Creating, Running, and Sustaining Campus-Community Service-Learning Partnerships: Lessons from Practitioners



Franklin Pierce University students teach senior citizens computer skills.

By
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Prepared for
Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont
Campus Compacts



(L) Sterling College students doing stream bank restoration.



A Franklin Pierce University student and a local senior citizen concentrate on their computer skills lesson.



A staff member of Maine Medical Center enjoys the artistic work created by Maine College of Art students. They used their talents to offer comfort, creativity and humor to future children in the waiting room.

Northern New England partnerships listen to Cornell's Ken Reardon who inspires them to communicate directly with community leaders.





May Boeve and Jamie Henn, students at Middlebury College, were recognized at the 2007 Vermont Campus Compact Gala for their role in co-founding the Sunday Night Group, the largest student group working on national climate change initiatives. An impetus for the group grew out of environmental studies service-learning classes in which students partner with a variety of local and national organizations working on environmental and climate change issues.

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Funding provided by the
Corporation for National and Community Service

and
Campus Compacts of Maine
| New Hampshire | Vermont

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Preface and Acknowledgments

Campus-community partnerships are an essential element in community service-learning. Partnerships are the structure for identifying community needs, developing appropriate student projects, fostering experiential education, carrying out required planning and logistics and sharing feedback on the process and results.

Because of their importance, the elements of successful campus-community partnerships have gotten a lot of attention; however, less has been done to identify "best" or even "promising" practices that are used to create, run and sustain good partnerships. The purpose of this handbook is to record and share the voices of partnership practitioners on what they have done that has worked well in their partnership efforts.

This need, and the value of practitioner voices in addressing it, became apparent as the Campus Compacts of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont brought together campus and community partnership members in a variety of activities funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Under this Learn and Serve grant, the Campus Compacts of Northern New England offered summits, sub-grants and trainings all aimed at creating and strengthening partnerships among institutions of higher education and community partners and meeting community needs.

As this grant neared completion, the Northern New England Campus Compacts decided to draw on this experience and create a handbook to document and share the wisdom of these many practitioners. Cheryl Whitney Lower of Vermont Campus Compact and Maryli Tiemann of Maine Campus Compact were particularly instrumental in the creation of this handbook, with other important contributions from state Campus Compact Executive Directors, Amy Gibans McGlashan (Vermont), Liz McCabe Park (Maine) and Deborah Scire (New Hampshire), as well as Amy Escoto and Alice Elliott, former Campus Compact staff. Many thanks also to Lyn DeGraff of Middlebury College who formatted this handbook and offered invaluable advice.

Thanks are also due to the many campus faculty and staff, and their community partners, who completed surveys or were interviewed to provide the substance of this handbook. Their voices, and the important practices they describe, make up most of what this handbook has to offer. In addition we thank the other campuses in Northern New England who may not be included in this publication, but have also worked on strengthening campus community partnerships, and from whom we have learned a great deal.

Grateful acknowledgement goes to the Corporation for National and Community Service for its support of this important project, and specifically to retired program officer, Valerie Wheeler, for her enthusiastic and unwavering support of the work of the Northern New England Collaborative.



Sterling College students mentor area youth on climbing wall.

I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Handbook

The literature on campus-community partnerships has focused on the characteristics of "good" partnerships—partnerships that effectively and efficiently meet the needs of partnership members and their constituencies.[1] What has received less attention in the literature, although it is often a major topic of partnership conversations, workshops, and conferences, is the question of how to become a "good" partnership—how to build, operate and sustain partnerships that are effective and efficient.[2]

This handbook addresses this by drawing on the experience of dozens of individuals from colleges and universities and from community organizations in northern New England who have been involved in service-learning partnerships for several years or more. To the extent possible direct quotes from these practitioners are used throughout the handbook.[3]

This handbook is not only interested in the belief that, for example, partners in "good" partnerships "share common goals," but more importantly how those forming actual partnerships achieve those common goals—what steps they take, what "practices" they use, to build this dimension of a "good" partnership. We organize the reported "promising practices" according to their role in creating, running or sustaining different elements of "good" partnerships.

In reporting what they feel are the reasons that their partnerships work effectively, these practitioners often describe some of their partnership activities as well, providing a useful collection of brief case studies of service-learning partnerships as a bonus for this handbook.

The last section of the handbook addresses how this initial inventory of good or promising service-learning partnership practices can be updated and expanded over time, allowing more and more practitioners to share with one another their experiences in creating, running and sustaining partnerships.

Nature of Service-Learning Partnerships

Campus-Community partnerships include a wide range of partnerships between campus individuals or entities (faculty, students, staff, courses, departments, colleges, centers, offices) and community entities (individuals, organizations, parts of organizations like local government offices, collaborations or partnerships of organizations) designed to serve community and campus needs.

These partnerships cover a wide range of common concerns (housing, neighborhoods, education, public safety), and involve different academic resources (faculty, staff, students) and approaches (community-based research, joint task forces, service-learning, community service) to achieve their ends.

The focus of this handbook is on *Service-Learning Partnerships* that are a subset of campus-community partnerships. Service-learning partnerships are collaborations between faculty/course(s) and community

[1] See, for example, Nye and Glickman (1995), Nye and Schramm (1999), Torres (2000), Strand et al (2003), Leiderman (2003), Sandy and Holland (2006).
[2] Strand et al (2003), chapter 3, and Sandy and Holland (2006) provide helpful information about partnership practices from the campus and community perspective.
[3] The value of practitioner experience and lessons is discussed in Schon (1983).

organization(s) that are developed to both meet specified community needs and provide community situations and problems as service-learning opportunities for students. These partnerships are designed to be of mutual benefit to all partners, with campus partners playing the lead in defining student learning needs and community partners in defining community needs. Students in service-learning courses providing academic credit carry out the work of the partnership.

In service-learning partnerships, community partners play a critical role in the design, implementation and ultimate effectiveness of service-learning courses and provide a variety of benefits to the service-learning course faculty and students including:

- community-defined problems for service-learning projects
- opportunities for faculty and student participation in social change
- assistance with project and feedback on project progress
- assessment of the work of the student team and of individuals
- "real" work for students, providing increased motivation
- student education in diversity and multicultural issues
- introducing students to career possibilities and to the value of civic engagement
- enhancement of student field study, team building and interpersonal skills
- opportunities for continuity over a series of classes and/or for new types of service-learning projects
- other benefits beyond service-learning (e.g. community-based research opportunities for faculty, non-credit service projects for students)
- image building opportunities for colleges and universities

At the same time service-learning course faculty and students play a critical role in the design, implementation and ultimate effectiveness of service-learning projects that provide a variety of benefits to community partners. These benefits include[4]:

- specific services, reports, findings, and other "deliverables" requested by the community partners
- direct impacts on client outcomes (e.g. college students encouraging high school students to go to college or providing companionship to elders)
- direct impacts on organizational capacity (e.g. students extending the workforce of community organizations)
- staff and organizational development through the SL process itself and information/technical assistance/financial support gained in the process
- access to the prestige associated with the university partner
- increased community capacity from linkages created among community partners engaged in SL projects
- having a partner in social change
- linking community partner practice with academic theory

This flow of benefits to both sides of the partnership is an important element in successful collaborations (see discussion of reciprocity and mutuality on page 21).

[4] Most of these benefits are presented and discussed in Sandy and Holland (2006, pp. 35–36)

Service-Learning Support Systems

Service-learning partnerships do not just happen. Faculty and community partners often need help in finding one another and building their partnership. This is where a variety of university organizations and individuals play a critical role. Many campuses have service-learning or community-based education offices or centers, and/or service-learning coordinators, that develop data bases on potential partners, hold matchmaking events that bring faculty and community people together, run workshops for faculty and community participants on ways to form partnerships and work together, and in other ways greatly facilitate the development of service-learning partnerships. Some larger community organizations, like the United Way or a particular local government agency, can play this role on the community side. The importance of these offices and individuals is highlighted in later sections of this handbook.

Support for service-learning partnerships can go beyond the campus or local community. Campus Compacts in different states, and nation-wide, provide grants, consulting, workshops, conferences, networking events and other services that are a valuable resource for local campus-community service-learning efforts.

Different Types of Service-Learning Partnerships

Service-learning partnerships can be highly varied, involving different types and numbers of service-learning courses and community partners, different partnership focuses, different scales and scopes of activity, and different lengths of operations, from one semester to many years.

1. Single Campus and Community Partners/Single or Multiple Projects

Partnerships can be simple in form—one academic course linked with one community organization. This partnership may last only as long as it takes to complete one project, like a program evaluation, or it may operate over many years, carrying out one or more projects, like an annual survey overseen by the community partner.[5] Here are some examples:

Julianna Acheson, University of Maine at Farmington,[6] writes:

> *The University of Maine at Farmington—Maine Center for Economic Policy (MECEP) Partnership* was established specifically for the purpose of this individual project. My students conducted ethnographic interviews with individuals in the six rim counties of Maine for the Maine Center for Economic Development. Both upper division classes and a lower division class were involved. My students, in total interviewed 575 individuals from the six rim counties (Franklin, Oxford, Somerset, Piscataquis, Aroostook and Washington). The upper division students trained the lower division students on interviewing strategies and also had to analyze the data. This data was used in a report, *Bring Prosperity to All of Maine*.

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[5] Fulbright-Anderson et al (2001) refer to "Project or Placement Partnerships" as those that are "short-term, instrumental and project oriented" and "Umbrella or Core Partnerships" as those that have structures "for shared decision-making and goal setting over a long-term engagement."
[6] Only the organizational affiliation of those surveyed or interviewed are included in the text. Their titles and other information is provided in Appendix i.

Cathryn Field, Bowdoin College, writes about the *Bowdoin College Geology Department—Friends of Casco Bay Partnership*:

> The Marine Environmental Geology class [under the faculty leadership of Ed Laine] has worked with Friends of Casco Bay (FOCB) on water quality monitoring in Casco Bay since 2000. Each year, we have built upon the findings of previous classes to ask more specific questions and undertake more complex research. These opportunities would not be available to students, nor would the research be available to FOCB, if we had to reinvent the projects each year. (For more on this partnership see pages 19 and 36).

2. Multiple Campus and/or Community Partners/Single or Multiple Projects

Partnerships can also involve multiple partners—several partners on the campus and/or community side—and carry out different kinds of projects and activities over time. These partnerships can also be short-term, usually single project oriented, or long-term. Here are some examples:

Katherine Dauge-Roth of Bowdoin College describes the *Bowdoin College-Mount Ararat High School Romance Languages Partnership*, a partnership linking two organizations, with units from within each working with one another:

> For Bowdoin students, this partnership seeks to improve their language skills and knowledge of Francophone and Hispanic cultures by using and sharing them with high school French and Spanish students. They also gain confidence by having to become leaders in discussion, improve their presentation skills, and develop organizational and communication skills. They grow a great deal personally through their work with the high school students.
>
> For the Mount Ararat students, the partnership seeks to (1) foster their interest in pursuing college after high school graduation by exposure to college students and college life, and (2) improve their communication skills by having greater contact time in small groups with our students as facilitators.
>
> One section of Advanced Grammar and Composition (Spanish 205) produced cultural units on several Latin American countries that were used by the Spanish 3 groups at Mount Ararat. Bowdoin students presented these units to the high school students, and entertained questions on what learning Spanish has meant to them. Students were also invited to campus to tour a Cuban Art exhibit with visits given by Bowdoin Spanish students. A Spanish festival is planned for local high school Spanish students and teachers.
>
> Intermediate French (French 204), carried out the following activities. 1. Student groups planned and prepared materials for weekly small group conversation time—called Café Francais—with the high school students. The whole class facilitated these almost weekly sessions at the high school. Themes included Carnaval, the Francophone world, Valentine's Day, role play, games and problem solving activities. 2. Students planned and carried out a French and Francophone Festival at Bowdoin, an immersion experience for about 30 Mount Ararat French students from French 3, 4 and 5. Bowdoin student-run activities included a campus tour, a Caribbean dance lesson, and a French lunch in French. Packets for Mt. Ararat students included maps, menus, handouts with cultural background for each activity, a welcome letter and a program of the day's activities. 3. Individually, students created substantial materials for teaching units based on the needs of the Mount Ararat French teachers as a final project.



Romance language faculty from Mt. Ararat High School and Bowdoin College design a plan for the next school year, partnering students from both institutions.

Carrie Williams Howe and Kathleen McNamara, University of Vermont, describe the *UVM-Burlington Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) Partnership*:

Burlington's Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) is an organization that is a catalyst for many community development projects in the city of Burlington. From small business development to neighborhood associations, CEDO has its finger on the "pulse" of the city of Burlington. From the perspective of the University of Vermont, establishing a long-term partnership with this office has meant accessing CEDO's many programs and offering student and faculty partnerships as tools for helping this office meet their goals. This key, strategic partnership enables UVM to better meet the needs of its local community. Here are a few examples of service-learning projects under this partnership:

• A Local Economic Development class worked with CEDO's Economic Development Office to update the *Jobs & People Report* for the city of Burlington. Students learned how to replicate and update the data and present it in a readable format. One of the students in the course was simultaneously interning in the Economic Development Office, and was able to further the engagement of the community partner in this project.

