



Editor's Introduction

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Editor's Introduction—Bridging University and Community

Seymour J. Rosenthal, MSSW

This special issue is dedicated to sharing the increasing number of continuing education programs which deal with the joint efforts of the university and their surrounding neighborhoods. These efforts will as a consequence serve to eliminate the often acrimonious relationships between the universities and their neighbors. There are times when the universities administrative and scholarly efforts result in newly formed relationships and there are times when each others goals and programs are in odds with one another. In spite of best intentions the university can be seen as a land hungry and insensitive institution, complex and unwelcoming to many who live in its shadows. Generally there is no "port of entry" for those who seek the support of the university to enhance the lives of people in its sphere of influence. What tends to exist is a sporadic flurry of program interventions which evolve from the individual research faculty seeking to enhance their search for tenure and research funds and administrators concerned with creating programs and policies within the university which often are in conflict with community interest, or viewed as such by old time residents or newly created quasi political interest groups. The articles presented here are programs, policy and research efforts whose purpose is to bridge this gap between universities and their neighbors.

The history of recent years has seen new efforts in both areas of concerns through the increased number of publically funded programs which encourage collaboration with the university and the civic and social infrastructure of the community.

The guest editors of this issue, **Tracy Soska** and **John Trudeau**, have had long tenure operating community and university based policy, programs, and research and training departments.

Their long-term relationship with community and continuing education development has enhanced their individual skills and sharpened their capacity to give direction to the creation of the special issue.

Mr. Soska, LSW, is continuing education Director and a Community Organization and Social Administration Program faculty member at the University of Pittsburgh's School of Social Work.

Soska is also co-director of the University of Pittsburgh Community Outreach Partnership Center, and he has been principal investigator of several training and community-based research projects for the School of Social Work. Prior to coming to the University full-time in 1993, Soska was a nonprofit executive for more than years. He is co-author of the recent book, *University-Community Partnership: Universities in Civic Engagement* (2004), and in addition to *Professional Development*, he serves on the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Community Practice* which is published through the Association for Community and Organizational Practice, for which he is also editor of *ACOSA Update*, its national newsletter.

John H. Trudeau PhD, is director of the Center for Social Policy and Community Development, a department of Temple University's School of Social Administration and has held numerous direct service and managerial positions at the center for the past 24 years. Trudeau has co-taught graduate courses on social planning at Temple and has been the PI on more than 30 federal, state and local grants on workforce development, services to at-risk youth, adult literacy and community development. He is an associate editor of *Professional Development*, *the International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education*.

The perspective from the field is presented by **William T. Bergman** who has served at Temple since 1996, the first three years as managing director of campus safety and the last three years as vice president for operations. He is responsible for facilities management, campus safety, community relations and environmental safety. Mr. Bergman served 26 years prior with the Philadelphia Police Department, he held numerous executive positions and was appointed by Mayor Rendell to the rank of Deputy Police Commissioner in 1994. Mr. Bergman was an executive on loan to the Philadelphia School District (1992) and the Philadelphia Housing Authority (1993). Mr. Bergman holds a BS degree in business administration from Philadelphia University and a MS from St. Joseph's University.

Seymour J. Rosenthal is former director of the Center for Social Policy and Community Development, associate dean for research and community development, and currently emeritus professor, School of Social Administration, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122.

Perspective From the Field—Universities and Community Relations

William T. Bergman, MS

Universities, like other large complex institutions, for a long time depended upon community relations specialists to handle on-going dialogue with the community. The specialists invariably were personable, smiling individuals who ran numerous meetings with the university's neighbors.

The specialist became the face of the organization.

The problem with that approach was the specialist could not solve the underlying problems that existed between a university and the community. A more modern approach is that community relations should not be centralized in one person or department. The delivery of services and opportunities to a university's neighbors should be shared by several different venues throughout the organization.

One blueprint for delivering service and opportunity to the community would be to take a holistic approach involving the following:

1. Overlapping Services

- a. Safety services-patrols that foster a safe university and surrounding community.
- b. Facilities Management-provide street cleaning, landscape and lighting projects throughout the neighborhood.

2. Academic Enrichment

- a. Local school consultancies.
- b. Tutoring by staff and volunteers.
- c. Scholarship opportunities.
- d. Service learning opportunities.

3. Physical Plant/Development Management

- a. In-Put of area residents on all major projects.

- b. Ensuring the development of green space in and around campus.
- c. Development of a master plan.
- d. Management of construction execution-ensure street closure and construction debris are kept to a minimum.
- e. Manage parking around campus.

4. Economic Opportunities

- a. Job opportunities.
- b. Business opportunities.

5. Develop a Culture of Respect

- a. Even in times of disagreement there has to be a respect between the University and Community.

The blueprint above described a holistic comprehensive initiative requiring a diverse cadre of university administrators and faculty and while I cautioned not to centralize these various activities in one person or department, it does remain obvious that a measure of centrality would be required to assure a timely integration and coordination the different services required. The level of coordination and the locus of the authority to bring the services together would require the highest level within the university structure, with the authority to convince or cajole the necessary authorities to cooperate. There is some evidence to suggest that the higher level of authority in the coordinating role, the more probable is a successful outcome of any project's goals.

William T. Bergman is the vice president for operation at Temple University.