

*c. Establish a Fund For Community Service and Engagement.* As is suggested in Finding # 8, beyond obtaining support from the legislature, a vehicle is needed to attract a pool of support to provide grants for promising and highly effective community service endeavors and initiatives. On a very modest scale, Florida Campus Compact has demonstrated how helpful making such investments can be. To be effective, this kind of fund will most likely need one or several organizing benefactors who can be recognized for their support. The BOG, and the network council suggested above, would need to determine how to either link or transcend university development offices in such an effort.

*d. Seek Establishment of a Center of Excellence.* Successful community service development strategies require bold and imaginative ideas about new and better ways to

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<sup>64</sup> In a number of universities, for example, FAU and FGCU, the number of participants in such programs equals the number of full-time students and have more disposable income for charitable support and time for community engagement activities.



contribute to the common good. Florida and many other states have designated centers of excellence within the university system to promote prominence in selected areas of inquiry or fields of endeavor. For the most part, these centers have supported areas of applied science, technology and economic development. Given the considerable extent of community service in Florida, its importance to the common good, the interest in expanding and improving it, and the strong need to address issues of civic capacity and regional leadership in Florida's communities, we suggest that a long term vision and goal of the BOG be to create a Florida Center for Community Service, Engagement, and Collaboration.

## V. CONCLUSION

We commenced our study of community service in the SUS in January 2008 and over the next 11 months conducted over 100 interviews and meetings on all 11 campuses of the SUS with presidents, provosts, vice presidents, department chairs, center directors, administrative staff and students. This review has been completed in one of the most troubling periods of financial retraction for the Florida SUS and for the state in the past 50 years. However even in this climate, we heard from presidents, provosts, faculty and staff that the SUS should seek to expand and improve community service and increase community engagement initiatives. Those in the SUS who would advance community service, will need to move quickly to create new, better, and more imaginative financial development strategies and to establishing a structure for more sophisticated coordination and communication. We believe there is a unique planning opportunity for so doing in the coming years.

The authors commend the Board of Governors and their staff for their foresight and support in producing this initial study of community engagement. As the 2007 Pappas report "Forward by Design" has suggested, "An effective system of higher education is one where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts." We believe one of the critical parts of the SUS that has received far less attention than it deserves based on its strategic contribution to the whole system, is community service, engagement and collaboration.

In a recent *Chronicle of Higher Education* commentary, "Even in Hard times Colleges Should Help Their Communities," Eugene P. Trani, President of the Virginia Commonwealth University, proposed that "the connections between universities and our communities are essential to our core functions and are increasingly vital to our continuing success as well as the long-term prosperity of the nation's cities, regions and states." He continues, "Twenty or even 10 years ago, universities may have pared back their community-engagement activities in periods of fiscal uncertainty on the grounds that they were valuable expressions of the university's social commitment but not essential to teaching students and contributing to the scholarly community. But today we need to engage with our communities to meet our instructional goals, equip our students with discernment and judgment, and enable them to be productive citizens. Moreover, collaborative partnerships are a vital part of university's research portfolio. They provide opportunities for financial support where others may not exist, they build reinforcing networks that can broaden the expertise brought to a research problem, and they often focus on applied questions whose answers are crucial to governments as well as businesses."<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May, 2008

This review supports the views of President Trani including his conclusion that universities “have become indispensable participants in the capacity of cities, regions and states to shape their futures in a way that is beneficial to their citizenry.” A pronounced theme in our interviews and meetings also parallel his final reflection that “in the contemporary university, collaborative relationships with external partners are not a luxury for good times only, but essential to the success of our core missions.”

Our best and last advice for the Florida Board of Governors, the universities of the Florida SUS, and the Florida legislature is this: Now is the time to recognize the importance of university community service, engagement and collaboration because they can be essential to the renewal of our economy and the improvement of our communities. These are assets worthy of greater attention and support. These are investments that are capable of even greater returns going forward.



*Appendix #1 List of Meetings and Interviews*

**BOG COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE  
CAMPUS SITE VISITS, MEETINGS AND INTERVIEWS  
MARCH 2008-JANUARY 2009**

*Board of Governors Staff, May 5, 2008*

R.E. LeMon, Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs  
Maryanne Bestebreurtje, Corporate Secretary

*Board of Governors, August 13, 2008*

Chancellor Rosenberg & R.E. Lemon

*Board of Governors, January 4, 2009*

Dorothy Minear, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs,

*Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) November 17, 2008*

James H. Ammons, President

Cynthia Hughes Harris, Provost

Mr. Robert Nixon, Executive Director, FAMU Small Business Development Center

Rosalind Fuse-Hall, Chief of Staff, *(by Phone, September, 2008)*

Richard Gragg, Institute for Environmental Science, Chair of the Climate Change *(by Phone, September, 2008)*

*Florida Atlantic University, June 12, 2008*

Kristen O. Murtaugh, Ph.D., Vice President, FAU John D. MacArthur Campus *(by phone June 12)*

James Murley, Director, Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions, FAU, Ft. Lauderdale

*Florida Atlantic University August 14, 2008*

President Frank Brogan

Dr. John Pritchett, Provost

Randy Goin, Chief of Staff

Dr. Joyanne Stephens, Campus VP – Broward

Dr. Kristen Murtaugh, Campus VP – Jupiter

Gerri McPherson, Campus VP – Treasure Coast

James Murley, Director, FAU Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions

Tom Donaudy, University Architect

Monica Jara, Weppner Center for Civic Engagement & Service

David Kian, General Counsel

Tom Barlow, Assoc. VP – Governmental Relations

Susan Peirce, VP – Campaign

*Florida Gulf Coast University, April 23*


Wilson G. Bradshaw, President

Peg Gray-Vickery, Acting Provost

Susan Evans, Chief of Staff

*Florida State University, May 5*

Robert Bradley, Vice President, Planning and Programs



Bill Moeller, Co-Director, Center for Leadership and Civic Education  
Laura Osteen, Ph.D. Co-Director, Center for Leadership and Civic Education  
Jeff Hendry, Director, Florida Institute of Government  
Camille Licklider, Vice President, FSU Foundation

***Florida State University, August 13***

T.K. Wetherell, President  
Robert Bradley, Vice President, Planning and Programs

***Florida International University, May 14, 2008***

Patricia Temino, Assistant Director, Center for Leadership and Services, FIU  
Dr. Robert Hogner, Associate Professor, Management and International Business  
College of Business Administration

***Florida International University, August 15, 2008***

Provost Ronald Berkman  
Rock Salt, Everglades Director, U.S. Department of Interior, FIU.  
Greg May, Executive Director, South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

***New College of Florida, April 23, 2008***


Gordon E. "Mike" Michalson, Jr, President  
G. Steven Pfeiffer, General Counsel

***University of Central Florida,***

John C. Hitt, President  
John Schell, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs  
Scott Cole, General Counsel  
Linda Chapin, Director, Metropolitan Center  
Professor Jim Wright  
Douglas Babcock, Executive Director, Lou Frey Institute of Politics and Government  
Naim Kapucu, Director, the Capacity Institute  
Marilyn Crotty, Director, UCF Institute of Government  
Nancy Ellis, UCF Center for Community Partnerships  
Rafael Montalvo, UCF IOG Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium Partnership

***University of Florida***

Jimmy G. Cheek, Senior Vice President, Agriculture and Natural Resources, IFAS  
Jane Adams, Vice President of University Relations  
Susan Crowley, Assistant Vice President for Community Relations  
DeDee DeLongpre, Director, UF Office of Sustainability  
Walter Rosenbaum, Interim Director, Bob Graham Center for Public Service  
Tracey E. Reeves, Assistant Dean of Students, Director, Center for Leadership and Service.  
David Coburn, Director, Askew Center  
Laila A. Racevskis, Assistant Professor, Food and Resource Economics Department  
Director, Florida Natural Resources Leadership Institute, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences  
Tom Ankersen, College of Law, Provost's Sustainability Fellow (*by phone, June, 2008*)  
James Cato, Dean, School of Natural Resources (*by phone, April, 2008*)