• Students in this same class also worked with CEDO's Center for Community & Neighborhoods (CCAN) to re-administer and analyze a "Quality of Life Survey" in Burlington's Old North End. The survey was developed and administered four years earlier by another service-learning class and a group of graduate students. The survey was designed to gain feedback on the progress of CCAN's community development programs in this neighborhood since the last survey was administered, and to get a better sense of resident-defined concerns and needs of the neighborhood. Students were partnered with AmeriCorps VISTAs working in the CCAN office to administer the surveys, and gained valuable experience in canvassing, as well as in qualitative data analysis.

• Other courses working with CEDO include a recently created Community-Based Research course that will work with CEDO and several other community partners interested in participating in community-based research; a Public Administration graduate course on Community Economic Development; and students from the Introduction to the Non-Profit Field course who worked with various CEDO programs, including the Restorative Justice Panel.

3. Organization, Place and/or Common Interest Partnerships

Partnerships can have different organizing structures. Some partnerships focus on the varied activities of an individual *organization*, like a local school, with students assisting in different classrooms (see Bowdoin-Ararat High School partnership above); some partnerships focus on an organization, or a set of organizations, that are linked by their connection to a particular *place*, like a neighborhood or region (see UVM-CEDO partnership above); and some partnerships focus on a *common interest* that connects organizations from a variety of places, like those interested in supporting family farms. Here's an example of this latter form of partnership.

Richard Schramm, University of Vermont

The *UVM Food, Farms and Schools Partnership* began in 2002 when a local parent with a child in the public school system asked me to help her figure out how to get more local foods into the school system. Since that time I have taught four different classes (one twice) where students have done service-learning projects related to linking local farms and local schools. The earlier courses were department based; the last course is crossed listed with four departments throughout the School of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Over this time I have worked with a wide variety of partners, with the particular subset involved any particular semester depending on the number of student teams, student interests and community partner needs. The organizations in this "umbrella" partnership are listed in Table 1. This partnership focused on a broad theme or interest (local food, farms and schools), not on a particular organization or place, and has generated a wide range of services and studies over the past five years, with many projects building on earlier work by students.

Table 1 – The Food, Farms and Schools Partnership

Community:

- Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont
- Food Works
- Shelburne Farms
- Edmunds Middle
- Edmunds Middle School
- Burlington School Food Service
- Brewster-Pierce Memorial School, Huntington
- Burlington Food Council
- Intervale Foundation
- Vermont Agency of Agriculture

University of Vermont:

- Community Development and Applied Economics
- Public Administration
- Nutrition and Food Science
- Plant and Soil Science
- Animal Science
- Center for Sustainable Agriculture
- Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning

All of the partnerships above involved few or many partners, working on a single or multiple projects, over a short or long period of time. Table 2 organizes these partnerships along these three lines.

Table 2

PROJECTS and PARTNERS	Few Partners	Multiple Partners
Single Project	A single project where, for example, students work on different aspects of a survey for an individual partnering organization	A single project where students work with different organizational partners on different aspects of the project. For example, developing a compendium of workforce development programs for a coalition of workforce organizations
	Short-term: The partnership ends after the project is completed (see University of Maine-Maine Center for Economic Policy Partnership above).	Short-term: The partnership ends after the project is completed
	Long-term: The partnership continues with, for example, the survey conducted every year (see UVM-Shelburne Farms PLACE Program on page 19 and Bowdoin College-Friends of Casco Bay Partnership above)	Long-term: The partnership continues with, for example, students working on a single coalition project each year
Multiple Projects	Students work on a variety of projects for a single organization. For example, working with different individuals or departments within a single agency	Students working on a variety of projects, with a variety of organizations. The partnering organizations can be independent or part of a coalition (partnering with a partnership—see UVM Impacts Project on page 13)
	Short-term: The partnership ends after the completion of the projects, perhaps with the organizational partner changing each year	Short-term: The partnership ends after the multiple projects are completed.
	Long-term: The partnership continues perhaps with different projects and departments each year (See UVM-CEDO Partnership above)	Long-term: The projects change over time but the set of organizations remain the same or largely the same. (See UVM Food, Farms and Schools Partnership above)

Characteristics of Successful Partnerships

Our focus is on *successful* service-learning partnerships, campus-community collaborations that have effectively and efficiently met the needs of the course, the community partner, and the service-learning partnership over several years.

The characteristics of "good" or "successful" partnerships are presented in Table 3, drawing on four studies of successful partnerships. These studies identified very similar characteristics and lent themselves to the

development of a composite picture of what a "good" partnership looks like. This composite picture is used to organize promising partnership practices as reported by those working in the field.

Table 3

Nye and Glickman (1995)	Nye and Schramm (1999)	Torres, Jan (ed) (2000)	Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, and Donohue (2003)	Composite Model
	A process of collaboration that embodies a shared philosophy of community development	Multi-dimensional, involving participation of multiple sectors that act to address a complex problem		Partnership should be a collaboration involving all major stakeholders
Comprehensive community vision	A shared underlying philosophy of community development	Founded on a shared vision and clearly articulated values	Share world view, agree on goals and strategies	Have a Shared, Comprehensive Philosophy, Mission and Goals
Balance expectations of stakeholders	Recognition and satisfaction of the mutual interests of all partners	Beneficial to all partnering institutions	Satisfy partner's needs	Mutuality and reciprocity of partnership benefits
	A working relationship among partners that overcomes power, cultural, racial, class, and economic differences	Composed of interpersonal relationships based on trust and mutual respect	Trust and mutual respect, share power, empathy and understanding,	Strong, open and effective working relationships among partners
Strong leadership that can articulate the mission and goals of the partnership to its stakeholders; Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability to changing conditions	Appropriate organization to best achieve the purposes of the partnership; balancing of advocacy, organizing and political roles of partner	Clearly organized, with dynamic leadership; Sustained by a "partnership process" for communication, decision-making, and the initiation of change; evaluated regularly with a focus on both methods and outcomes	Good communication, flexibility, evaluate	Well organized, strong leadership, planning, operating and evaluation systems in place
Long-term perspective; organization and institution building	Long-term and patient relationships that have institutional continuity; institutional commitment and leadership involvement of all partners	Integrated into the mission and support systems of the part-nering institutions	Enhance capacity, adopt long-range social change perspective	Long-term, patient relationship, built into the mission and support systems of the partnering organizations

Information and Lessons from Practitioners

With a sense of successful partnerships in mind, the next question is how these partnerships were created, operated and sustained. Individuals who have been actively engaged in partnership building and operation helped provide answers to this question. This handbook drew on multiple sources for this data on promising practices.

First, a Web-based survey of 100 campus and community individuals involved in service-learning partnerships in New Hampshire, Maine and Vermont resulted in 31 responses used in this handbook. The survey questions are in Appendix ii.

Second, two other sets of interviews both at the University of Vermont contributed information on promising practices. The first was five interviews (three campus and two community partners from three separate partnerships) carried out by David Harker and Carrie Williams Howe in the Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning; and the second was ten faculty interviews at the Rubenstein School of Natural Resources and the Environment conducted by Katherine Westdijk, a graduate student and partnership coordinator in that School. These interviews provided quotes for several individuals already surveyed and for one additional faculty member.

Third, the author's experience at UVM with four different service-learning courses, many individual community partners, and three different university-community partnerships informed this handbook.

Finally, the handbook draws on some of the literature on partnership practices where relevant.

This data base includes material from 33 individuals (including the author), representing 27 faculty and staff but only 6 community partners, reflecting a common difficulty in obtaining community partner survey and interview data. To partially compensate for this, the handbook incorporates material from several studies of community partner concerns and practices.[7]



Students work in the lab at Vermont Technical College.



Saint Michael's College has a strong partnership with the Edmundite run St. Peter Claver Parish in New Orleans. Here, a SMC student works on demolition in New Orleans.

Organization of Promising Practices

This handbook organizes all of this survey and interview data into broad categories of practices, and connects these practices to the characteristics of "good" partnerships that are described in Table 3 above. The data is also organized into three over-lapping stages—creating, running and sustaining partnerships—that provide a framework for the main sections of this handbook (see Table 4).

[7] Leiderman et al (2003) and Sandy and Holland (2006).

Table 4

Elements of Partnership Development	Characteristics of "Good" Partnerships	Lessons from Practitioners on How to Achieve These Characteristics of "Good" Partnerships
Creating the Partnership	Good Partners	Start by looking to existing partnerships
	An Effective Collaborative	Partners need to have common interests, and complementary skills and resources.
		The partnership needs broad representation, that includes all major stakeholders
		Partners need to have a commitment to the work and provide leadership
		Partners need to build the partnership together from the very beginning
	A Shared, Comprehensive Philosophy, Mission and Goals	Partnerships need a statement of purpose or mission
		Partners need to build a common understanding of their mission and goals
	Acknowledged and Promoted Mutuality of the Partnership	
	Strong Partnership Relationships	Relationship building should start early and not wait until the partnership is engaged in specific projects
		Partners should operate as equals, with equal participation in key partnership decisions
		Participation should occur with all types of decisions
		Transparency and honesty play a critical role
		Building relationships needs to be intentional and involve structures or processes
		Building relationships takes time
Running the Partnership	Roles, Responsibilities, Procedures and Understandings in Place	Project goals, workplans, roles and responsibilities need to be clear and agreed upon
		Partners need to have clear, shared and reasonable expectations
		Preparation for project work is essential
		Design and implement partnership activities with flexibility
		Have appropriate communication systems and information needed for decision-making
		Be sure that someone plays a "bridging" role
		Learn to work with different campus and community time lines
		And don't forget to build in project monitoring
	Appropriate Projects	Projects need to fit the interests, needs and constraints of all partners
		Projects need to be real, important and relevant
Sustaining the Partnership	Support for the overall partnership	
	Support for community partners	
	Support for the faculty	Provide SL teaching assistants and other support
		Provide educational support for faculty
	Regular feedback on the partnership	A helpful evaluation rubric

II. CREATING THE PARTNERSHIP

■ Finding Good Partners

When you begin to create a service-learning partnership, a good place to start is to look for existing campus-community partnerships.[9] These may be partnerships, for example, that exist to discuss campus-community affairs, carry out community-based research, oversee service-learning activities, or help with community service efforts. The essential benefit to those looking for partners is that the partnership already exists and partner relationships have been developed. A service-learning course can link with an entire partnership (see example below) or individuals and organizations from one or more of these partnerships.

Richard Schramm, University of Vermont, writes about a service-learning partnership that tied into an emerging partnership:

> The *UVM Impacts Project and Partnerships* grew out of the work of the UVM-Burlington Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) that operated from 1999–2003 before being absorbed into UVM's Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning. The project goal was to analyze UVM employment and purchasing expenditures (totaling $300 million) to determine their impact on the local/regional economy and to change policies and procedures to serve the local economy and UVM better.
>
> An annual service-learning course, UVM and the Local/Regional Economy, was established to carry out research, outreach, and evaluation for this project, with the course focusing on research in years one and two, outreach in year three and evaluation in year four. Students in the class essentially served as staff to an Employment Partnership and a Purchasing Partnership with each partnership including UVM offices and departments as well as local and state organizations. The partnerships set the agenda for student projects, provided resources to help their work, and reviewed their progress in regular presentation sessions.
>
> The students produced two research reports, helped implement 12 outreach projects, and conducted elements of the project evaluation.

Not all existing groups, however, may work as partners. As Therese Seibert, Keene State College, writes:

> I will no longer partner with committees comprised of members with different, in particular conflicting, goals. For example, Keene State students worked with a large committee that the mayor of Keene organized for the purpose of defining community goals. The committee included leaders from business, health care, environment, human services, education, and so forth. Our project consisted of conducting phone surveys that would tell the committee what Keene residents valued and how they would like to see Keene advance. The students and I often found ourselves in the middle of debates among committee members. What I realized after the project was over is that our expertise is in community-based research, not consensus building. What I learned more generally is to be mindful of our limitations. I also learned that the Community Research Center (see pages 37) most rewarding and successful partnerships were ones that are cultivated over time, and this simply can't happen when working with ad hoc committees.

[9] Strand et al (2003) provides a thorough discussion of finding partners drawing on existing partnerships or starting afresh. (pp. 43–49)

Personal relationships and experience working together are often critical in forming service-learning partnerships. As Susan Kasser, University of Vermont, puts it:

> The success of this particular partnership (working with Donna Diaz, Vermont Special Olympics) was founded on my existing relationship with Donna and that she had worked with multiple groups at multiple times, and knew how to work with people. Some other partnerships that I worked with…didn't work as well, and I think it's because there wasn't enough time to develop a truly collaborative relationship…some organizations don't necessarily collaborate, they just offer a service [e.g. internship placement]…others didn't have experience working with college students and their expectations were well beyond what the students were capable of.

Her partner, Donna Diaz, agreed on the importance of experience working together and added that a partner's understanding of the larger context is important. "Sue's understanding of Special Olympics philosophy [contributed to the success of the partnership]."

Partnerships can also be created from recommendations from others on campus or in the community, from campus and organizational directories, and/or from the data bases of campus or community organizations that support service-learning activities (see section on service-learning support systems on page 5).

Forming the Collaborative

With potential partners identified, the next step is putting the actual collaborative together. The ease with which this can be done, and the likelihood it will be successful, depends on a variety of factors. Here are some examples.

1. Partners need to have common interests and complementary skills and resources.

Peggy Burns and Tiffany Sargent, Middlebury College, Alliance for Civic Engagement (ACE), emphasize the importance of "formal connections of partners to one another's boards, committees, etc." to "help ensure the future of this collaboration." They illustrate these connections, and how they work together, in discussing their collaborative with People of Addison County Together (PACT) and the United Way of Addison County to form the *Addison County Anti-Poverty Partnership*. This collaborative began to meet regularly in 2003 to co-host a now annual Forum on Civic Engagement, as well as to conduct a variety of topical meetings, depending upon needs and targeted issues.

They write:

> Specifically, the executive director of PACT serves on the Advisory Board for the Alliance (ACE). Similarly, the director of the Alliance serves on the College's United Way Campaign Committee and has done so for several years. The United Way executive director has also served as a community partner in a series of service-learning course projects, providing additional depth. The directors of United Way and ACE also attend PACT board meetings.
>
> Because each organization has access to or represents a wide, yet different, cross-section of the community, collaboration fosters a value-added benefit. We have also begun to invite the local Chamber of Commerce to work with us as well. As needs arise, we meet to discuss possible ways to rally the community to address these needs, involving different people and organizations, depending

> upon the circumstances…We also strive to build upon our unique strengths and assets, assigning individual responsibilities, accordingly. At times there are funding issues, but again, we seem to be able to work through those in response to each individual situation.

Amy E. Stuart, Community College of Vermont and Emma Mulvaney Stanek, Peace and Justice Center, emphasized the importance of "shared local social and political interests" in the success of their partnership work. And Nancy Cathcart, Champlain College, captures a similar connection when she highlights how collaboratives have to be "natural alliances," where each person brings different but needed skills and knowledge to share with others.

And Joseph Larosa, Rutland (VT) Southwest Supervisory Union, shares what he feels good collaboration looks like:

> Willingness to collaborate, to be open, to take a risk. To truly help, it's one thing to say something and it's another thing to say something by putting it into action. Doing things without having to be asked. Creating a comfort zone: ideas can freely be brought up without worry of conflict. It shows the maturing relationship between the college and schools.

2. The partnership needs representation that includes all major stakeholders

For a collaborative to be successful it needs to include all those parties who have a major interest in the goals and activities of the partnership and will be impacted significantly by what the partnership does. This normally means including representatives of key university and community organizations that share a particular interest or concern. Sometimes a partnership will include organizations, like state agencies, that have an interest and can provide resources and/or perspective but are unlikely to be impacted by the partnership's actions.

Here's an example of partnership representation that goes even further:

Michelle Barber, Norwich University, describes a partnership program that goes beyond just linking organizations.

> I have found that there is absolutely no way to know what a community needs, what its history is, what its moods are, etc. by just having students, faculty, staff, and non-profit professionals involved in a service-learning program. Even if participants live in the local community, their priorities are usually first as a student or a professor or their allegiance is to their university or organization. By having Community Partners in our Program, we are able to gauge the climate of Northfield. They've helped us plug into networks that would have taken us years to even tap into. And they've provided a picture of the context in which we conduct service-learning projects.
>
> Community Partners are simply members of their community. What an amazing asset that is and yet so rare it is today to have them directly involved in partnership work.
>
> We started the Program [see box, next page] not fully knowing what we wanted out of these Community Partners. We were fully prepared to embrace whatever skills they brought to the table. That is the most enriching part of the whole program, actually! We knew that we had to invest in our Community Partners. So we offered trainings, materials, and professional development opportunities as much as we did to our faculty and students. They were welcome at any and all

meetings our program held and their opinions or contributions carried weight just as anyone else's did. It is so important to fully involve each individual in the Program, whether they're a freshman PE major, a tenured Ph.D., or an interested community member.

Norwich University Community Partner Program

When looking at our [partnership] composition in the spring of 2005, we had a nice complement of students, faculty members, community organizations, and 'friends' of the Program all involved in some way or another. However, we were missing a vital piece, a voice was not being heard in our Program. So …we started our Community Partner program. We advertised locally and hired Dick Brockway and Lisa DiLena, both of Northfield, based on their unique backgrounds, interest in NU and NUSL, and commitment to serving the community.

The purpose is to incorporate more community voice into the NUSL Program. By having Community Partners involved in the day-to-day operations, strategic planning, networking, and programming of the NUSL Program, we have modeled for our students, faculty, and community that there is great value in combining academic, student, and community life. As individuals, Dick and Lisa have brought abundant skills to the Program and provided a perspective on the community that is well-informed, long-standing, and unique.

In their six short months on the NUSL team, they already have had a great impact. Dick has helped us revamp our tracking forms, created a database for all of our data, and will be helping us institutionalize the data-gathering process. Lisa has helped us make some key community contacts, including with Central VT Adult Basic Education, expanded our on-campus contacts due to her networking, and has diligently attended other team meetings (Scholars and Consultants) to give us a more grassroots community perspective. Both are also assisting with our efforts at outreach and PR and in program design and implementation.

—Michelle Barber, Service-Learning Coordinator,
Norwich University Service-Learning Program

3. Partners need to have a commitment to the work and provide leadership

"Ownership" of the partnership by all partners is often mentioned as critical. With ownership often comes commitment, the investment of time and resources, and leadership from both sides of the partnership to ensure that mutual benefits emerge.

Emma Mulvaney Stanek, Peace and Justice Center, speaks to this need:

> Strong partners in each of the organizations in the partnership is key. Also enthusiasm in the work and to the concept of community service learning was very important. That keeps you going when things don't work out as you expect.

Joseph Larosa, Rutland (VT) Southwest Supervisory Union, writes about "investment":

> A partnership should be truly equal and organizationally should have people interested in "partnerships." *You want people who are invested*. In a true partnership people listen. It's not a one-way street. You need to recognize a common goal.

Ann Greenan-Naumann, University of Vermont, describes what happens without this "buy in" or "investment" by a partner:

> In terms of "buy in" to service learning partnerships, one important lesson that I learned is that it is key to have "buy in" at all levels of an organization. In one of my partnerships, the director of the non-profit agency was very enthusiastic and committed. However, she was not the person who my students would be interacting with on a daily basis. The individuals who would be doing this were clearly less enthused and committed. This meant that they were obligated, based on the director's commitment, but really not committed themselves. The result was frustration for almost everyone. Commitments were not kept, interactions with students and faculty were not optimal, and as a faculty person, I always felt that I was adding to the burdens of some of these folks. The lesson that I learned was that it is not enough to have buy in from the top. The people in the "trenches" of the day to day work of the organization must see the value of the commitment, and to have the resources in terms of time, energy, and focus to bring to it.
>
> A lack of buy in is more complex than it might first appear, particularly when one is in the middle of it. Despite my frustration with the poor follow up and non optimal student interactions, I could see that the agency itself did not have enough depth in staffing to carry out the commitment of the director. The partnership was just one more task on a very long "to do" list. My enthusiasm and the enthusiasm of the director of the organization were not enough by themselves. Our partnership ultimately dissolved (failed?) due to the lack of "buy in" by folks who were carrying out the mission of the organization on a day-to-day basis.

4. Partners need to build the partnership together from the very beginning.

The startup phase of partnerships is critical since the way partners work together from the beginning shapes their working relationship later on. Here are some examples of how partnership building and good working relations among partners can get off to a good start.

Richard Schramm, University of Vermont:

> When we brought the partners together in the Purchasing and Employment Partnerships of the *UVM Impacts Project* (see page 13), we effectively used a fishbowl method that was very powerful in getting the partners involved in the work of the partnership and with one another.
>
> The initial meeting of each partnership was the first week of the semester and had as its agenda developing a research agenda for the students in the service-learning course, UVM and the Local/Regional Economy. These students would act as "staff" to the partnership. After brief introductions of partners, faculty and students, all 12–15 partners met around a table in the middle of the room with the faculty and students seated around them (in fishbowl fashion) taking notes as appropriate

but not participating in the discussion. The meeting was two hours long, during which the partnership discussed their goals and developed a set of potential questions to be addressed by the students.

With this task and audience, and knowing that the students were their "staff" awaiting instructions, the partners got very serious very quickly and came up with a set of potential research questions in the time allotted. There was then time for discussion of all those attending to get to know one another, clarify research questions, etc. The partners then adjourned their meeting and left; the faculty and students remained to sort through the potential questions and agree upon the ones they had the most interest and skills to address. The following week the faculty and members of the partnership agreed on the final research agenda.

Over the semester, some of the partners would come to class and/or meet with student teams to share their knowledge, and at the end of the semester the student teams would report their findings to the full partnership. The initial fishbowl process, plus the meeting to receive the findings, proved very powerful in building the partnership and the relationships among partners.

Katherine Dauge-Roth, Bowdoin College writes of the importance of getting all parties of an emerging partnership away to a retreat. The partnership that emerged, and the projects they engaged in, are described on page 6.

As a department, we have been interested in thinking about integrating service learning earlier in our curriculum. Community-based activities have had a place in some upper-level courses for some time, but we had not yet attempted civic engagement activities at the intermediate level. The schools are a natural partner for a language, literature and culture department such as ours. Four department members and three Mt. Ararat high school teachers attended the Engaged Department Institute hosted by Maine and NH and VT Campus Compacts in June (2005). We were fortunate to attend with our partners and used the time to begin to develop ways in which our partnership might work. Being able to have this kind of discussion early on with our community partner was key in getting off to a good start and forging a cooperative relationship.



Community matchmaking event designed to bring community partners together with faculty and staff from the University of Vermont.



Faculty consultant Sue Taylor Fickett illustrates the importance of reciprocity in working with community partners.

■ Creating a Shared, Comprehensive Philosophy, Mission and Goals.

1. Partnerships need a statement of purpose or mission.

An important way to create the discussion and deliberation needed to ensure common goals and philosophy is to develop a formal Partnership Mission or Purpose statement together. This statement goes beyond the mission statements of individual partnering organizations to the purposes of the partnership itself. Here are a few examples of service-learning partnerships with clear statements of purpose:

Walter Poleman, University of Vermont, in writing about the *Place-Based Landscape Analysis and Community Education (PLACE) Program*, a Partnership of the University of Vermont and Shelburne Farms, provides this mission statement for the PLACE program:

> Our mission is to promote a sustainable relationship between communities and their local landscapers by engaging residents in exploring, understanding, honoring and celebrating the natural and cultural features that contribute to their town's character.

The specific purpose of the *PLACE Program* partnership is to provide

> (1) local residents with a forum for exploring and understanding the natural and cultural history of their town landscape. Working directly with local schools, town commissions, historical societies, and conservation organizations, PLACE staff members develop an integrated series of presentations, field trips, workshops, and printed materials designed to facilitate residents' understanding of the natural and cultural history of the local landscape.
>
> (2) graduate students being trained in landscape analysis with the opportunity to really put their knowledge to work. By linking them with real towns and engaged community members, they learn first hand about landscape ecology and human community dynamics.

Cathryn Field, Bowdoin College, describes the purpose of the *Bowdoin College-Friends of Casco Bay (FOCB) Partnership* as two-fold:

> to provide real-world scientific research experience to introductory level college students and to assist FOCB in data collection and interpretation efforts regarding water quality in Casco Bay.

She continues that to achieve this purpose "introductory level students conduct small-scale research projects, analyze the data they collected, and present the results to FOCB. The specific topics and goals of the research are built upon from year to year based on the previous year's findings."

Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Daniel Webster College, in discussing their partnership with a variety of school and community organizations (see box), describes their mission as follows:

> The main purpose of our partnership is explained in the Daniel Webster College Service-Learning Community Partnership Mission Statement: The mission of our partnership is to form a vital working relationship that is mutually beneficial in which resources are shared and needs are identified and met. We strive to promote student development intellectually, socially and personally through shared learning experiences to instill in all students a sense of their integral role in the community and their responsibility to help better that community.

Daniel Webster College and its Community Partners

Daniel Webster College (DWC) Community Partnership with Mt. Pleasant Elementary School, Birch Hill Elementary School, Amherst Street Elementary School, Broad Street Elementary School, Adult Learning Center, PAL, Boys and Girls Club of Nashua, 20th Century Afterschool Program, Soul Purpose Halfway House, Southern NH Services

We started working with Mt. Pleasant and Birch Hill schools in Nashua. Our initial partnership was focused on having EN 101 students at DWC act as writing coaches for elementary school students. This program was called 'Writing Across the Community.' We then expanded into having DWC students serve as math coaches in math classes as well.