*University of North Florida, March 6, 2008*

John Delaney, President  
Robert Rhodes, Foley and Lardner, Jacksonville

*University of North Florida, June 10, 2008*

Provost Mark Workman,  
Tom Serwatka, Vice President, Chief of Staff  
David Jaffee, Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Studies Academic Affairs, Professor  
Department of Sociology and Anthropology  
William R. Voorhees, Asst. Professor, Political Science and Public Administration  
Jeffrey Will, Professor of Sociology, Director, NE Florida Center for Community Initiatives  
Michael Hallett, Professor and Chair, Criminology and Criminal Justice  
Kerry Stewart, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Jacksonville/Duval Office of the Mayor John  
Peyton  
Nancy Soderberg, Distinguished Visiting Professor, Political Science and Public Administration  
Heather Patterson, Office of the President, Coordinator of Governmental Affairs

*University of South Florida*

Judy Genshaft, President  
Ralph C. Wilcox, Provost and Senior Vice President  
Susan Greenbaum, USF Anthropology and President of the Faculty Senate  
Kathleen M. Moore, Associate Vice President Academic Affairs and Educational Outreach  
Linda Whiteford, Associate Vice President for Strategic Initiatives in Academic Affairs  
Greg Firestone, Conflict Resolution Collaborative, College of Public Health  
Dr. Edward Mierzejewski, Director, Center for Urban Transportation Research,  
Dr. Angela Crist, Institute of Government  
Dr. Harold Keller, College of Education

*University of West Florida*

John Cavanaugh, President  
Harold White, Executive Vice President  
Rick Harper, Director, Haas Center for Economic  
Larry Strain, UWF SBDC Director  
Elizabeth Benchley, Director, UWF Archeology Institute & Statewide Archeology Network  
Carla Thompson, Director, Community Outreach Research and Learning Center  
Dick Snyder, Director, Center for Environmental Diagnostics and Bioremediation  
Steve Kass, Co-Director Center for Applied Psychology, Professor, Human Factors Psychology  
Jerry Cartwright, Director, FL SBDC Network  
Janet Pilcher, Director and Professor, Institute for Innovative Community Learning  
Will Patterson, faculty associate, Center for Environmental Diagnostics and Bioremediation, and  
member of Sponsored Research Advisory Committee  
Carol Rafalski, Grants Specialist Supervisor, Research and Sponsored Programs  
Shigeko Honda, Director, UWF Japan Center  
K. Ranga Rao, Professor Emeritus, Center for Environmental Diagnostics and Biomediation



**OTHERS**

*Florida Campus Compact*

DeeDee Rasmussen, Director

Luciano H. Ramos, Associate Director

*The Florida Council of 100, April 24, 2008, St. Petersburg*

Mickie Valente. Communications & Progress Director



*Appendix 2: Letters of Support*

- **Larry Arrington, Interim Vice President, IFAS, University of Florida**
- **Wilson G. Bradshaw, President, Florida Gulf Coast University**
- **Frank T. Brogan, President, Florida Atlantic University**
- **John Cavanaugh, Chancellor, Pennsylvania System of Higher Education**
- **John A. Delaney, President, University of North Florida**
- **John C. Hitt, President, University of Central Florida**
- **Gordon E. Michalson, Jr., President, New College of Florida**
- **Laura Osteen, Co-Director, Center for Leadership & Civic Education, Florida State University**
- **Linda Whiteford, Associate Vice President for Global Strategies, University of South Florida**





Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS)  
Office of the Senior Vice President  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

PO Box 110180  
Gainesville, FL 32611-0180  
352-392-1971  
352-392-6932 Fax

February 2, 2009

Mr. Robert M. Jones, Director  
FCRC Consensus Center  
Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium  
Morgan Building, Suite 236  
2035 East Paul Dirac Dr.  
Tallahassee FL 32310

Dear Mr. Jones:

I have read the draft report on *Community Service, Engagement, and Collaboration: The Florida Public University Experience*. Let me first congratulate you and Stuart for putting together such a comprehensive report. The report sends a clear message of the need to have more interaction and coordination among the state university system (SUS) of Florida in community service and engagement. This report also points out an absence of a strategic perspective in carrying out this important mission. I agree that there needs to be better communication for documenting services and reporting results and sharing best practices across the system.

The report captures the strong interest and commitment of the SUS to enhance and expand their community service and their strong desire for more strategic direction and support. Your tangible recommendations, "Options for Action," to the Board of Governors are noteworthy and important to consider if institutions of higher learning are to have community engagement and collaboration as part of their core mission.

Thank you both for including UF/IFAS as part of your review. We are committed to community engagement, service, collaboration and strong partnerships. We expand beyond the walls of the University of Florida here in Gainesville. We have 67 county extension offices located throughout Florida and are an integral part of those communities, offering a variety of educational programs. In addition, we have 13 research and education centers throughout Florida that support strong partnerships and community engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Larry R. Arrington'.

Larry R. Arrington  
Interim Senior Vice President

LRA/vnm

*The Foundation for The Gator Nation*  
An Equal Opportunity Institution



February 19, 2009

Mr. Robert M. Jones  
Dr. Stuart Langton  
FCRC Consensus Center  
Morgan Building, Suite 236  
2035 E. Paul Dirac Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 32310-3700

Dear Mr. Jones and Dr. Langston:

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the report entitled *Community Service, Engagement, and Collaboration: The Florida Public University Experience*. Historians and public leaders alike have argued that higher education's service mission is uniquely American. In 1896, future president of the United States Woodrow Wilson stated, "It is not learning but the spirit of service that will give a college a place in the annals of the nation." In 1962, Frederick Rudolph, author of the *American College and University*, traced the lineage of higher education in the United States and concluded that a primary purpose of American colleges and universities is the production of citizens who can contribute to society through public service.

The original mission statement of Florida Gulf Coast University included a paragraph describing the future university's public service focus. Today, service and community engagement remain integral aspects of FGCU's mission and identity. The commitment of students, faculty, and administration to this ideal is confirmed by the 2008 classifications of "curricular engagement" and "outreach and partnerships" by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

This Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium (FCRC) Consensus Center report documents the important role that service plays at member institutions of the State University System of Florida. The report also describes opportunities and challenges that remain. The five suggestions for improvement will be useful to the Board of Governors and Florida's public universities as we explore ways of strengthening community relationships and enhancing educational opportunities.

Sincerely,

Wilson G. Bradshaw, Ph.D.  
President

WGB:vaf

c: Cabinet





OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
Florida Atlantic University

February 23, 2009

Mr. Robert M. Jones  
Stuart Langton, Ph.D.  
FCRC Consensus Center  
Florida State University  
Morgan Building, Suite 236  
2035 East Paul Dirac Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 32310

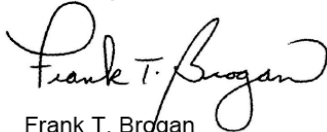
Dear Mr. Jones and Dr. Langton:

First, let me thank you for the tireless effort you have put into the monumental task of evaluating the role of community engagement in the State of Florida. Your report "Community Service, Engagement, and Collaboration: The Florida Public University Experience" captures the diversity, range and depth of community involvement in the regions served by the State University System.

At Florida Atlantic University we have been developing a strategic focus on community and regional partnerships at our various campuses. I believe such partnerships provide reciprocal benefits that strengthen the quality of our academic programs in their teaching, scholarship and service missions while offering opportunities for our students and faculty to help find solutions to challenges. Through such service we seek to make FAU an integral part of the greater regional community.

I am convinced that by working collaboratively the Board of Governors and all members of the SUS can promote the critically important role that community service and engagement should play in our overall missions. The dividends reaped from our investment in strategic partnerships that increase the universities' value to the community at large will play a key role in building an innovative knowledge economy in Florida.

Sincerely,



Frank T. Brogan  
President

---

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January 25, 2009

Robert M. Jones, Director  
FCRC Consensus Center  
Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium  
Morgan Building, Suite 236  
2035 East Paul Dirac Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 32310

Dear Dr. Jones:

I am pleased to strongly endorse the report *Community Service, Engagement and Collaboration: The Florida Public University Experience*. As a participant in the study during my time as President of the University of West Florida, I am very happy that it conveys a comprehensive look at all the excellent work occurring at Florida's public universities.

President Obama has recently challenged all Americans to become engaged. I believe he would be especially pleased at the track record of so many of Florida's faculty, staff, and students in creating learning opportunities outside the classroom. Connecting what happens in the classroom with *in vivo* experiences is the best way for students to learn. Moreover, it inculcates a sense of community service that students will take with them.

The summary that the report provides offers a blueprint for institutions interested in beginning a service-learning or community engagement component to their academic program. I believe many will find it extremely useful, and especially timely.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important project. I look forward to continued leadership from Florida.