Later we added other elementary schools to our partnership and also began working with the ESL program at the Adult Learning Center. With the addition of the social science major at DWC, which incorporates service-learning into many of the courses in the program, we added PAL, the Boys and Girls Club, the afterschool program and Southern NH Services.

The interest of faculty in the Computer Science Division and the Business Division has expanded our partnership base into Southern NH Services and Soul Purpose Halfway House. Most of the activities of the partnership are directed toward tutoring and mentoring youth related programs. We also provide some assistance to non-profits in the area of computer assistance and marketing projects.

—Kathleen Fitzpatrick,
Director of Experiential Education, Daniel Webster College

2. Partners need to build a common understanding of their mission and goals.

Vicky Smith, King Street Youth Center, stresses the importance of developing common goals and ensuring mutuality of partnership benefits:

> I would say without hesitation, one of the most important practices, if you will, is a through discussion of the goals and objectives of each partner (understanding of mission and philosophy)… Before making any commitment on our part at King Street…[my partner] and I met to discuss possibilities and ideas. It was imperative for me to get the buy in of the staff at King Street. Community based organizations must evaluate the short-term and long term needs of the agency. The concept of mutuality can not be stressed enough.

Joseph Larosa, Rutland (VT) Southwest Supervisory Union, writes that good partnerships need:

> Common goals, mission statement, meet frequently and review. Make sure to put all cards on the table. If there is an issue, it needs to be raised. The word "partnership" means two or more people have equal participation and recognize reciprocity.

Walter Poleman, University of Vermont, provides a useful way that partners can come together to more fully understand and to take ownership of the mission or goals of their partnership:

> We worked hard as a group to develop a Logic Model for the program. It was a tedious wordsmithing process at times, but in the end, it ensured the partners shared common goals and that we understood each others needs.

The logic model (sometimes referred to as a logit model) that this partnership completed together is shown in Appendix iii. Completing this model required considerable thought and partner agreement about the resources to be used in the partnership (inputs), the activities to be carried out, the immediate results to be provided like workshops and presentations (outputs), and the expected short, medium and long-term outcomes (impacts) that indicate real progress towards the goals of the partnership. Partners also have to think about why this approach will work; what is the theory that lies behind their efforts. This important and difficult conversation can move the partners to the common goals and understandings needed to build a strong partnership.

■ Acknowledging and Promoting the Mutuality of the Partnership

To be successful, partnerships must serve the interests of all partners. There must be mutuality and reciprocity. This is true in the short-run but especially critical in building long-run partnerships (see Section IV). And to achieve this mutuality, "All parties need to be clear about needs…don't assume that you understand each others needs," writes Marli Rupe, Poultney-Mettowee Natural Resources Conservation District.

Therese Seibert, Keene State College (KSC), describes some of the ways she and her community partners support one another:

> We support each other in various capacities. Our partnerships go beyond working on specific projects. We really are there for each other whenever we can be of assistance. Kenneth Jue [Monadnock Family Services, MFS] has not only served on the Community Research Center Advisory Board; he is also a key member of KSC's Service-Learning Leadership Team and was instrumental in promoting service-learning at KSC. He recently wrote a letter to the editor of *The Keene Sentinel* responding to another person's previous letter lamenting the lack of student involvement in the community. Ken set this person straight, highlighting the many ways MFS has benefited from the work of KSC students in general and the CRC in particular. At the same time, my work with MFS extends beyond working on service-learning projects. I have also worked with its Quality Control Division, teaching its staff how to enter and analyze data with the statistical software SPSS. I participate in their fundraising activities and have written letters on their behalf. Given that I am a member of the YMCA Board, I work even more closely with the YMCA [another community partner] supporting it in many ways including fundraising, member recruitment, program development, and so forth.

Debra Nitschke-Shaw, New England College, stressed this mutuality when discussing her work with a variety of school partnerships in Henniker and Kearsage, NH. "We each had needs and we decided to work together to meet those needs," and "to support the mission and vision of the other and to enable all partners to be successful in their endeavors." She describes the various ways this reciprocity and mutuality is evident in these partnerships:

> Students are provided from the college to meet critical needs [in the public schools]; schools accept students to work with their K–12 students; professional development is offered to individuals in the K–12 schools; faculty in the K–12 schools co-teach or teach at the college. Basically we work to meet the needs as they are identified by the partnership… [There is] synergy between the college and the K–12 schools - constantly being aware of what the other has as needs and resources and how best to use them so that all can meet with success.

Susan B. Martin, Bates College, describes a partnership, *Bates College-Lewiston High School Aspirations Program* where the mutuality of goals and activities is highlighted. Her role is to "identify needs from the perspectives of both [partnering] institutions and broker connections. I work with everyone involved to design, implement, and evaluate activities [and to]…help access resources for the work."

She writes:

> This is a long standing relationship that began over 20 years ago when Bates College agreed to allow qualified high school seniors to access courses at the college level during their senior year.
>
> The purposes are two fold: 1) support the high school in increasing the number of students who apply to, matriculate, and complete post-secondary education; 2) provide meaningful opportunities for college students, staff, and faculty to participate in academic and volunteer work.
>
> [The activities reflect this reciprocity]: 1) Research on the impact of the school's work; 2) Providing opportunities for high school students to experience activities on the college campus; 3) College students support of the 'aspirations lab'; 4) Tutoring for non-native English speakers who are required to take the TOEFL; 5) Early college access for qualified high school seniors and 6) Other activities as needed.
>
> The most exciting aspect of this partnership is its breath and depth. We have faculty and students engaged in quality research and we have volunteers who 'merely' help for a few hours. The multiple ways to access the work allow all partners to benefit.

Sarah Bedingfield, New Hampshire Community Technical College, describes the mutuality that lies beneath the *College Connections: NHCTC—Exeter Adult Education and Dover Adult Learning Partnership*:

> We had worked together in years past around the needs of individual students. We decided to get together to form a more formal partnership in support of student aspirations towards higher education.
>
> The main purpose of our partnership is to promote higher education among adult education graduates and develop a 'readiness' for this experience.
>
> The main activities are: (1) assessment via ACCUPLACER, Learning Styles, and Pre/Post Aspirations Survey; (2) College Readiness via a one credit College Success course that is embedded within a high school elective as well as software tutorial in math and English; and (3) mentoring by college students enrolled in a leadership course (service-learning component).



A Saint Michael's College student and an elder dance at the community "Senior Prom." Every year Saint Michael's College sends invitations to the Senior Prom to area nursing homes and senior citizen organizations.

A service-learning partnership was created to support the college connection partnership. This was done through a college credit course (Psychology120: Leadership Development). The college students enrolled in this course were assigned as 'mentors' for the College Connections project. *It was a win-win situation for both groups*, the college students and adult education students. The college students developed some critical awareness and leadership skills and the adult education students formed partnerships with individuals that could instrumentally help shape their expectations of college and self-image.

Nancy Cathcart, Champlain College, describes a unique program that brings a non-profit organization, NeighborKeepers, into the College itself. She writes:

> NeighborKeepers is a new non-profit organization founded by social entrepreneur Hal Colston (in partnership with the Mercy Connections, Sisters of Mercy) to end poverty one family at a time. (see box)
>
> Hal and I were meeting in the very early stages of his new venture regarding how some Champlain students could better serve his idea. In the course of that meeting we recognized three or four overlapping interests among programs and faculty at Champlain College. We brought the idea to then Business Division Chair, Lynne Ballard and she approved an office for Hal on campus to build alliances among faculty and students to help him attain his mission. In just two years four faculty and service-learning courses have served Hal's research and development needs.
>
> The main purpose of the partnership is to meet the research, development and program goals of the non-profit partner while intersecting those with the learning objectives of [service-learning] courses across a number of academic divisions. *It has been a truly reciprocal relationship*. Hal Colston now is adjunct faculty teaching sections of a required community service course.

NeighborKeepers Program (from Web site)

NeighborKeepers brings together allies, volunteers providing mentoring and coaching support, and families in poverty to be in relationship cross-culturally for an 18-month journey. The relationship will be founded on mutual respect, trust and understanding. Families make new connections with allies that share in their desires and interests. Impoverished families create new support systems and relationships/role models for leading themselves into the middle class. Cross-cultural relationships with allies will allow the family in poverty to create its own vision for its transformation into the middles class. The allies will be matched to provide the resource-building needs of the family and to have a personal relationship with the family based on trust.

NeighborKeepers will be using a model that has created much success in Iowa. The name of this model is called Circles of Support (CoS). In its start up year 20 families will be referred to the CoS program from the portal organizations and agencies that provide services to families in poverty. These twenty families will come from communities in Chittenden County. NeighborKeepers will provide training to teach about the unspoken rules of social class. Allies will partner with their families at a weekly meeting that will be a key part of the program. The weekly meetings include a community dinner and exercises for community building. Volunteers from the community will present important topics at the weekly meeting to give knowledge and understanding for families to improve their lives. Families and their allies will make plans for achieving the families' goals and review how things are going to achieve these goals. This model builds peer support for low-income families who dialogue and share their goals with one another. It is expected that family participants and allies will work together for 18 months with the likelihood of lasting relationships developing from CoS.

NeighborKeepers is in partnership with Champlain College to establish and deliver Circles of Support to the Burlington community. Circles of Support is a high-impact strategy that befriends people in poverty and allies, creating the necessary support systems for families to achieve their goals for self-sufficiency. The service learning philosophy of Champlain College and its entrepreneurial spirit is an excellent match for NeighborKeepers. Through a Memorandum of Understanding, Champlain College and NeighborKeepers have combined their energy and resources for the common good of the Burlington community.

And Joseph Larosa, Rutland (VT) Southwest Supervisory Union, highlights the mutual goals and benefits from their partnership with Green Mountain College (GMC):

> My goals are to improve the Poultney High School curriculum by offering college courses that that they [the high school] can't offer. The partnership also gives us access to their equipment such as labs. The mentor piece is also important at both the high school and elementary school. The college has a positive impression on youngsters. GMC also brings in professional and technical support like equipment, consultations, etc. Green Mountain uses the high school as a "lab"; the college students are able to gain experience. *It goes both ways, and it should.* Also, it's a support for not just students but staff. GMC staff can help our staff in preparing lessons and preparing students.

Building Partnership Relationships

Building a partnership is about shared mission and goals, and mutuality and reciprocity, but it's also very much about building relationships among people. As Nancy Cathart, Champlain College, writes: The key to partnership success is "Relationships, relationships, relationships." And, according to Therese Seibert, Keene State College:

> Building community partnerships means more than supervising student projects. It means being actively involved in the community. It means genuinely caring about the success of your partners and their role in advancing the community. It means inviting partners to be actively involved in your institution; they have so much to offer. It means working together to build a stronger community.

There are many aspects to relationship building, and survey and interview responders addressed some key ones.

1. Relationship building should start early and not wait until the partnership is engaged in specific projects.

Katherine Dauge-Roth, Bowdoin College, writes:

> The fact that we were able to design our partnership together from the beginning, working as a team of teachers, was key to the success of the programs we were able to put into place this past year. I highly recommend early and careful joint planning of service-learning activities.

Therese Seibert, Keene State College, expands on this idea:

> The most important practice contributing to the success of the Community Research Center (see page 37) has been involving partners from the beginning and seeking their advice as the CRC developed. Community partners helped me develop the CRC. Indeed, they were really the ones how crafted its mission statement. This is not surprising since this is what they do. I relied on their expertise when I founded the CRC, which meant stepping out the academic world into the real world of community engagement. Having community partners there to navigate this new world was pivotal to the CRC's success.[10]

2. Partners should operate as equals, with equal participation in key partnership decisions.[11]

Susan B. Martin, Bates College, writes that:

> This partnership (*Bates College-Lewiston High School Aspirations Program*, see page 22) has been built on careful relationship building based on mutual respect. All participants equally participate in planning and evaluation and maintain the right and responsibility to approve or veto any ideas. The long term success of the partnership is more important than the individual activities.

[10] See Strand et al (2003), pp. 50–54 about the importance of sharing power and resources.
[11] See Strand et al (2003), pp. 61–64, for a discussion of the importance of flexibility.

Vicky Smith, King Street Youth Center, highlights this equality further writing that "There was a need to be candid, reflective and establish a sense that no one was the expert—we were all learning together."

3. Participation should occur with all types of decisions.

Participation in planning is the most obvious but participation in other activities, like evaluation, can serve equally well in building strong partner relationships. Susan Martin, Bates College, writes that she and her partners engaged "in frequent and ongoing formative and summative assessment using a variety of approaches and frequent personal contact" as a way of building better relations and strengthening the partnership.

Walter Poleman has already been quoted on the value of shared participation in doing a logic analysis as a good partnership building method (see page 21). He also writes that "We worked with an external evaluator, and found the experience to be extremely valuable. Having an external and objective consultant examining our process really helped us iron out rough spots, and solidify our activities and objectives."