Best wishes,

John C. Cavanaugh, Ph.D.  
Chancellor



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

January 26, 2009

Robert M. Jones, Director  
Stuart Langton, Senior Fellow  
FCRC Consensus Center  
Morgan Building, Suite 236  
2035 E. Paul Dirac Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 32310-3700

Dear Stuart and John,

As you discuss in your report, over the past several years a number of universities have become explicitly and increasingly more involved in community service and community engagement activities. In taking these steps, we recognize the benefits that accrue to our institutions, our students, and the communities we serve. We can help communities address local and regional problems, assist students in learning to translate theory into practice, and enrich our curriculum and the opportunities for faculty scholarship. We also have learned the value that comes from developing better methods to communicate and showcase our efforts and accomplishments in this arena.

As described in your findings, there are a number of steps we can take to grow and better organize our community-based activities at the institutional level. And the five options you recommend provide a clear framework for the actions that could help us accomplish a goal of expanded community-based engagement at the system level.

My colleagues and I appreciate all of your efforts in conducting your study and in putting together this report. I know that it will impact our operations at the University of North Florida and I trust that the Board of Governors will find your recommendations for the system helpful in their deliberations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Delaney", written over a horizontal line.

John A. Delaney

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Office of the President

February 10, 2009

Robert M. Jones  
Dr. Stuart Langton  
FCRC Consensus Center  
Florida State University  
Moegat Building, Suite 236  
2035 East Paul Duac Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 3210

Dear Mr. Jones and Dr. Langton:

I commend you for writing the important and timely report, "Community Service, Engagement, and Collaboration: the Florida Public University Experience." This overview of engagement activities among the Florida State University System institutions is a good initial blueprint for more effectively supporting our universities' community engagements and collaborations. The findings and the options for action that you identified are worthy of consideration by our state universities and the Board of Governors.

Becoming America's leading partnership university has been one of my five primary goals for the University of Central Florida since I became its president seventeen years ago. Our community partnerships, which are the hallmarks of our approach to engagement in the region, have brought reciprocal benefits to UCF and our partners.

One key to sustaining these partnerships is collaborative leadership. Our community partners provide us with opportunities for engagement, and they support it with their talent and resources. The university's leadership strengthens our civic culture by generating the scholarship, research, and teaching that support the partners' goals and prepare our students for engaged, active citizenship. Additionally, UCF's recent success in receiving the Carnegie Community Partnership classification validated our partnership efforts and also revealed ways we can strengthen and leverage our efforts.

There is great worth in sharing our experiences. I would support the Board of Governors' working with the SUS institutions to adopt a state-wide mandate for community partnerships.

Cordially yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John C. Hitt".

John C. Hitt  
President

P.O. Box 160002 • Orlando, FL 32816-0002 • (407) 823-1823 • Fax: (407) 823-2264 • [jhitt@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:jhitt@mail.ucf.edu)

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# New College

THE HONORS COLLEGE of Florida

*Office of the President*

March 3, 2009

Robert M. Jones, Director  
FCRC Consensus Center  
*Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium*  
Morgan Building, Suite 236  
2035 E. Paul Dirac Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 32310-3700

Dear Bob:

I appreciated meeting with you and Dr. Langston regarding the community engagement project that the Consensus Center has initiated. I have reviewed the Center's Report, and I support the goals and approaches that are described in it. I also endorse the collaborative approaches to policy and program development that the Consensus Center has offered for many years.

Florida's colleges and universities can offer critical expertise and resources that can improve the physical and social environment of our communities. More than that, any higher education program that deserves the name simply must teach commitment to improving places where we live. New College is committed to enhancing the level of interaction that our students, faculty and staff have with the off-campus community. I appreciate the organized approach to engagement that the Consensus Center Report offers. The Report will help us meet our goals.

I also want to acknowledge the able assistance that your organization provided to New College as we developed our Academic Master Plan. The collaborative approaches that you helped us follow have resulted in a high level of support for the Plan. That support has been an important aspect of successful implementation of the Plan.

Sincerely,

Gordon E. Michalson, Jr.  
President

FLORIDA STATE  
UNIVERSITY



The DIVISION of STUDENT AFFAIRS  
*Center for Leadership & Civic Education*

March 5, 2009

Robert Jones, Director  
Stuart Langton, Ph.D.  
FCRC Consensus Center  
Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium  
Morgan Building, Suite 236  
2035 East Paul Dirac Drive  
Tallahassee, Florida 32310

Dear Bob and Stuart,

Thank you and congratulations on your research and report, *Building Bridges: University Community Service, Engagement and Collaboration*. Through your efforts to gather, understand and synthesize the varied ways and means of engagement across the Florida public university experience you have created a comprehensive resource with insightful recommendations that can move the entire SUS forward.

Here at Florida State University, we are proud of our local, state, national, and global engagement efforts. As we seek to continue current programs and develop new initiatives, *Building Bridges* will serve as a critical map guiding our way. Specifically, as co-chair of Florida State's campus-wide committee charged with applying for Carnegie's engaged classification, *Building Bridges* will be a go-to resource for our work.

Given the current economic challenges we face as a state and nation, *Building Bridges* is a timely and necessary document to assist campuses in making smart choices in program development and enhancement. Now more than ever public universities must re-commit to our responsibility to serve; and bring our knowledge, talent and faculty, staff, and student resources to our surrounding communities. Thank you again for your great work.

Sincerely,

*Laura*

Laura Osteen, Ph.D.  
Co-Director

100 S. Woodward Avenue, Florida State University, P.O. Box 3064161, Tallahassee, FL 32306-4161  
Telephone 850.644.3342 • Fax 850.644.3362 • [thecenter@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:thecenter@admin.fsu.edu) • <http://thecenter.fsu.edu>





UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH FLORIDA

Robert Jones, Director  
FCRC Consensus Center  
Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium  
Morgan Building, Suite 236  
2035 East Paul Dirac Drive  
Tallahassee, FL. 32310


2.6.09

Dear Bob:

Thank you for sending us the draft of the Community Service, Engagement, and Collaboration: The Florida Public University Experience Report. These kinds of opportunities for review and share insights certainly strengthen the collaborative nature of your intended product. President Genshaft and Provost Wilcox asked me to respond to the draft report on their behalf; they have both reviewed and commented extensively on the draft manuscript. As you know, in 2006 USF was the first university in Florida to receive the Carnegie Community Engaged classification. USF has placed considerable significance on making community engagement a central part of the USF experience. That commitment was first recognized in 2006 by Carnegie Foundation in the Foundation's first round of Carnegie Community Engagement classifications; however, the work of community engagement was underway at USF long before the award was given.

In addition, the most recent USF Strategic Plan (2007-12) reifies that commitment and acknowledges that community engagement will play a crucial role in the planning and practice of the university: "Excellence in teaching and learning; scholarship and research (both basic and applied/translational); together with community engagement and public service based on the highest standards of discovery, creativity and intellectual attainment." We were, and still are, immensely proud of that recognition but have not rested on those achievements in community engagement. In 2008, the Provost created the Community Engagement Initiative, a university-wide Task Force of more than 60 people focusing on assessing and establishing community engagement as a core value for the University. The Task Force is reviewing current structure, policies, and as your report clearly identifies as a system-wide problem, the collection of data on community engaged activities.

We anticipate the initial reports from the various Community Engagement Committees (Research and Scholarship, Experiential and Service Learning, and Community Outreach) by March 2009, and I would be pleased to share them with you. But the committee reports are only a step in our forward progress to institutionalize community engagement (and its component parts of engaged teaching, engaged research and scholarship, and engaged outreach).



We applaud and support your work to identify and develop ways for Florida universities to strengthen their relationships with the communities around them. We could facilitate that process were we to share a common set of definitions. Community service and, separately and distinctly, community engagement are difficult to define. Perhaps relying on the Carnegie definitions, for instance, of community engagement as something that: "...describes the collaboration between higher education institutions and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching 2006) would help. While much of community engagement follows the same path as community service (outreach into local communities, services provided to local stakeholders), the critical - and we believe most consequential - element in the Carnegie definition that differentiates the two is the reciprocal nature of that relationship, and its mutual definition in the community engagement process.

On behalf of President Genshaft and Provost Wilcox, we thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft document; and we agree with you that these are critical issues for all of us. We are pleased to share USF's commitment and experience with the Consortium and with other important stakeholders such as the BOG. As your document points out, this is a time for state level leadership particularly in periods of economic stress, to make our universities the place where our communities can turn for collaborative and reciprocal engagements.

Best wishes and we at USF look forward to working with you in the future,.

Linda

Linda Whiteford, PhD, MPH  
Associate Vice President for Global Strategies  
Office of the President, and  
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and  
Strategic Initiatives, Office of the Provost

cc: President Genshaft, Provost Wilcox, Dr. Greenbaum, and Dr. Keller

## Appendix #3 Concept Paper

*Working Discussion Draft*

# The Convergence of University Public and Community Services and Collaborative Governance

**A Concept Paper**

March, 2008

By:

Stuart Langton, Ph.D.

Senior Fellow

Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium


Florida State University, 2035 Paul Dirac Drive, Tallahassee FL 32306-2777

<http://consensus.fsu.edu>

Robert Jones,

Director (rmjones@fsu.edu)






In the past quarter century two trends have emerged within universities and government that have important implications for the future of community life in America. The first trend, *university public and community service*, is the effort of colleges and universities to become more involved in contributing to the quality of life in their communities and regional areas. The second trend, increasingly referred to as *collaborative governance*, involves efforts by government, the private and non-profit sectors to work together in addressing public needs and finding solutions to challenging public problems. These trends represent a response and possible antidote to social fragmentation, intergovernmental bickering, and the polarizing adversarial political behavior that characterizes our public space. The potential intersection of these trends may offer significant benefits to our states, regions, and communities. As will be discussed below, universities can play many roles in helping to overcome costly public disputes and the gridlock that results from inadequate cooperation between the many government bodies that influence our lives. In Florida, for example, there are many instances in which universities have advanced collaborative governance solutions by providing neutral forums, assisting in community problem-solving, and helping to resolve disputes at the state, regional, county, and local levels. This paper provides a background for a project that will explore these practices in Florida. The aim of this project is to determine if and how the assets of state universities can be more fully utilized to achieve greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness in public life through collaborative governance practices.

### **The Rise of University Public and Community Service**

The history of higher education in America is marked by a paradox: while colleges and universities have been responsive to broad social needs, they frequently ignored or indeed created problems in their own host communities. The broad social responsiveness of American higher education is evident in the vocational orientation of the earliest state universities, the rise of the “Normal School” movement which prepared teachers in the 19th century, and the development of 70 “Land Grant” colleges and universities supported by the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, with federal support, Cooperative Extension Service programs, begun in 1914, were established at many universities to serve rural communities; through the Servicemen’s Development Act of 1944 (the G. I. Bill), higher education expanded to meet the learning and manpower training needs of the World War II generation; and with the National Defense Education of 1964, colleges and universities increased their capacity in the basic sciences and applied technology to help meet the security and economic needs of the nation.

Despite the responsiveness of higher education to macro social needs, the micro social needs of the communities where colleges and universities have resided have been either exacerbated or overlooked. Until the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, “town-gown” tensions and adversarial relations were common between higher education institutions and their host communities regarding such issues as real estate, traffic and transportation, public service costs, pollution and other matters. Of greater import, however, was the tradition of isolation between colleges and universities and their communities, as each pursued economic and physical development agendas in parallel and in relative isolation, with limited sensitivity to or involvement with the other. In Florida this was reflected in the fact that the state university system initially resisted involvement in the local government growth management and comprehensive planning reforms of the 1980’s.



Today, the good news for colleges and universities and their communities is that their relations are not only less adversarial and more accommodating, but reflect a new era of cooperation, outreach and support in communities and regions. The term which large numbers of colleges and universities use to describe this more positive mutually beneficial relationship is, “partnership.” An example of the extent to which this cooperative ethos has advanced is Campus Compact. This coalition of colleges and university presidents has committed to “building civic engagement into campus and civic life” and developing “service learning” as part of the higher education curriculum. Created in 1986, Campus Compact has grown to over 1,100 institutional and individual members representing six million students, with offices in 32 states. Among the 1,100 schools, and beyond, it is now the case more than the exception to see colleges and universities partnering with local organizations, to find numerous ways in which students and faculty volunteer and to find that “service learning” is a part of the curriculum.<sup>1</sup>

### **University Public and Community Service in Florida**

The State of Florida is an example of how far a state public university system has come in its commitment to public and community service. For example, the chancellor of the State University System of Florida, Mark Rosenberg, has set the tone for the entire system: “With a theme of collaboration and building partnerships, Dr. Rosenberg believes universities can help our state confront the challenges of this century. He places special emphasis on public service and commitment to excellence.”<sup>2</sup>

Another example of the importance of public and community service is found in the Strategic Plan of the Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida which identifies, “Meeting community needs and fulfilling unique institutional responsibilities” as one of its four goals to pursue between 2005-2013.<sup>3</sup> Further, the mission and goal statements of all the universities within the public system include similar references.<sup>4</sup>


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<sup>1</sup> Gearan, Mark, “Emerging Communities: the college compact model,” *National Civic Review*, June 22, 2005. An interesting parallel program to College Compact has been initiated with an emphasis on College and University Boards of Trustees. See: Lang, Eugene, “Project Pericles: an exciting work in progress,” *National Civic Review*, June 22, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.flbog.org/chancellor/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.flbog.org/about/strategicplan/>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Florida A&M speaks of, “meaningful public and community service through creative partnerships.” Florida Atlantic University says “public engagement” is part of its mission, and Florida Gulf Coast University states it, “nurtures community partnerships and values public service.” Florida International University claims “promoting public service” is one way it achieves its mission, and Florida State University speaks of, “providing broad access to institutional resources and services to the county and the state.” The University of Central Florida seeks to “provide services that enhance the intellectual, cultural, environmental, and economic development of the metropolitan region.” The University of Florida mission includes, “service to the citizens of Florida, the nation, and the world,” and the University of South Florida advocates “community engagement to build university-community partnerships and collaborations.” The University of West Florida speaks of “Developing educational partnerships and community services,” while the University of North Florida says “community involvement” plays a vital role in achieving its mission.



There are many examples of how these lofty purposes and goals have been implemented in Florida, but several illustrate the extent and quality of effort. For example, in 2004-05, at the University of Florida, 35,778 students, or 72%, participated in community service activities, donating 135,534 hours and \$1,081,971 in charitable donations. At Florida Gulf Coast University, the newest within the SUS system, all students are required to engage in 80 hours of service learning at a minimum.

In 2006, the University of South Florida became the only university in Florida that received the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching “Community Engagement” classification awarded to 76 universities nationwide for their exemplary practices in community engagement outreach and partnerships. As President Judy Genshaft noted upon receipt of the national recognition, “We believe it's important for all universities to take up the mantle of community engagement and we practice what we preach. We are the only Florida University to receive this classification and one of only 10 across the country recognized for documented excellence in the areas of community outreach and research productivity.”<sup>5</sup>

Before discussing the possible expansion of the public and community service tradition among Florida state universities, a few comments are in order regarding the related trend in collaborative governance. As will be discussed, there are a number of collaborative governance activities that offer additional and significant opportunities for university engagement and impact.


### **The Rise of Collaborative Governance**

While the term *collaborative governance* may mean different things to different people, in the most general sense it refers to inclusive and participatory approaches to decision-making and action. The word collaboration, from its Latin cognate *collaborare*, simply means to work together. In current literature collaboration is used in a variety of ways in reference to democracy, government, management, planning, policy, and community as well as governance. While the term collaborative governance has occasionally been referred to as a management principle<sup>6</sup>, its uniqueness seems to be that it refers to a broad civic rather than a government-only approach to decision-making, solutions and action. This trend toward multi-sector action reflect lessons from recent history that governments may achieve less,

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<sup>5</sup> In 2006 the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching established a new “Community Engagement” elective classification recognizing higher education's commitment to community engagement. Drawing its criteria heavily from Campus Compact's Indicators of Engagement Project, the new classification reaffirms institutional commitment to deepen the practice of service and to further strengthen bonds between campus and community. Community Engagement is defined as the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/classifications/>

<sup>6</sup> see Getha-Taylor, Heather, “Collaborative Lessons from Katrina,” *The Public Manager*, 9/22/07, and Nardini, Jean, “Collaborative Governance: Key Piece to the Puzzle,” *Nephrology Nursing Journal*, 2/1/01



and non-profit and business organizations may contribute more to civic life than expected; and, by working in harmony, the three sectors may achieve more than the sum of their parts. That at least is the algorithm of hope and the promise of collaborative governance.