4. Transparency and honesty play a critical role.

For Nancy Cathcart, Champlain College, successful relationships are served by "Honest, open, frequent communication… [and] one-on-one contact." Communication practices are discussed below (see pages 30–31).

5. Building relationships needs to be intentional and involve structures or processes designed specifically to strengthen working relationships.

Sarah Bedingfield, New Hampshire Community Technical College, writes about an approach that engaged all partners in planning and coordination:

> One specific practice that helped us is that we met as a team (over breakfast) once a month and during this time we did several things: (1) reviewed our activities and timeline, (2) coordinated who would do what and when, and (3) reviewed progress to date and made adjustments when necessary. There were so many different elements to this partnership that it was critical that everyone was on board, operating from the same plan. This planning time is essential to the success of the project.



The New England Culinary Institute partners with the Montpelier Food Pantry.

6. Building relationships takes time.

Susan Martin, Bates College, writes that "this is difficult, time intensive work. Relationships build slowly and must be honored. Changing priorities of each institution must be discussed and considered in planning."

And sometimes relationships need to end. As Therese Seibert, Keen State College, writes:

> It is fine not to renew projects with partners who see students as working for them rather than with them, especially after repeated attempts to build collaborative relationships. In my experience, these partners are few and far between, but they frustrate and demoralize students. Equally serious, they obstruct student learning. And they contradict the important goal of students learning how to develop democratic partnerships based on mutual respect, open communication, and reciprocity.

And, of course, community partners need to make the same judgments about their campus partners as well.



Sterling College students providing various nutritional snacks for local elementary students to sample.

III. RUNNING THE PARTNERSHIP

Partnerships exist, of course, to get things done. Our surveys and interviews uncovered a variety of useful insights on implementation process and projects.

■ Establishing Needed Roles, Responsibilities, Procedures and Understandings

1. Project goals, workplans, roles and responsibilities need to be clear and agreed upon

Implementation requires a clear and comprehensive set of project activities.

Vicky Smith, King Street Youth Center, stresses the importance of:

> the establishment of agreed upon goals and timelines…Once an idea is firmed up, there must be an ongoing discussion about how to implement the actual project—roles, responsibilities and timelines. Is there a concrete plan? The clearer the better.

This is echoed in a statement by Michelle Barber of Norwich University:

> Since the program is new, the participants and the service-learning staff members should sit down and hammer out a plan and goals and a timeframe. If this isn't done, then a lot of other problems can creep in, like the community partners not feeling like they know any faculty, for example.

2. Partners need to have clear, shared and reasonable expectations

Several respondents wrote about the need to set reasonable expectations for project work. As Vicky Smith writes, "It is helpful to not take on too much. Sometimes more is less!"

Joseph Bandy of Bowdoin College writes:

> I have had to take more of an organizational role with the projects than my partners, which I expect. But sometimes my partners have voiced an interest in assisting students that they cannot feasibly meet given their schedules and tasks. It is important to have all expectations clarified early in the project for all involved, and to have a clear work plan for students and partners to follow.

And according to others, these reasonable expectations include cutting community partner staff and students "some slack." Kathy Fox, University of Vermont writes:

> Don't be too demanding; don't expect gratitude; and keep expectations modest…
> [Don't rely] too much on staff for assistance since they have daily program needs to attend to.

Emma Mulvaney Stanek, Peace and Justice Center, offers this lesson regarding students:

> We learned that some students will not complete the CSL requirement as expected. This can impact our non-profit's work because we depend on the work hours by these volunteers. We learned to build in some space for students not to show up…

Juliana Acheson, University of Maine at Farmington, adds another dimension:

> The most important factor was that we all trusted students to do professional work, but also allowed for them to be 'students,' make mistakes, learn from the mistakes, etc.

That is echoed by Kathy Fox, University of Vermont, who argues that we should "let students take the lead in figuring stuff out as we go (makes for good job skills...)."

3. Preparation for project work is essential.

Preparation for community work is essential for both sides of the partnership. Here are some comments regarding student preparation.

Joseph Bandy, Bowdoin College, writes:

> Students do best at learning and service when they are prepared to understand the social context of the service they provide. This requires an emphasis on academic preparation before students fully participate in service tasks, especially if it involves logistically, intellectually, or ethically challenging work.

Vicky Smith, King Street Youth Center, adds:

> Dr. Fox's [her university partner] guiding of her students in this process was evident from the start. The students were well prepared, respectful and eager learners. The established goals were mutually beneficial.

Maureen Capman, Poultney (VT) High School, stresses that "planning and meeting [are] key. I met with the students twice before they came into the class and gave their lecture."

4. Design and implement partnership activities with flexibility[12]

Community service-learning partnership work is often messy—unexpected events change the landscape, community partners take new jobs, students drop out of classes and leave their teams short-handed, appointments are forgotten—so that all partners need to be able to adjust to these occasions.

[12] See Strand et al (2003) pp. 61–64 for a discussion of flexibility.

Vicky Smith, King Street Youth Center, writes:

> Perhaps flexibility is the most important lesson. [We] expected this from the onset. It is helpful to view the project as an organic process…ongoing 'tweaking' will be a part of the process.

And Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Daniel Webster College, agrees, writing that:

> Understanding that there has to be flexibility on both sides of the partnership is another important lesson.

Flexibility may mean bringing in partners in the middle of a project. Therese Seibert, Keene State College, writes:

> The Community Research Center (see page 37) conducted a comprehensive community needs assessment for Southwestern Community Services (SCS) in 2002. The project turned out to be more than the SCS and the CRC could handle. Instead of letting go of the project, we approached Monadnock United Way (MUW) to help us since the results would also benefit them. MUW did not hesitate to assist us, providing valuable support that allowed the CRC to produce a report in 2003 that served both agencies well.

5. Have appropriate communication and information needed for decision-making[13]

Good communication seems like "motherhood" with this concern on the top of many practitioners' lists.

Sue Fickett, St. Joseph's College, in writing about their Nursing Department's partnership with Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church, says:

> Make sure that everyone stays informed and is aware of the unique needs of the church congregation as well as the developmental and educational needs of 21–22 year old nursing students.

Vicky Smith, King Street Youth Center, writes that:

> The communication was key for me as our partnership developed. [We] were in constant contact. There was a need to be candid, reflective and establish a sense that no one was the expert—we were all learning together.

But her partner at UVM, Kathy Fox, adds a qualifying statement: "Remain in consistent but not incessant communication…"



It doesn't seem complete if the "I" and the "Y" are missing from "COMMUNITY."

[13] See Strand et al (2003) pp. 54–59 for a discussion of effective communication

Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Daniel Webster College, writes about the importance of communication and ways to improve it:

> Communication with our partners and responding to the needs that they have for their organizations has been vital to the success of our projects… Regular communication and making sure that all participants have the means to contact each other is a crucial lesson for the success of the partnership. However, communication is the key lesson.
>
> Providing students with a webpage of information about school schedules, phone #'s of their community sites etc. are helpful. I hand out sheets with all the necessary info, but it often gets lost. The other helpful form is a Service-Learning Documentation Sheet in which students can list the day, time and activity they engaged in at their community site. This can be signed by the supervisor for verification and it helps the students keep track of their participation.

Karrie Kalich, Keene State College, tells of enhancing communication by "Developing a health-based Web site for the In-Shape Program…[with] the Web site project an interdisciplinary project—I team with a Computer Science Web design instructor."

Sarah Bedingfield, NH Community Technical College, stresses the need for different, overlapping forms of communication:

> With respect to the actual service-learning component, it is important for the mentors to establish multiple modes of communication with their mentees (not just face-to-face) and allow for some individual conferencing time in addition to group activities. Our mentors did not have enough time with the adult education students and more time needs to somehow be built into the partnership, even if it is electronically or via TVC which would be a great learning opportunity for all students.

6. Be sure that someone plays a "bridging" role

Many responding pointed out the importance of someone linking the campus and the community, a bridging person, a liaison, an interpreter or translator who helps partners understand and work with one another.

Cathryn Field, Bowdoin College, describes this role well:

> I serve as the liaison between the partner and the students. I teach students the skills they need to conduct their projects and oversee their efforts in the field. I connect with and contact the partners on a regular basis throughout the year to keep ideas and information flowing between our department and their organization.

Nancy Cathcart, Champlain College, refers to the role as "matchmaker." And NH Community Technical College's Sarah Bedingfield's role as administrator involves some aspects of bridging. She writes: "My role is an administrator for this partnership: I monitor the budget, meet with the partners as a team, keep track of activities, complete reports, administer some of the assessments and provide end of project feedback."

For other examples of service-learning coordinators who play this bridging role, see the Sustaining Partnerships section below.

7. Working with different campus and community time lines

One of the most common difficulties faced by campus-community partnerships is working with different academic and community organization timelines. Here are a few ways different partnerships have addressed this concern.

Holly Lasagna, Bates College, writes of sustaining momentum [and continuity] of the work with partners:

> This can be done by using community work study students, volunteers, thesis students and fellowships during the academic year as well as during the summer so that when there is not course based service-learning during a semester that will be working with the museum, the work [still] continues.

Cathryn Field, in writing about Bowdoin College's Partnership with Friends of Casco Bay (see page 19), emphasizes the importance of communication in working out differences in the time schedules of different partners.

> Essentially, I think we have excellent communication. Although this course is only taught once a year, we also try to fit in other projects with FOCB in upper level courses or summer internships [to provide year-round support]. The effort is a true collaboration.

8. And don't forget to build in project monitoring

Keeping on top of service-learning projects is critical.

Karrie Kalich, Keene State, writes:

> I am able to closely monitor the implementation of the cooking classes and help ensure the success—it is key that I monitor the student/client interactions closely.

Such monitoring often involves developing and checking on workplans, timelines, progress reports, and draft reports or other deliverables. This often requires close cooperation between campus and community partners involved with a project.

■ Agreeing on Appropriate Projects[14]

The choice of partnership projects is critical. The activities of the partnership need to produce good results for the partners and their constituencies, and build good working relationships among partners to strengthen the partnership.

[14] A service-learning "project" is defined here to mean a specific set of tasks to be carried out with or without a final product. Thus a project might be a written or phone survey, a study to be conducted, or a set of services to be provided. Whatever the project, it would be carried out within the philosophy of service-learning.

1. Projects need to fit the interests, needs and constraints of all partners

The matter of fit is critical. As Kathy Fox, University of Vermont, writes of the *UVM Sociology Department-Burlington King Street Youth Program Partnership*:

> I chose an activity that the agency needed that made sense for my course goals. Those things need to match up well. …It worked … it happened to be a good fit for their needs and my requirements.

She goes on to discuss how this fit is achieved:

> I contacted the program director and asked what projects she needed or would like to have completed by a senior level sociology class, to serve the agency in its need to document outcome success and to teach applied sociology to my students.
>
> King Street needs to document success in order to satisfy United Way's evaluation requirements, yet their staff does not have expertise in doing evaluation research [nor the time]. My students interview the kids at the youth center about what they like and don't like about the program. We analyze the data and present it in a report for the staff and board of directors. The data are also used by the staff to improve programs, and used by the United Way as documentation to secure funding. I arrange interviews, solve problems as we go, fix things that did not work last time, etc.
>
> My students learn to do evaluation research, learn about youth centers (and non profits generally) while providing this service. I think it is mutually beneficial to students and the agency, perhaps even in equal amounts.

The matter of fit applies to the college students and the community group they are working with. This is most apparent when college students work with K–12 students. As Maureen Capman, Poultney (VT) High School, writes about the Women's Studies High School Outreach Project partnership with Green Mountain College:

> I wanted my Senior Seminar students to gain some knowledge on what to expect when they transition from high school to college. I wanted the students to be aware that there is a difference between what they anticipate versus the reality of college life…Overall my students had exposure to great role models. They learned more about what they can expect from college and that they have to keep an open mind when they go off to school…The college has a level of diversity that the high school doesn't and I think our students should be exposed to that. The college can help the high school students realize the difference in maturity levels and gain a better understanding of responsibilities.

2. Projects need to be real, important, and relevant

A successful project requires that it be of importance to all partners. This importance is a key motivator for students who consistently report that feeling they were doing worthwhile work greatly enhanced their effort and learning. And its importance for the community partners guarantees that they will give the project their attention.



Maine College of Art students sew unique clothing to sell at an event called "Informal Attire." They raised funds for "Dress for Success" which gives women returning to work appropriate clothing for interviews.

Amy Stuart, Community College of Vermont (CCV), comments that her community partner's

> livable wage workshops speak to most CCV students' real life experiences. As such, she offers people who've lived off minimum wage jobs an opportunity for greater awareness of the dynamics that influence wages and therefore greater understanding about how to discuss the issue. In addition, she identifies avenues students may travel to participate in public debate and policy change.
>
> Notwithstanding the energy, effort and effervescence of the workshop leader, the real link, the obvious connection between the relevance of this issue to the CCV student population, is the single most critical element of our work. The practice we engaged in required diligence in voicing this natural match between educating and energizing CCV students and raising awareness about the livable wage campaign.