Collaborative governance has been referred to as a new paradigm, a movement, and a system. Some have suggested that collaborative governance represents a shift from the hierarchical paradigm of government, while: “The governance paradigm encourages the creation of innovative partnerships between the government sector, the private sector, and the non-profit sector in order to harness the collective energies and strengths of all parties.”<sup>7</sup> The Hewlett Foundation describes collaborative governance as a movement in the tradition of citizen participation: “This movement actively engages citizen through the tools of dialogue and deliberation, community problem solving, and multi-stakeholder dispute resolution to inform and shape public decision making.”<sup>8</sup> The Policy Consensus Institute refers to collaborative governance as a system based on certain principles: “This collaborative governance system can work anywhere as long as several key principles are adhered to: transparency, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, responsiveness, accountability, forum neutrality, and consensus based decision-making.”<sup>9</sup>

As the above analysis suggests, collaborative governance is conceptually rich and methodologically broad. As a term, collaborative governance has evolved from a buzz-word and catch-phrase toward becoming an organizing idea and principle that relates to other concepts such as citizen participation, consensus building, conflict resolution, community networks and partnerships, and deliberative democracy. To be sure there may be other phrases and concepts that may perform these functions, and certainly more theoretical work is needed in conceptualizing the notion; but, for now, the notion of collaborative governance has gained widespread attention and is being employed among scholars and practitioners concerned with modern civic life.

### **The Convergence of University Public Service and Collaborative Governance**


While the two trends discussed above are distinct phenomenon, there is an area of fusion between them. Certainly, not all university public service involves collaborative governance, and not all collaborative governance efforts include universities. Nonetheless, there is a significant overlap zone where colleges and universities are involved in collaborative governance, and which (for the most part) can be distinguished from other university public service areas such as direct volunteering by faculty, students and staff, advocacy, and service learning. Within this zone, the roles and relations experienced by colleges and universities are myriad and include such things as serving as initiators, organizers, conveners, sources of

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<sup>7</sup> Martin, L. L., Smith, H., and Phillips, W., “Bridging ‘Town and Gown’ Through Innovative University-Community Partnerships,” *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal*, Vol. 10 (2), Article 20.

<sup>8</sup> See, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation’s “Collaborative Governance: A Guide for Grantmakers,” <http://www.hewlett.org/Publications/collaborativegovernance.html>

<sup>9</sup> See, Policy Consensus Initiative, “What is Collaborative Governance,” [http://www.policyconsensus.org/publicsolutions/ps\\_2.html](http://www.policyconsensus.org/publicsolutions/ps_2.html)



expertise to inform, supporters, participants, and facilitators of collaborative governance activities.


Not a lot is known about university public service efforts in relation to collaborative governance. Until now, the principal focus of university public service in practice and research has been on the benefits of student and faculty volunteering and service learning. Yet, there are hundreds of examples of college and university engagement in collaborative governance that are worthy of description, analysis, evaluation, and emulation. This is not to suggest any criticism or devolution of support for volunteer and service learning programs, but rather it is to suggest the importance of another strain of public service that has been growing and is worthy of greater attention.

A number of reasons might be advanced for university public service in relation to collaborative governance. However, the most important reason, which may not seem to appeal to immediate self-interest, is that it represents responsiveness to one of the major macro challenges of contemporary American society. That challenge is presented by the high degree of fragmentation and polarization that exists today and which blunts prospects for workable consensus and joint action on shared solutions at all levels of society. So, as traditional mediating institutions, including government, have lost influence and credibility among people today, colleges and universities, such as Washington State University and the University of Washington, have emerged as potential resources to help advance public consensus and workable solutions for their state, its regions and communities through collaborative means.

This new role for Universities has been advocated by William D. Ruckelshaus, EPA's first director, former CEO at Weyerhaeuser and Browning Ferris Industries, and Chair of the William D. Ruckelshaus Center at the Washington State University/University of Washington. Recently in remarks to the Council of Presidents at the 2007 Annual Meeting of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges in New York City, he advanced the principle of: "Universities as Neutral Forums for Collaborative Problem Solving." As an example, he described the work of the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium based at Florida State University in helping the state build consensus on creating a new statewide building code following Hurricane Andrew's trail of destruction in South Florida in the early 1990's. He concluded: "There is a thirst for this kind of application of the assets of the university to be put against the problems of the state and to help the state in solving problems. The universities are here to help the state and to help the people that are going to be impacted by a solution."

While there is limited attention to date regarding college and university involvement in relation to collaborative governance, there are signs of relevant early interest. For example, Harvard University and centers at the University of Southern California, the University of Arizona, and the University of Washington have established programs on collaborative governance. One hundred scholars joined in 2007 as a part of the Collaborative Democracy Network which is concerned with collaborative governance. Many professional and academic associations such as the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, the Association of American Law Schools, National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration have devoted presentations and seminars on the subject at conferences held over the last decade. Recently, the Policy Consensus Institute has proposed the





creation of a Collaborative Governance Network among university centers that have been engaged in the facilitation of collaborative governance activities.

### **A Florida Initiative to Assess Higher Education Involvement in Collaborative Governance**

As is the case in regard to public service generally, the State of Florida and its institutions of public higher education have been at the forefront in support of collaborative governance. For example, in 1987, the Florida legislature passed legislation to establish a center to help promote consensus about contentious issues arising out of growth management reforms, and based at one of Florida's public universities. The center, the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium (FCRC), was given the mandate to, "reduce the public and private costs of litigation and administrative appeals on public disputes, including those related to growth management issues, more quickly and effectively through the use of consensus building and alternative dispute resolution."<sup>10</sup> The Consortium, based at Florida State University, has undertaken over 700 projects with local, county, regional, state, and federal agencies, private sector firms and civic organizations since its founding, and has trained over 2,000 public officials. A recent study of FCRC clients indicated a very high level of satisfaction with their services.<sup>11</sup>


The Consortium is hardly alone in its efforts among higher education institutions to promote collaborative governance. Among the more than 550 centers and institutes that exist within the universities of the Florida State University System, there are many that are heavily involved in supporting collaborative governance. Among these centers are: the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions at Florida Atlantic University, a long-time partner with the FCRC; the five branches of the John Scott Dailey Florida Institute of Government; the Bob Graham School of Public Service at the University of Florida; the Institute for Public Management and Community Service at Florida International University; the Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Central Florida; the Northwest Florida Center for Building Better Communities at the University of North Florida; the Florida Center for Community Design and Research at the University of South Florida, and the Community Outreach Research and Learning Center at the University of West Florida. In addition to these centers, there are offices on each campus that help to manage public and community volunteer and service learning activities. Also, many among the 550 plus centers that have a specific topical focus, such as the Florida Center for Environmental Studies and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida, the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida have long been engaged in collaborative governance activities.

Through a contract with the Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida, the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium, working with the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions, and several other partners, will undertake an action-research project during 2008 to assess the extent of, need for, and interest in support of collaborative governance among the 10 public universities and one college within the State University System (SUS). This project will address the following questions:

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<sup>10</sup> Public Postsecondary Education, §1004.59 Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium

<sup>11</sup> See, <http://consensus.fsu.edu/>

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1. What kinds of collaborative governance activities have the universities and college been involved with in the last 3 years, and which have been most successful?
  2. What are the most important lessons that have been learned from these activities?
  3. Who among faculty and administrators are most interested in collaborative governance efforts?
  4. What are some of the most important areas of opportunity and need for collaborative governance in the surrounding communities and region of each school?
  5. In what ways can the universities and college within the SUS, and perhaps others, collaborate to advance the extent and quality of collaborative governance in Florida?

The purpose of this assessment project is to encourage the involvement of colleges and universities in contributing to collaborative governance activities in their communities, regions and the state. However, this is not the end goal since collaborative governance is not an end in itself but is rather a means to the greater end of building stronger, quality communities and regions. Collaborative governance represents one bundle of strategies and practices to help communities to make better decisions, build civic capacity, and forge solutions. Colleges and universities have the resources and are in good position to learn more about collaborative governance and to help improve and expand it in practice. This project is a modest attempt to encourage such effort.