Her community partner, Emma Mulvaney-Stanek, Peace and Justice Center, also writes:

> Exposing CCV students to an activist organization and empowering them with experience and knowledge on how to make change—especially with economic issues such as livable wage—provides a very valuable learning experience. Community involvement, civic engagement, and volunteer service to non-profits are also important elements of student learning.

Julianna Acheson, University of Maine at Farmington:

> Make sure the students meet the partner. Make sure there is a face to go with the project—this makes a huge amount of difference for anything requested that doesn't make immediate sense to the students. If they have met the partners and seen how serious they are about their jobs, the students take the work more seriously and are more respectful to specific requests…
>
> This partnership allowed my students to put methods into practice, something that would have made far less sense to them without this real world application. They took their work much more seriously as a result of working with our partner and the importance of the report.

Karrie Kalich, Keene State College, discusses how project choices can play a bridging role. One of her project—providing healthy cooking classes for individuals with disabilities to increase their independence and improve their health—

> has helped to eliminate barriers between the college students and individuals with disabilities. Also this project has contributed so positively to the students' development of counseling skills. We host an introduction evening that is key to reducing anxieties experienced by both the college students and the cooking class participants.

Similarly service-learning projects can help demystify the "other's" interests and motivations. Sarah Bedingfield, NH Community Technical College, writes:

> Partnerships between adult education and community colleges provide a great opportunity to reach another population that might not otherwise access higher education. One thing we learned is to not assume that these students are not interested in college or perceive themselves as not 'worthy' of college; in most cases they don't have the tools (or home support) to make things happen. This is where a partnership can be really effective.

Holly Lasagna, Bates College, emphasizes the longer term benefits to students of being involved in important work:

> Students not only become citizens of the community, they come to understand the vital importance of the work they are doing and how that work will be evident years from now.



Ita Meno from the Center for Community and Neighborhoods keynotes at the Statewide Poverty Simulation in Vermont in 2007.

IV. SUSTAINING THE PARTNERSHIP[15]

Susan Dorn of Bowdoin College writes about the importance of building longer-term partnerships:

> The primary purpose…is to develop sustainable, long-term partnerships between Bowdoin and local organizations. This could be manifest in threads of projects being woven through one organization over several years, or one project taking on a life of its own, being woven through different organizations meeting different needs at different times. It could mean partners working effectively with faculty on course-based projects for a semester at the same time as they host student-led service groups with consistent volunteers over the course of a year. Or, it could mean connecting interested staff and faculty members with expertise to work on agencies' missions in their personal time.

Cathryn Field, Bowdoin College, in discussing their partnership with Friends of Casco Bay (see page 19), describes the basis for building this long-term relationship:

> Friends of Casco Bay (FOCB) has turned out to be a wonderful partner because they have a very open-ended research question in mind. If you are looking to build a long-term relationship, you need to either have a very good fit with the class and many projects to work on in the future, or an open-ended project that can continue on in many forms. Our shorter-term partners have generally had a single, very specific need and we have not continued working with them. With long-term partners, many of the logistics and expectations are worked out ahead of time, saving us and the partners time and effort. Everything runs more smoothly.



Maine College of Art notes the importance for Celebration and Listening in their plans for Libbeytown's neighborhood renewal.

[15] Strand et al (2003) provides examples of practices that sustain partnerships. See pp. 64–70.

Supporting the Overall Partnership

Organizational structures may be needed to institutionalize service-learning and partnership building. Therese Seibert, Keene State College, describes a structure that has provided an excellent framework for carrying out community-based research service-learning, the Community Research Center:

> [I established the Community Research Center (CRC) to carry out community based-research, which I define as a type of service-learning]. Since founding the CRC in 2000, students and I have worked with at least 20 different community partners. Simply working on a project with an agency, however, is not the same as cultivating a sustainable relationship that stands the test of time. More recently, the CRC has concentrated on projects with agencies that we have a long standing relationship with such as Monadnock Family Services (MFS), Keene YMCA, Cedarcrest Foundation, SAU-29—Keene School District, and Monadnock Developmental Services.
>
> My primary role is to sustain these relationships as students rotate in and out of the CRC, which is a good thing. We want students to graduate and hopefully continue community work long after they leave KSC. My secondary role is to supervise students, which is a balancing act between fostering student ownership and making sure that students work with partners in a professional, respectful manner. An advantage of working with partners over time is that we have developed relationships based on mutual trust. I trust them to advance student learning as much as they trust me to make sure that students have the capacity to produce a quality report. Effective partnerships mean that partners understand what service-learning is and their role in the project. They value student work, and at the same time, have no qualms about contacting me with questions or concerns.

Holly Lasagna, Bates College, discusses the importance of the Harward Center and the organizational support it provides for partnerships. Using the *Bates College Harward Center—Museum LA Partnership* (see box) as an example, she writes:

> The Harward Center develops, coordinates and supports the relationship between Bates College faculty, staff and students and the Museum LA community. The Center also provides ongoing, sustained support in the form of volunteer, work study and service-learning students and funds to support this work.
>
> By receiving a Maine Campus Compact Community Partnership grant, we have been able to develop the work with Museum LA in a pro active, well thought out way. This allows us to create a true partnership, where there is real teaching and learning by both Bates College and Museum LA. We support the partnership with faculty, student and staff time as well as with actual funds through various grants and student and faculty fellowships. Bates faculty and students become true citizens of this community through the prolonged, rich interaction with retired mill workers and their families. The nature of the project and the partnership will allow this work to continue for years to come.
>
> It is important to maintain momentum while sustaining the project. This can be done by using community work study student, volunteers, thesis students and fellowships during the academic year as well as during the summer so that when there is not course based service-learning during a semester that will be working with the museum, the work continues. It is also helpful to work with community partners to present the work being done and to apply jointly for funding to support the work…Choosing partnerships where the staff of the organization has the time to support the work. Providing real resources in terms of people but also funds to support the work.

Bates College Harward Center—Museum LA Partnership

A local amateur historian began collecting artifacts and materials from the recently closed Bates Mill complex in 2001. He contacted what was then the Center for Service-Learning at Bates College to ask about how students could help. For two years, students volunteered intermittently collecting materials and doing basic organization of records and files.

In 2003, Museum LA hired a part time director. The Director contacted the center at Bates College to ask if students could help with recording oral histories of retired mill workers. A Bates College student helped to set up a mill workers reunion, attended by over 200 retired workers. Names were gathered and since that time over 100 interviews have been conducted. Students have come from courses across the curriculum to participate including classes in the departments of American Cultural Studies, History, Anthropology and Sociology. Currently, Bates College is working with the museum, with the help of a Maine Campus Compact partnership grant, on transcription and transfer of tapes to digital format. In addition, summer interns are working on creating a traveling exhibit about the museum from the 19th century to the Depression.

The goals are to develop a partnership with a community organization that is sustained and engages students across departments, and to participate in culture making and preservation in the local community.

Partnership activities include oral history recording, transcribing and digitizing to create an accessible online database of historical information; creation of a traveling exhibit about the history of the mills; continued work on researching, organizing and creating a database of mill artifacts and records.

—Holly Lasagna, Program Coordinator,
The Harward Center for Community Partnerships, Bates College



Two teams from Maine (left: Lewiston – Auburn's branch of the University of Southern Maine and Empower Lewiston, right: Bates College and the Museum LA) sort out how to better their community by working toward a common goal.

Susan Dorn, Bowdoin College, provides another perspective on organizational support for partnerships:

> The Community Service Resource Center works to connect Bowdoin students, faculty and staff with the community and to ascertain community needs that can be addressed through faculty research, service learning courses, student volunteerism and the individual talents and interests of the Bowdoin community as a whole.
>
> For long-term success, we have developed:
>
> - Relationships with community partners that are reciprocal in nature, recognizing them as equal educators of our students.
>
> - A 'web' among the agencies themselves along with the campus, in which a diverse set of activities is spun to increase the impact on both the community and student learning.
>
> - On-line surveys for students, faculty and staff engaged in service learning courses which are administered at the end of each semester. The compilation of these over the years allows us to identify any trends and major changes in perceptions of stakeholders, and has helped us evaluate and improve the program most recently.
>
> - An on-line agency database that allows community partners to communicate their needs, and the Bowdoin community to find needs they can address. (http://bowdoincsrc.bowdoin.edu/agencies/)
>
> From the beginning, we have viewed the larger partnership with many agencies as long-term and one that will grow and change according to student and faculty interest, campus themes and community needs. This allows for fluidity in the program—but is based upon a commitment to a focused group of partners with whom we make connections wherever possible. Because we live in a small community, our community partners are receptive to this as ultimately our mutual philosophy is based upon working together to educate students as future leaders, contributing to society in an informed manner. Gathering once a year, sharing a vision for working together to address community needs as a group of campus and community constituents, and developing programs in partnership wherever possible are specific practices that have helped us.

Two programs developed at Bowdoin College to help identify and sustain longer-term partnerships are Campus Community Connections (see Box) and Community Action Fellows (see section below on supporting faculty).

Bowdoin College CAMPUS-COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

We have been able to develop partnerships with a number of organizations over the past three years in the Greater Brunswick Area to address both social and environmental issues. Although we have ascertained the needs of up to 100 of these organizations, it is about 30 with whom we have sustained relationships to varying degrees.

With a subgrant from Maine Campus Compact we created a Campus-Community Connections Seminar and hosted the first one in the spring of 2004. Thirty-nine leaders from local organizations came for a day of 'service learning 101' to meet with Bowdoin faculty and staff to better understand the objectives of course-based service at Bowdoin. At the end of the day we realized as much as it was important to clearly communicate the benefits and challenges of service learning partnerships, it also seemed helpful simply to bring these organizations together for networking. We determined together to think about one particular issue (affordable housing/low-income assistance) we all could address in a concerted effort in the future, and our office concluded the day committed to developing a database that would solicit agency volunteer and research needs to communicate these campus-wide to students, faculty and staff.

The second year, the seminar was developed in conjunction with existing and new community partners created as a result of the first seminar. The seminar objective of Year 2 was to help agencies design potential service learning projects to be pitched to the campus as well as communicate the broad spectrum of ways in which the campus could work with organizations. Our hope was to focus on the synergy that could be developed as a result, compounding the impact for both the agency and student learners.

As a result of these seminars and the development of general partnerships, several specific partnerships with the local school district and with low-income assistance organizations have been established. In addition, it is the relationships that were developed as a result of the seminars that led to the Community Action Fellowship.

—Susan Dorn, Bowdoin College

Carrie Williams Howe, University of Vermont, describes the support her office has provided in building the UVM-CEDO partnership (see page 7):

> In order to more fully realize this partnership, the UVM Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning (CUPS) has assigned one staff member with the key role of furthering this partnership, from the development of projects to monitoring ongoing interactions, and meeting regularly with the CEDO staff to explore further opportunities. In 2006–2007, CUPS hired an AmeriCorps VISTA specifically for this purpose. At the same time CEDO's Center for Community and Neighborhoods Office has had representation on the CUPS Advisory Board.

> This partnership has carried out a variety of activities in addition to their support of service-learning courses (see page 7). For example, UVM worked with CEDO to create and host a "Community Matchmaking Event." The event brought together UVM Faculty, Staff, and Student clubs/organizations with local non-profits to stimulate interactions and development of partnerships between these groups. Plans have been made to develop this as an annual or semi-annual event. Sustainability of the program has been increased by bringing more partners on board for the planning process, including UVM faculty, and Chittenden County United Way staff.

Partnerships can benefit from their evaluation. Therese Seibert, Keene Sate College, suggests the following:

> Build partnerships into student reflection and evaluation. When students and I first started [service-learning], our main focus was on outcome, producing a research report that provided students with a meaningful learning experience and partners with a report that would serve their agency well. Over time, I have learned how important it is to have students reflect on the partnerships themselves as part of learning how to be civically engaged. I have also learned that building partnerships into evaluation means periodically assessing them so that communication stays open and issues are resolved in a timely way.

■ Supporting Community Partners

Besides the benefits they receive from specific project-related services and products, what sustains the community partners' interest in working with colleges and universities? What are some ways that campuses have gone beyond providing community partners their hoped for project benefits?

An innovative way of supporting community partners, ensuring their voices are heard, and building effective partnerships has been developed at Unity College. Jennifer Olin, a community member and employee of Unity Barn Raisers, runs the Community Service and Service learning office at Unity College. Here's their story:

> Since 1994, Unity College has had a nationally recognized service-learning program that has transformed the college while helping to address community needs. As with any educational institution involved in service activities, one of our greatest challenges is maintaining a strong community voice in identifying local needs and assets.
>
> Local service-learning efforts can be significantly enhanced by improving the linkages between the college, local public schools, and community partners. To do this requires that all parties understand each other's strengths and needs.
>
> To address this problem Unity College created a community-based Service Learning Coordinator position within Unity Barn Raisers, a local non-profit community organization with open membership that works to enhance small-town character and rural environment, while nurturing a thriving community-based economy. The Service-Learning Coordinator (Jennifer Olin) is a member of the Unity area community and a Unity Barn Raiser employee, but is housed in an office located on the Unity College campus.

> In this new rural based service-learning model, responsibility for initiating the development of campus-community connections and initiative is located within the community. Historically service-learning programs depend on a college staff or faculty member to make these connections. While these attempts have met with some success, there have been limitations. Community needs may take a back seat to student learning and other college issues, which tend to be the primary concern of college faculty and staff.
>
> A community based service learning coordinator with strong ties to the community assures that service learning projects address real community needs. Housing the coordinator on-campus provides for direct access to college faculty, staff, and resources, and assures that students have powerful learning experiences directly related to course material.

Jesse Pyles, Green Mountain College, and Marli Rupe, Poultney-Meetowee Natural Resources Conservation District (PMNRCD), describe another way to bring community partners on campus and provide them with support:

> GMC Faculty members…became supervisors on the PMNRCD's board, and helped to establish office space on campus for the District. Increased visibility of the office on campus and the establishment of the College's Service-Learning program lead to partnership opportunities for tree plantings, service-learning class and grant related projects, and semester internships.

Nancy Cathcart, Champlain College, describes a similar program that brings a non-profit organization, NeighborKeepers, into the College itself (see pages 23–24).

Debra Nitschke-Shaw, New England College (NEC), writes of several ways they have provided a strong support system for their community partners:

> Our partnership point system is particularly noteworthy. K–12 schools earn points for having NEC students and then teachers/ paraeducators/ administrators can trade those points in to take courses at no cost at NEC. There are policies and procedures that are clearly articulated for each partnership.
>
> Another success is the seamlessness between the college faculty and the K–12 faculty—they teach with us and are members of our faculty; and we teach in their classrooms, alongside them. We strive to create a community of learners where our students, faculty and administrators work alongside the students, faculty, and administrators in our K–12 partners schools. This reciprocal learning environment enables all participants to engage in learning and in teaching.

Nancy Cathcart, Champlain College, discusses other forms of community partner support:

> To date I would say that the success has come from Champlain College recognizing Hal Colston's gifts [Director of NeighborKeepers, see page 23]—his record and his potential—by giving him an office space on campus with which he could build natural alliances. We are now in Year III of the partnership, working to develop an electronic game to teach young people how poverty and rules of class happen. Together we are seeking funding.



Faculty and community partners from Farmington, Maine discuss how to bring a vision to life at the Campus Community Partnership Institute in November 2005.

Emma Mulvaney-Stanek, Peace & Justice Center, writes of longer-term benefits to her organization from continued student involvement as volunteers:

> Our CSL-partnership has really blossomed over the last year. We began with the hope of connecting one class of students to do community service for the Peace & Justice Center as well as arranging a few workshops in other CCV [Community College of Vermont] classes. We quickly expanded this work to several other campuses and many more students have been involved via community service than we expected. The most success has been the long-term involvement of CCV students outside their course requirements. Three students testified at the VT State House during mid-winter on livable wage legislation after learning about the issue during their community service. Many more have signed up to be permanent volunteers for our organizations. Also, several students have learned how to write letters to the editor and are taking action through the press outside of their CSL hours.

Michelle Barber of Norwich University writes about how their faculty grant program can help community partners:

> NUSL Program's faculty grants can be used to provide a stipend for team teaching with community partners, or providing supplies on their end of the service-learning project, or to support the events and/or programming of the community partner, as long as it's tied to the service-learning project and our students. Recently, faculty have used these grants to reimburse mileage for the community partners to simply come speak or work with the service-learning students. So, although our faculty grants can only be accessed by faculty, clearly our community partners can benefit.

Community partners also need support in building their capacity to work well with colleges and universities. As Susan Dorn, Bowdoin College, writes:

> Community organizations need to understand how to connect with the College, the challenges of the College calendar, the ways in which students, faculty and staff 'think' and the basic components of the pedagogy of service learning specifically.

Michelle Barber, Norwich University, writes about educational support for community partners:

> The NUSL Program hosted a three-part lunch series in the spring of 2006 for community partners. The first lunch was basically "Service-Learning 101." The second was a workshop on how NUSL advocates for service-learning and community partners and how community partners can help us in that effort. The third lunch was a discussion of how central VT non-profits and higher education, specifically NU, could collaborate in a more holistic way.

Supporting Faculty

There are many benefits (and costs) for faculty involved in service-learning partnerships. Juliann Acheson, University of Maine at Farmington, writes of some of these:

> It takes a huge amount of time. It is highly valuable. It allowed me to get involved with the community of 'Maine' and was much more enriching than had I never become involved in the partnership. In addition, it has enriched my teaching and my students' learning.

But the time commitment and changes required in faculty teaching need support beyond the psychic rewards. Here are some longer-term support systems for faculty.

1. Service-Learning teaching assistants and other course support programs

Systems to provide teaching assistance to faculty are often critical. Katherine Dauge-Roth, Bowdoin College, writes of how helpful this has been to her:

> I had a teaching assistant who helped me work with students in preparing weekly conversation sections, materials creation projects, and the festival. The work would have been overwhelming without the help of a terrific senior major as a TA.

Susan Dorn at Bowdoin College writes of their Community Action Fellows program to support faculty while providing valuable learning to students (see box on next page).



Vermont Technical College student tutors a child from the local community.

Bowdoin College COMMUNITY ACTION FELLOWS

Most service learning courses at Bowdoin are problem-based or sophisticated in nature. The Community Resource Service Center (CSRC) supports faculty in making connections to local organizations and providing logistical support, but does very little in the way of 'placements' for service learning courses. This means that individual faculty members outside of the Geology Department and Environmental Studies Programs (which both have sustained staff support for service learning) who undertake service learning courses do much of the work themselves. Therefore, our focus in developing the Community Action Fellowship was to build capacity for service learning faculty by providing them with a service learning TA, and to build capacity in the organizations by having a student serve as a liaison. The secondary purpose of the program was to have students placed in agencies research additional potential projects.

This program was started in partnership specifically with Volunteers of America of Northern New England, but then several other organizations were brought on board including: Tedford Housing (homelessness), Independence Association (disabilities), People Plus (seniors), Five River Arts Alliance (the arts) and the Town of Brunswick.

Again with the help of a Maine Campus Compact sub-grant and the further development of the vision that was set forth in the initial seminars of building a 'web,' the Community Action Fellowship is a true example of collaboration between the campus and the community from start to finish. The Director of Community Engagement at Volunteers of America and I wrote the grant proposal together, outlining our objectives for using students as interns working with either an agency or a faculty member to serve as liaisons between the campus and the agency for service learning and community service activities. We convened all of the community partners we hoped to involve to help develop the program, establishing a shared vision from the beginning. Initially piloting the program the first semester with Volunteers of America, the second semester five additional students were hired, three working with agencies and two supporting faculty members teaching service learning courses.

Students placed in agencies completed a specific research project for the agency and developed a list of potential collaborations based upon needs. The faculty members who had TAs have communicated the support they were able to provide was beneficial. All stakeholders convened at the end of the semester to reflect on the program. Many of the community partners now have a summer intern piloting our summer internship program with the objective of further building both capacity within the agency and the potential for long-term partnerships with the College.

—Susan Dorn, Bowdoin College

Kathleen Fitzpatrick at Daniel Webster College (DWC) writes of her work in this respect:

> As the Director of Experiential Education I coordinate most of the service-learning projects on campus. I am the contact person between community sites and I do the orientation for students, I oversee the evaluations of the programs and I offer workshops for faculty on various aspects of implementing service-learning in their courses. This fall I have organized a workshop that will be attended by faculty from Rivier College as well as faculty from DWC.
>
> And, meeting with our faculty at DWC, sharing the needs of the community and reviewing the outcomes each faculty member has for his/her class, has been another vitally important ingredient.

2. Educational systems for faculty

Education of faculty involved in service-learning partnerships is also of critical importance. Many colleges and universities provide workshops and other forms of training for faculty about service-learning. Here is one example.

Richard Schramm, University of Vermont, writes about UVM's program for training faculty in service-learning pedagogy and practice;

> UVM has offered an annual Service-Learning Faculty Fellows program since 2000, with 65 faculty completing the program so far and going on to teach more than 200 SL classes that have involved more than 3000 students. Faculty apply for the program; if accepted they participate in a three day workshop in January, work on service-learning related activities during the semester, and come together for a day in May to share their experiences. Faculty receive a stipend for their participation and are all expected to create and implement a service-learning course as the result of this training. New Fellows join an inter-active network of existing Fellows that share ideas about teaching, push for university-wide changes to support service-learning, and participate in the education of future Fellows.

■ Evaluating the Partnership

Earlier we saw how the evaluation process can be helpful in developing good working relationships among partners, creating a more universal understanding of the partnership goals, resources, activities and impacts, and providing useful feedback to shape partnership activities.

These benefits can be provided more systematically through the use of partnership performance and condition rubrics. Jane Andrews, Alice D. Elliott, Tracy Harkins, Debra Nitschke-Shaw, Deborah Scire and Cassandra Thomas played a key role in the development of the rubric, *A Tool for Growing and Sustaining Collaborative Partnerships* (see Appendix iv).[16]

This Rubric provides a framework for campus-community partnerships to use on a regular basis to assess their progress in becoming a stronger and more sustainable partnership. The Rubric identifies five areas of concern—philosophy and mission, partners, leadership and support, evaluation and assessment, and communications—and three levels of progress—exploring, quality building, and sustained institutionalization. A partnership can review these concerns and stages of development to determine how far along they are in different areas.

For example a partnership in the process of forming might find itself in the exploring stage of developing their philosophy and mission—in this case they decide that they are best described as:

> Partners identify a common need and come together to explore the viability of creating a collaborative partnership to address the need.

[16] Also see chapter on "Assessing Partnerships" in Scheibel, Bowley and Jones (2005).

Or a longer-term partnership might find that in the area of leadership and support it had achieved the stage of sustained institutionalization described as:

> Partner organizations actively support the partnership by including it in their organizations' vision and/or strategic plan. Written policies and procedures are in place and regularly updated, and resources are provided to sustain and celebrate the partnership on an ongoing basis. A system to educate new leaders of partnership organizations is in place.

The Rubric provides definitions of key terms and lists questions to address in assessing where in the Rubric a particular partnership currently finds itself.



Johnson State College partnered with Clear Path International to take students on a service trip to Vietnam. Upon their return, students worked to educate Vermont communities about landmines.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Creating, running and sustaining effective service-learning partnerships is a challenging task facing campus and community partners, with many operating somewhat in a vacuum, often times struggling with issues that others have already worked out. Asking partnership practitioners in northern New England to share some of the things that have helped them develop successful partnerships has not only uncovered a multitude of insights and lessons reflecting the wisdom of practitioners, but also highlighted the importance of finding new and better ways of documenting and sharing this wisdom.

This handbook tries to serve this function, but it is truly a work in progress as additional comments from partnership practitioners continue to flow in. Rather than necessarily issuing a regular hard copy update, the Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont Campus Compacts are considering the development of an on-line version to which practitioner lessons can be submitted and shared. The use of a campus-community partnership practices "wiki" for this purpose is under consideration.[17] Your thoughts on this or other approaches to sharing SL partnership practices are welcome.

VI. Resources/References

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[17] Mark Koenig, a higher education consultant who develops wikis using Wetpaint wiki software, provided help in thinking through the use of a wiki for this application. He can be reached at . Information on different wiki software programs can be found at: http://www.wikimatrix.org/.

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VII. Appendices

i. Surveyed and/or Interviewed Individuals Included in Handbook

Julianna Acheson, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of Maine at Farmington

Joseph Bandy, Associate Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Bowdoin College

Michelle Barber, Service-Learning Coordinator, Norwich University Service-Learning Program

Sarah Bedingfield, Director, Center for Academic Planning and Support at New Hampshire Community Technical College at Stratham and Portsmouth

Peggy Burns, Assistant Director, Middlebury College, Alliance for Civic Engagement

Maureen Capman, Health and Physical Education Educator, Poultney High School

Nancy Cathcart, Director, Center for Service & Civic Engagement, Champlain College

Katherine Dauge-Roth, Associate Professor of Romance Languages, Bowdoin College

Donna Diaz, Director of Sports, Special Olympics Vermont

Susan Dorn, Director, Community Service Resource Center, Bowdoin College

Susan Taylor Fickett, Associate Professor of Nursing and Faculty Liaison for Service Learning, Saint Joseph's College

Cathryn Field, Lab Instructor/Service Learning Coordinator, Geology Department, Bowdoin College

Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Director of Experiential Education, Daniel Webster College

Kathy Fox, Associate Professor, Sociology Department, University of Vermont

Ann Greenan-Naumann, Clinical Assistant Professor, Rehabilitation and Movement Science, University of Vermont

Carrie Williams Howe, Associate Director, Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning, University of Vermont

Karrie Kalich, Service Learning Co-Chair and Assistant Professor, Health Science, Keene State College

Susan Kasser, Associate Professor, Education, University of Vermont

Joseph Larosa, Grant Director, Rutland Southwest Supervisory Union

Holly Lasagna, Program Coordinator, The Harward Center for Community Partnerships, Bates College

Susan B. Martin, Director, Service-Learning Program, Bates College

Kathleen McNamara, AmeriCorps*VISTA, Office of Community-University Partnerships & Service-Learning, University of Vermont

Debra Nitschke-Shaw, Dean of Undergraduate Programs and Faculty and Professor of Education, New England College

Jennifer Olin, Coordinator of Community Services and Service-Learning, Unity College and Unity Barn Raisers, Unity, Maine

Walter Poleman, Senior Lecturer, Rubenstein School of Natural Resources and Environment, University of Vermont

Jesse Pyles, Service-Learning Coordinator, Green Mountain College

Marli Rupe, District Manager, Poultney-Mettowee Natural Resources Conservation District

Tiffany Sargent, Director, Alliance for Civic Engagement (ACE), Middlebury College

Richard Schramm, Community Development and Applied Economics Department, University of Vermont

Therese Seibert, Sociology Professor, Department of Sociology/Anthropology at Keene State College

Vicky Smith, King Street Youth Center, Burlington, Vermont

Emma Mulvaney Stanek, Director, Vermont Livable Wage Campaign, Peace and Justice Center, Burlington, Vermont

Amy E. Stuart, Coordinator of Academic Services, Community College of Vermont

ii. Campus-Community Service-Learning Partnership Practices Survey

The following are questions asked in a survey that was conducted using Survey Monkey in June 2007 and kept open until September.