## *Appendix 4: NASULGC Statement on Engagement*



### **NASULGC on Engagement**

Engagement is a fundamental and essential characteristic of public higher education ... an equal with learning and discovery. Engagement reaches beyond outreach and extension as the university seeks relationships with its communities that are a commitment to sharing and reciprocity and embraces two-way partnerships defined by mutual respect among the partners. Engagement, Learning and Discovery are overlapping essential characteristics.<sup>1, 2</sup>

NASULGC supports engagement as an essential characteristic of public higher education and recommends that NASULGC members actively advance a "culture of engagement" as the fundamental approach for linking to the issues and needs of its communities.

The essence of public supported universities is serving the public good.<sup>3</sup> An engaged institution is seeking and acting on its publics needs as partners.

Communities whether industry, businesses, towns and cities, agencies, students, parents, or citizen groups (or many more one might think of) when engaged by institutions as partners provide needed definition and focus to the institution and its partners.


- Engagement is a characteristic that informs and influences discovery and learning in an institution.
- Discovery and learning are characteristics that inform and influence engagement.
- Engagement is a two-way interaction between the institution and its communities. As such, an engaged university will seek to improve increasingly urgent local, regional and national problems.
- Engagement is focused and presents identifiable problem boundaries and measurable outcomes.
- Engagement is involvement, involvement of faculty, staff and students; involvement with communities; involvement of resources.

Engagement will be activated at the point of the institutions linkage to the community, often at the local level and individual level. Engaged institutions will find, among others,

- Students involved in community service,
- Diversifying communities,
- Community-based education, and
- Technology research with clients not just for clients.

These characteristics describe a culture of engagement ... an ivory bridge, rather than an ivory tower. A bridge firmly rooted in both the academic world and the





communities it serves. A public institution of higher education is incomplete without engagement.

Universities have long used learning and discovery to prepare well educated students and to extend their basic and applied knowledge to society. University engagement takes these two crucial elements one step further by fostering interaction with communities to assure that students and university-based knowledge provide more direct benefits to society.

### **Applying Engagement**

Engagement is at its heart universities working with the people of their states and communities to solve the persistent problems and enhance the quality of life. Public higher education has unique capabilities to engage communities on many levels to address relevant issues that impact its citizens. From teaching individuals (formally and informally) to engaging in the formation of public policy to the transfer of university discovered technology and knowledge to private enterprise, university engagement is essential to America's future.

- **K-12 Education.** Campus administrators, faculty and staff must become more critically linked to and engaged in the K-12 education programs of our states and communities. American can not meet the challenges posed by the "Gathering Storm"<sup>4</sup> report or the National Innovation Initiative<sup>5</sup> without a stronger commitment by higher education in creating stronger K-12 and undergraduate programs.
- **Economic Development.** Engaged universities are critical in the economic development of communities, regions, states, the nation, and the World. Engaged universities can apply its knowledge resources to rural, urban and suburban areas alike to enhance their economic capacities.
- **Urban Issues.** Some issues are unique and critical to America's highly populated areas. University engagement in transportation, planning and design can assist in creating more efficient and livable urban and exurban areas. Engagement with law enforcement can improve approaches to crime prevention. Embedded poverty can be systematically attacked.
- **Democratization.** American democracy has been sustained by informed and participatory citizenries. In recent decades Americans, especially those on the margins, have become more detached from the democratic process. Universities have unique resources that when engaged in communities can assist in bringing more informed people into the governance of their communities and as participants in the broader national agenda.
- **Health and Well-being.** America is experiencing a crisis in health care which starts with the obesity of many of its citizens. Public universities engaged in local communities and informing public policy can be major players in decreasing the stress associated with our current health care crisis and to provide the base for a sustainable health lifestyle for its citizens. Safe and secure food and water are essential to good health and well-being.
- **Poverty.** Many Americans earn at levels that barely provide the essentials of life. As government assistance for the poor has reduced, it is clear that many in our work force continue to need additional training in work skills and life preparation. America's public universities can respond.

- **Higher Education.** Student learning resulting in academic degrees is basic to the goals of all universities. However, increasingly students are becoming involved in styles of learning that engage them in the solution of community problems. Service learning is major part of this activity, but it should extend to additional internships and other opportunities for student engagement.
- **Internationalization.** Trade and communications continue to shrink the globe. Activities once required to be performed nearby can now be positioned almost anywhere in the world. Similarly, new workers arrive daily in the US from throughout the world. Students and non-students continue to need greater exposure to a broader cross section of the world. Solutions to problems in distant locations now require the thought, perspective and inputs from many people in many locations. World engagement is essential to stronger nations and sustainable peace.
- **Natural Resources and Environment.** Water, land, energy and food are essential for survival and to thrive in our world. Engaged public universities actively seek to provide effective, efficient and sustainable approaches to our natural environment whether in dealing with industrial air quality control or the production of agricultural commodities. Working with industries, farms, public agencies and individual citizens in determining approaches to a sustainable future is essential to the role of engaged public universities.
- **Security.** Security is an unavoidable concern of America's citizens. Terrorists, flu pandemics, wars, crime, abnormal geological and weather events and a myriad of other concerns continue to dominate the agenda of a rapidly change world. The knowledge of engaged public universities is essential to examining the vulnerabilities of our society and in modifying institutions and approaches to providing security.
- **Energy.** Energy continues to be an overriding concern throughout the world. Energy solutions will include discovery and engagement as universities attempt to apply their knowledge to increasing supplies and reducing consumption through sound conservation practices.

### Conclusion

NASULGC is committed to public higher education being a strong influence in its communities -- local, regional, state, national and global. Engagement develops powerful two-way partnerships that build on the strongest attributes of all partners to enhance the well-being of all members. NASULGC visualizes a world where public higher education is recognized as a powerful partner in developing strategies, providing educational resources and linking communities to build better lives through learning, discovery and engagement.

<sup>1</sup> Kellogg Commission, "Return to Our Roots: The Engaged University", Washington, DC, 1999,

<sup>2</sup> American Association of State Colleges and Universities, "Stepping Forward As Stewards of Place", Washington, DC, 2002

<sup>3</sup> Adrianna J. Kezar (Editor), et al, "Higher Education for the Public Good : Emerging Voices from a National Movement", Jossey-Bass, April 22, 2005.

<sup>4</sup> National Academy of Sciences, "Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Better Future", Washington, DC, 2005

<sup>5</sup> Council on Competitiveness, "Innovate America: Thriving in a World of Challenge and Change", National Innovation Initiative Report, Washington, DC, December 2004

*Appendix 5: NASULGC letter on Universities as Neutral Forums for Collaborative Problem Solving*



National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant  
Colleges  
1307 New York Avenue, NW  
Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20005-4722

April 3, 2008

Dear Colleagues,

This is to follow up to a productive discussion on the topic of Universities as Neutral Forums for Collaborative Problem Solving at the Council of Presidents session during last year's Annual Meeting. We are circulating the attached paper and suggesting assistance you may wish to use.

The attached paper describes how a growing number of universities are providing neutral forums to state and local leaders. Rather than the university solving the problem, the university's role is providing the place and the process for engaging the parties in addressing the issues themselves. The paper provides some examples of how this is being done by some universities.

This is a way universities can demonstrate their benefit to state and local government leaders. And, in return, universities gain a positive benefit when governors and legislators receive their help in successfully addressing the difficult kinds of issues.

Of course it is understood that most public universities have and are doing work such as this. The ideas presented in the attached paper and at the Council of Presidents session are for an augmentation and focus of such work.

For any of you interested in hearing more, the Policy Consensus Initiative (PCI) would like to offer its assistance. PCI has been working with universities to this end for the past ten years.

PCI is happy to advise and assist. For example if you hold a planning meeting PCI can suggest university leaders and public leaders from other states who have worked together to establish these kinds of centers. If you are interested in exploring any of this further, please contact Chris Carlson at [chris@policyconsensus.org](mailto:chris@policyconsensus.org).

With best regards,

Peter McPherson, President  
NASULGC

Charles B. Reed, Chancellor  
The California State University

## Bill Ruckelshaus Addresses Council of State University and Land Grant College Presidents on Universities and Collaborative Problem Solving

**Policy Consensus E-News — December 2007**




Bill Ruckelshaus recently addressed the Council of Presidents at the 2007 Annual Meeting of the [National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges](#). His topic was *Universities as Neutral Forums for Collaborative Problem Solving*. Bill was introduced by Charles Reed, Chancellor of the California State University System and former PCI Board member.