Partner and Partnership Information

- Your Name
- Your Title
- Your Organization
- Address, E-mail, Telephone Number

- Partnership Name
- Who are your partners?
- How did your partnership get started?
- What is the main purpose of your partnership?
- What are the main activities of the partnership?
- What is your role in the partnership?



Teams of partners from Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont meet at Mount Washington to learn about each other, to appreciate their commons goals and to enhance their work together.

Promising Partnership Practices

What is it about your service-learning partnership that you feel has been particularly successful? This area of success may be in the development and operation of the partnership itself (e.g. philosophy and mission, partner relations, leadership and support, evaluation and assessment, communications) or in the partnership activities/projects and outcomes that have benefited the partners and their communities.

What is the specific practice(s) your partnership engaged in that you feel contributed to this success? Describe the basic concept and critical elements of the practice, and how it evolved and operated, in a way that enables others to try this practice out in their partnership work.

Describe any other 'lessons' from your partnership that you feel would be of interest to others involved in developing and operating service-learning partnerships. You may include practices that did not work but provided important lessons in the process.

If there are other 'promising practices' or lessons that you would like to share, please describe them briefly.

Would you be willing to be interviewed in more depth about your partnership? If yes, please provide contact information and dates during the summer when we might contact you.

PLACE Program Logic Model – May 2007

Theory of Change: Through offering towns an inclusive, un-biased, and locally directed public forum to explore, integrate and envision the future of the natural and cultural landscape, PLACE will contribute positively to the health and well-being of the community and the stewardship of local resources.

STRATEGIES				INTENDED OUTCOMES		
Inputs	**Activities**	**Outputs**	**AUDIENCE**	**Short Term**	**Medium Term**	**Long term**
Shelburne Farms Resources UVM Resources Town Resources Financial Resources State, Regional, and National Organizational Partners (see attached list of resources by group)	Professional development workshops for K-12 educators Landscape analysis and community visioning training for community volunteers Evening presentations for community members Field Trips Displays Newspaper articles Development of a dynamic program website Creation of town maps Offer graduate-level UVM service-learning courses Assemble diverse planning/research team composed of community volunteers and UVM service-learners	***In each town offer:*** Principles & Best Practices in PBE workshop(s) for K-12 educators PLACE Institute workshop series (including historical geography, phenology, geology, aerial reconnaissance, and community visioning) to community volunteers and UVM service-learners Three evening presentations Three field trips At least three interpretive displays One community visioning forum Digital copies of all interpretive materials ***In addition:*** Create and maintain a dynamic website that features maps, images, and information about each town, as well as the landscape analysis and community engagement methodologies Offer PLACE Practicum each semester to 8 UVM graduate students Sponsor one master's research project each year *Develop a program model that is exportable to other states*		**K-12 Educators** develop new place-based education curricula for use in local schools **Community volunteers** participate actively in workshops and research and translate their learning into presentations and products. **Participants** *(educators, community volunteers, participating residents, PLACE staff, and UVM service-learners)*: • have an awakened appreciation for the town's unique qualities, landscape ecology, and cultural history • have an increased awareness of public access lands • have an understanding of the integrated character of human and natural history on the landscape • share their knowledge of landscape natural and cultural history with each other • utilize the PLACE website for information and research **Residents** *(non-participating community members)* are aware that PLACE programming is open to everyone in the community A diversity of community members participate in programs **UVM service-learners** develop meaningful professional skills and make a significant contribution to the community *PLACE Program model presented conferences and in publications*	**K-12 Educators** infuse place-based activities into their curricula each year **K-12 Students** develop a greater sense of place **Community volunteers** continue to actively engage in landscape analysis and community education **Participants** involved in ecological stewardship and community service **Participants and Other Residents:** • have increased contentment and pride in community and landscape • have an increased awareness of public access lands • Residents stay in community long-term and engage in local resource professions or volunteer opportunities. **Residents** develop a stronger sense of community and take pride in the special nature of where they live in relation to rest of world. They actively contribute to their towns section of the PLACE website. The relationship between university and local communities is strengthened. **UVM service-learning graduates** apply PLACE concepts in their lives and careers *PLACE model successfully exported to other states*	Improved quality of life for residents and enhanced stewardship of resources through stronger connection to and engagement with the local landscape and heritage

Students in a conservation and environmental policy class at Middlebury College partnered with Efficiency Vermont in a service-learning project called "72 Hours of Light," aimed at reducing the community's overall energy consumption and raising awareness within the community about energy efficiency and its potential to mitigate global warming. Over the course of the three days, the class distributed 7,000 CFLs and reached more than 800 homes in Middlebury and the surrounding area, helping residents save an estimated 1.4 million kilowatt hours of energy and $350,000 in electricity costs. Efficiency Vermont provided the CFLs —some donated and others at a reduced price—as well as support and guidance in the planning of the event.

As a result, Middlebury College and Efficiency Vermont were awarded a 2005 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence & Pollution Prevention.



iv. A Tool for Growing and Sustaining Collaborative Partnerships

Principal authors:

Jane Andrews
Alice D. Elliott
Tracy Harkins
Debra Nitschke-Shaw
Deborah Scire
Cassandra Thomas
& participants in the Maine Campus Compact Communities,
Higher Education School Partnerships grant program

Working Definitions

Partners: Individuals or organizations who agree to work together and commit resources needed to form a collaborative partnership

Collaborative Partnership: A mutually beneficial and well defined relationship entered into by two or more individuals or organizations to meet a community need they are more likely to meet by working together.

Leadership team: A team of representatives from partner organizations who have the authority to commit time and resources of their organizations, who are responsible for understanding, supporting and communicating the mission of the partnership and overseeing the implementation and assessment of the action plan.

Dimension	Exploring	Quality Building	Sustained institutionalization
Philosophy & Mission	Partners identify a common need and come together to explore the viability of creating a collaborative partnership to address the need.	A commitment has been made to form a collaborative partnership. Partners have shared their individual values and missions and have collaboratively developed a partnership mission and goals.	The mission of the collaborative partnership is clearly communicated and annually reviewed by all partners, is based on shared values and vision, is reflective of each partners' mission, and results in an action plan comprised of goals and outcomes that are measurable and attainable.
Partners	Representatives from potential partners gather to identify organizational and individual resources and assets. A team is created to support the development of a collaborative partnership. The team selects an individual to serve as a leader	The partners begin to identify and assign roles and responsibilities to meet the partnerships' goals and mission. They identify key individuals from each organization who will commit to and form a standing leadership team where all the partners have an equal voice. The leadership team develops an action plan.	Representatives from each partner organization who have the authority to commit the resources of their organization form the team. The roles and responsibilities of team members are clearly defined and agreed upon. The team is responsible for understanding, supporting and communicating the mission of the partnership and overseeing the implementation and assessment of the action plan.
Leadership & Support	Organizational leaders are aware that individuals from their organizations are exploring the viability of forming a partnership with other organizations to address a common need.	Leadership team members educate their organization's leaders on how the partnership could meet the organization's goals. Leaders commit to and actively support the leadership team and the partnership with time and resources.	Partner organizations actively support the partnership by including it in their organizations' vision and/or strategic plan. Written policies and procedures are in place and regularly updated, and resources are provided to sustain and celebrate the partnership on an ongoing basis. A system to educate new leaders of partnership organizations is in place.
Evaluation & Assessment	Partners review and discuss existing data related to the common need. Partners recognize that tools and a system are needed to provide feedback. No tools or system are yet in place.	The leadership team develops a system, identifies tools, and pilots these to measure progress toward goals. They consider how the information collected can be used in future planning.	A clear system and tools are in place to give ongoing feedback on progress toward goals. The leadership team uses this to inform next steps. The system and tools are adjusted as goals are met and new goals identified.
Communications	Partners begin to identify methods of communicating with one another and agree to common language to foster the development of relationships. Partners begin to recognize the need for documentation.	The leadership team develops a system and a variety of methods for effective communication and documentation to share information and build relationships among all partners. They begin to develop and use similar systems and methods to share information with the community at large.	A clear system and methods of frequent communication and documentation is in place and used allowing for the sharing of information to sustain and support relationships and to effectively carry out the mission of the partnership.

Guiding questions for completing Growing and Sustaining Collaborative Partnerships:

As you complete the rubric, consider the questions identified for dimension of the tool.

Partners

- Have you identified individual and organizational resources and assets?
- Have you identified a leader?
- Have you identified, clearly defined and assigned roles and responsibilities?
- Have you considered other people/organizations that should be included in the partnership or on the leadership team?
- Have the people who are able to commit resources from individual organizations been made members of the leadership team?
- Are the members of the leadership team able to commit resources or actively participate?
- Have you considered strategies to promote relationship building for your partnership?
- Do you have a system in place to hear all voices?
- Does the leadership team have a system in place for monitoring and taking responsibility for the outcomes of the action plan?

Philosophy & Mission

- Have you identified a common need?
- Have you shared individual institutional values?
- Have you shared your organizations' mission?
- Have you shared your organizations' goals?
- Have you collaboratively developed a partnership mission and goals?
- Have you collaboratively created an action plan with measurable outcomes and goals?
- Have you created a system to annually review your progress on your action plan?
- Have you shared the partnerships' mission internally and externally?

Leadership and Support

- Have organizational leaders been made aware of the collaboration exploration?
- Have organizational leaders been educated about the potential benefits of the collaboration?
- Have organizational leaders committed to supporting the partnership with time and resources?
- Have partner organizations included the partnership in their organizational visions and/or strategic plans?
- Are written policies and procedures in place and regularly updated?
- Are resources to sustain and celebrate the partnerships provided?
- Is their a system in place to educate new organizational leaders?

Evaluation and Assessment

- Have partners reviewed and discussed existing data related to the common need?
- Have partners recognized that tools and a system to provide feedback are needed?
- Has the leadership team identified tools and developed a system to evaluate progress toward goals?
- Has the evaluation system been piloted?
- Have partners considered how the gathered information can be used in future planning?
- Is there a clear system and tools in place to gather ongoing feedback on progress toward goals?
- Does the leadership team use the feedback to inform next steps?
- Is the system and tools adjusted as goals are met and new goals identified?

Communication

- Have partners begun to identify methods to communicate with one another?
- Has common language about the partnership been agreed upon?
- Have partners recognized the need for documentation?
- Has the leadership team developed a system and a variety of communication methods for effective communication and documentation?
- Are partners beginning to develop and use similar systems and methods to share information with the community at large?
- Is a clear system and methods of frequent communication and documentation in place and used?
- Does this allow for the effective sharing of information and relationship support needed to sustain and carry out the mission of the partnership?



Author, Richard Schramm explains some details involved in effective partnerships.

About the Author

Richard Schramm has taught economics, finance and community development for over forty years at Columbia, Cornell, Tufts, MIT, Goddard and the University of Vermont. He is currently a Senior Faculty Associate in UVM's Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning and on the faculty of the Community Development and Applied Economics Department. He is also a Northern New England Campus Compact Service-Learning Faculty Consultant.

Schramm has devoted much of his academic career to building links between universities and community, governmental and business organizations. During the last 25 years he founded and directed the Tufts University Management and Community Development Institute, the Goddard College Business Institute, and the University of Vermont/Burlington Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC). His publications on university-community partnerships include *Building Higher Education Community Development Corporation Partnerships (1999 with Nancy Nye) and Lasting Engagement: Building* and *Sustaining a Commitment to Community Outreach, Development, and Collaboration—A Case Study of Springfield College* (2002). In 2004 he received the Vermont Campus Compact State-Wide Award for Excellence in Linking Community & Academics.