In response to an increasing number of intractable public issues, Ruckelshaus described how a growing number of universities are providing neutral forums and process assistance to leaders. Rather than the university solving the problem, the university's role is providing the place and the process for engaging the parties in addressing the issues.

This is a way universities can demonstrate their benefit to state and local government leaders, he said. He also noted that universities also benefit when governors and legislators receive assistance in addressing issues successfully. These centers also benefit students because these projects offer experiences that can serve as teaching tools, as well as subjects for research.

Ruckelshaus stressed the importance of having a university president who champions this kind of center. He described the value of having both internal and external champions that help support and fund these programs.

As a concrete example of how a university can serve state leaders, Ruckelshaus described how the [Ruckelshaus Center](#), a joint program of the University of Washington and Washington State University, is presently assisting Washington's governor and legislature by conducting a process to develop consensus among environmentalists, property owners, and others over local critical-areas ordinances.



Last year, an Initiative was placed on the Washington ballot that would have required local governments to compensate property owners for restrictions on their land-uses. Even though it was defeated, opponents acknowledged that the measure's backers had legitimate grievances.

Even before the election, the governor pledged to work toward a compromise if voters rejected it. The election set the stage for the governor and lawmakers to approach the Ruckelshaus Center to assist them with a process for addressing the issue. "I know that this is a contentious issue and that we need to recognize the concerns of landowners, local governments, tribes, environmental groups and the state as a whole," Governor Gregoire said.

A bill was passed that provides for a 'time-out' while the Center assists all the parties in fact-finding and attempting to work out agreements for how to preserve and perpetuate agricultural activities while still protecting critical areas in the environment. That process is currently underway.

In the question and answer session following Ruckelshaus's remarks, there was discussion about how it is less difficult for universities to get involved in controversial issues when they serve in this kind of a neutral role. Robert Bruiniks, president of the University of Minnesota and incoming chair of the NASULGC Board of Directors, noted that in locating this kind of center within a university, rather than attaching it to a particular disciplinary area, it needs to be where it can carry out its commitment to providing impartial process assistance

## **UNIVERSITIES AS NEUTRAL FORUMS FOR COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING**


*(Bill Ruckelshaus NASULGC White Paper, November, 2007)*

We live in a time when powerful forces have altered the ability to address public issues through traditional mechanisms. Many of today's problems require new approaches if we are to meet these challenges. This is not a matter of governmental reform, but of finding better governance mechanisms, ones that enable leaders, public and private institutions, and citizens to collaborate: to work together effectively across sectors to address problems and find solutions.

Universities have long played important roles in their communities, regions and states, helping leaders address difficult and contentious public issues. They provide substantive expertise, educate and train leaders, and provide technical assistance to various levels of government through Extension Services, Institutes of Government, and other vehicles. Universities are among a handful of institutions that have managed to maintain a reputation for objectivity, and they are uniquely positioned to help leaders address today's issues.

In fact, universities are being called upon more and more to do so. In the face of complex problems, increasing demands on public and private resources, worsening polarization and gridlock, and citizens who increasingly expect to have a say in public issues, public leaders are turning to universities for help when traditional forums fail to help them address many of today's issues.





Universities are increasingly being called on, not only for their substantive expertise, but also for help in providing neutral forums where collaborative approaches can be used for problem solving and dispute resolution. These kinds of collaborative mechanisms require public leaders to serve as conveners and they are turning to universities to assist them in carrying out their roles. More universities are setting up centers with the expertise and capacity to assess, plan and carry out collaborative processes. Let's walk through one example of how they provide this assistance.

### **A Case Study from Florida**

The following case study from Florida describes how a university center is involved in ongoing efforts to build consensus on implementation of a statewide building code. Following Hurricane Andrew, Florida experienced record-breaking insurance losses resulting in a crisis affecting every homeowner in the state. The Governor appointed a Building Code Study Commission. The Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium, located at Florida State University, was asked to assess, design, and facilitate the Commission's study and deliberation process.


Before proceeding, the Consortium conducted an objective assessment to learn about the context, history, and dynamics of the situation, as well as the potential obstacles to collaboration that would need to be overcome. Based on the assessment, they designed and conducted a collaborative process for the Commission, which produced consensus recommendations for reform of the state's building construction system.

The legislature enacted the recommendations into law. Next, the Consortium was asked by the Chair of the new Commission to assist them in building consensus on a proposal for a uniform building code. A complex process was put in place that included designing and facilitating meetings of 11 balanced technical advisory groups, as well as the Commission's meetings. The Consortium also facilitated workshops around the state to receive public input. Following that, the Commission refined and presented the Code to the legislature for review and approval.

The legislature enacted the new Code and directed the Commission to continue to build consensus on key topics involved in its implementation. Since that time, the Consortium has provided an on-going forum for the Commission where stakeholders representing different interests participate in consensus building on issues affecting the construction industry. Members strive for consensus agreements which all can accept, support, live with, or agree not to oppose. Commission Chair Rodriguez, praises the consensus process that has resulted. "I am absolutely in awe of this process. The intent is not to compromise, because one does not compromise on issues of life safety, but to find and reach consensus on the best way to achieve results the people want."

### **Other Examples of What Universities are Doing**

Like Florida State University, a growing number of universities are playing an essential role in providing these kinds of neutral forums and assisting leaders in designing and managing collaborative processes. In a survey conducted in 2005, the Policy Consensus Initiative (PCI)



identified 50 university-based programs that are providing leaders with assistance in assessing, designing and conducting collaborative processes. PCI is a national non-profit, non-partisan organization with a Board made up of governors, legislators, and other state leaders whose mission is to initiate and strengthen the use of collaborative approaches to governance. Since 1997, PCI has provided consultation and resources for both existing and new university programs around the country.


As Bill Ruckelshaus states, “It is valuable for a collaborative group to operate under the auspices of a non-governmental, neutral organization, like a university.” To that end, Ruckelshaus has helped create university centers in two states; one at the *University of Wyoming’s School for Environment and Natural Resources* and the other, a joint center of the *University of Washington and Washington State University*. Since its inception in 2003, the Washington Center has assisted leaders by facilitating successful collaborative processes on some of the most contentious issues in the state, including water resources policy, watershed and salmon restoration, regulatory reform, and workers compensation. These two Centers have also successfully leveraged significant amounts of public and private sector funding to support their work.

**Here are some additional examples from universities:**

In the summer of 2005, the *Center for Collaborative Policy located at California State University at Sacramento* began working with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and its partner agencies to assist them with developing a strategic approach for communications modernization and interoperability (the ability for different radio systems to work together). The Center provided consultation, design, and facilitation services to the Interoperability Coalition. After almost two years of inaction, within six months 13 state agencies successfully completed a strategic plan for interoperability of state agency communications. The plan was submitted to the California Legislature and became a cornerstone of the State's emergency response effort. Now the Center is working with local governments to achieve the same kinds of outcomes.

At the *University of Arkansas at Little Rock*, Chancellor Joel Anderson committed the University’s expertise to a regular examination of racial attitudes and to hosting community conversations about race relations. He turned to the new *UALR Center for Public Collaboration* to assist in conducting the potentially difficult annual dialogue sessions with diverse members of the community. The Center has proven a valuable resource to the Chancellor in his convening role, providing the professional staff and capacity to deal with conversations over a difficult issue.

The *National Policy Consensus Center, Portland State University* was asked by the governors of Oregon and Washington to help convene key government, industry, and environmental stakeholders to deal with contentious issues relating to dredge material disposal in the Columbia River. The Lower Columbia Solutions Group was formed as a diverse group of local, state and federal governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. It includes four port authorities, the Army Corps of Engineers, local government representatives, fishing interests, environmental groups, and representatives of the Oregon and Washington governors' offices. The PSU-based Center provides an on-going forum where stakeholders come together to discuss and seek collaborative solutions to the multitude of issues that arise. To date, four contentious disposal issues have been successfully addressed.



## Conclusion

These are but a few examples of what universities around the country are doing to assist leaders in convening collaborative processes to address some of the pressing issues in their states. As more university leaders consider establishing these kinds of Centers, the Policy Consensus Initiative (PCI) is prepared to provide them with practical guidance.

In the past ten years, PCI has seen the role universities play as neutral forums grow significantly. We are serving as host for a new organization made up of university programs and centers whose missions are to provide capacity for the use of collaborative governance practices in their communities and states. These centers serve as neutral forums and offer a spectrum of services ranging from public deliberation to collaborative problem solving and multi-party conflict resolution. They also engage in education and research.

Drawing on the resources available through this network, PCI will serve as a clearinghouse, to share knowledge, materials, models, and best practices. We welcome the opportunity to work with university leaders who want to develop these types of centers and programs by sharing information about the factors that have proven critical to success of university centers.

For more information see [www.policyconsensus.org](http://www.policyconsensus.org)

*Appendix 6: About the Authors*

**ABOUT STUART LANGTON**

**Stuart Langton** is Senior Fellow at the FCRC Consensus Center, Florida State University, where he serves as a consultant to and for the Center. He also has been Senior Fellow at the Center for Environmental Studies at Florida Atlantic University through which he assisted the intergovernmental task force that coordinates Everglades and South Florida restoration. He earned his PhD at Boston University where he also taught philosophy and worked closely with the Human Relations Center studying organizational and community development. He has served on the faculties of the University of Massachusetts at Lowell and the Whitmore School of Business and Economics at the University of New Hampshire. For many years he was the Lincoln Filene Professor of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Tufts University and was Executive Director of the Lincoln Filene Center. He has long been interested in civic and community development having begun his career as a teacher of Civics. He chaired the National Conference on Citizen Participation in Washington, D.C. in 1978 and 1983. He has served as chair of the All American Cities selection Committee. He has edited several books about citizen participation and many articles and essays about civic education and volunteerism. He was one of the organizers of the National Conference on Civic Renewal that developed a National Civic Index, and he was one of the founders of the International Association for Public Participation. He also directed *Challenge to Leadership* an innovative community service initiative involving major institutions and leaders in Greater Boston. He has served as a consultant to over 500 institutions and has directed over 25 research projects.

**Dr. Stuart Langton**



## ABOUT ROBERT JONES

**Robert M. Jones, J.D.**, has been the Director of the FCRC since 1991. He is highly respected nationally for his leadership in the field of consensus building and collaborative governance, serving on a number of boards and committees including a founding member of the national board of the Policy Consensus Initiative and Chairing the University Network for Collaborative Governance. He has extensive experience in leading large stakeholder consensus building processes. He has worked with representatives from state and local government, the private sector and citizen and community groups to design and implement collaborative consensus building solutions approaches to public issues. He has mediated land-use, development and environmental disputes. As an educator, he has taught classes in the FSU Department of Urban and Regional Planning and lectured in the College of Law and School of Public Administration. As a trainer in negotiation, mediation and facilitation skills, he has conducted workshops for state and local government staff, elected officials and professional engineers, scientists, managers and planners. Prior to his work with the FCRC, Mr. Jones was a Senior Associate for eight years at the National Institute for Dispute Resolution, in Washington D.C., where he directed a national dispute resolution research grants program funded by the Ford Foundation and administered grants programs in public policy mediation and professional education. He is a member of the California Bar and a graduate of University of California, Davis and University of California, Berkeley.

**Robert Jones**



## *Appendix #7 About the FCRC Consensus Center*



## CONSENSUS SOLUTIONS

The FCRC Consensus Center, formerly the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium, was created by the Florida Legislature in 1988 and based in Tallahassee at Florida State University. The Consortium also has a regional office in Orlando in partnership with the Institute of Government at the University of Central Florida. The Center provides consensus-building services education, training and research activities. These efforts seek to build a broader understanding of the value of collaborative approaches among citizens, leaders, professionals and students. In addition, the Consortium provides neutral technical assistance and consultation to a wide range of professionals, agency staff and citizens engaged in public policy challenges throughout Florida. It helps design efforts for facilitating intergovernmental collaboration, and community problem-solving. The Consortium also serves as a broker connecting stakeholders with dispute resolution professionals. For more information on the Center's work, visit our website at <http://consensus.fsu.edu>. Or email us at [rmjones@fsu.edu](mailto:rmjones@fsu.edu).

### **HOW THE FCRC CONSENSUS CENTER CAN HELP YOU FIND SOLUTIONS?**

*“Their impact on government in Florida may be greater than we imagine when you consider how many agencies and public officials they have worked with over the years.” - State Agency Client*

### **WE ARE SOLUTIONS ORIENTED**

For over 20 years, the FCRC has helped to demonstrate the power of solutions that have been developed through collaboration and consensus building. From our neutral home in the State University System, the FCRC has assisted hundreds of federal, state, and local governments and private and civic interests with problem solving on public issues. We bring to all our projects, a first hand, in depth understanding of the organizational, intergovernmental and agency relationships in Florida on a wide range of public issues.

The Center's experienced and expert staff is committed to work with sponsors, conveners and interested stakeholders to develop, design, and implement high quality consensus-building projects that are aimed at achieving solutions to complex public issues.

*“Their impact on government in Florida may be greater than we imagine when you consider how many agencies and public officials they have worked with over the years.” - State Agency Client*



## **WE CONSULT ON HOW TO PROCEED**

When you come to us with a challenge, we actively listen to your description of the situation and of the people and interests involved. We explore with you: the scope of the problem, possible strategies to address the problem and realistic objectives. Based on our mission of impartial consensus building and over 20 years of experience working on public issues in Florida, we will propose a course of action that we think is appropriate for the situation.

*“In developing a design for the project, they needed to understand the organizational culture of our agency and other participating agencies as well as the politics, policy options, and stakeholder views. The FCRC facilitator was as good in understanding the politics of the issue as he was in grasping technical nuances and figuring the best process to keep us on track.”- State Agency Client*

## **WE ASSESS COMPLEX SITUATIONS –HELPING YOU TO “LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP”**

If the complexity and sensitivity of the situation warrants, we will suggest that the FCRC conduct an impartial assessment on behalf of a potential sponsor. During the assessment, we review pertinent information and talk to the people who are impacted by the problem (those with a stake in the solution) to get their perspectives on the situation. We ask stakeholders if they would be willing to participate in a collaborative process to help identify possible solutions to a shared challenge. The result is often a carefully thought through assessment report with recommendations on how to best proceed.

*“The sunk costs are enormous because of their in-depth understanding of our agency, Florida politics, and our technical issues. It would take a lot more money and time to get a comparable team up to speed, and then it would be a bet on their ability and sustainability.” - State Agency Client.*

## **WE HELP FIT THE PROCESS TO THE CHALLENGE**


We work with you to determine the appropriate scope of an initiative. That means we will work with you to design a consensus building process that will seek to address your interests and needs, as well as those of other stakeholders, at a price that is agreeable to you and within the timeframe that meets your needs.

*“They go above and beyond to keep the costs down. We liked the approach the Consortium uses of developing a concept and then negotiating several iterations of a contract proposal with our agency. The negotiating process takes time and was sort of a test drive for us. We liked that they were not pushy and were able to demonstrate their responsiveness to our needs.”- State Agency Client*

## **WE FACILITATE CONSENSUS SOLUTIONS**

Many leaders today understand that diverse perspectives must be taken into account and brought to the table if progress is to be made in finding solutions to our public problems. Consistent with our public mission, fairness and impartiality are cornerstones of every FCRC process, providing opportunities for interactions among all stakeholders that encourage mutual understanding and joint problem solving.

FCRC facilitators will assist representative stakeholder groups as they work together to reach



consensus solutions by developing a work plan, preparing meeting materials and meeting agendas, facilitating meetings, and providing reliable and accurate meeting reports. During meetings, facilitators will engage meeting participants in exercises that promote understanding and seek consensus on how to address challenges and find solutions. Facilitators will work with sponsors and stakeholders between meetings to insure the consensus building process remains on track. FCRC projects are designed with the flexibility to make adjustments along the way if the need arises.

*“This (consensus approach) was a key to our commission’s success. If we had just a simple majority we would have walked away but the disagreements would rise again. With the super-majority, even though it takes more time, you end up with decisions that may not all be to your or others liking, but these are agreements you all can live with.”-*  
Chair of a Statewide Commission

### **WE ADVISE ON COLLABORATIVE ACTION STRATEGIES**

The FCRC staff can work with clients to incorporate into the consensus solutions process the steps and collaborative strategies needed for successful implementation. We can also provide strategic advice, coaching and training on the collaboration and leadership skills needed to establish an ongoing implementation framework and public-private partnership development processes. In addition, we design and facilitate organizational strategic planning for public agencies.