



## From The Editor

### Releasing Our Power, Unleashing Our Ethics

Many campus conversations in varied locales are considering the benefits of service-learning and civic engagement and thus necessarily ask, how do we move from positive intent to meaningful impact? Who accrues the most in these campus-community partnerships, and in what ways? Scholars and practitioners alike recognize that seeking to do good may not be enough. In fact, Ivan Illich prompted those critical questions when he famously presented his remarks at a conference in 1968 entitled, “To hell with good intentions,” pointing out that in a complex world such as ours, academic power may sometimes be wielded with too little responsibility and too little humility.

In this issue of *Partnerships: A Journal of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement*, Bussert-Webb and De La O provide a response to the issue of impact by detailing their longitudinal study of how children, parents, staff, and teacher candidates together worked to improve life choices for low-income immigrant youth in Texas. These authors of “Knowledge into action in a Latinx Neighborhood” chronicle the choices they made in tune with social justice theory and practice, to enhance equality and confront the multi-factor oppressions surrounding their community. In another of this issue’s articles, Pritchard and Bowen recount in “Students as partners in service-learning: Assessing the impact” their interviews and other research with some of the less talked about partners in community engagement—student peer leaders. Their study looks at the ways in which increased civic engagement and knowledge surrounding diversity, controversial issues, collaboration, and goal attainment initially provided through training to student peer leaders is sustained over time, post-graduation. Finally, in this issue, Holland, George, and Nelson, in “Building a service corps: Using capacity building strategies to promote service-learning and social entrepreneurship within a higher education consortium” examine how individuals and institutions work to build the skills and expand resources to serve vulnerable and marginalized citizens. The authors offer insight into how colleges and universities of varying sizes can customize programming as needed for their communities.

This issue’s authors note that multiple needs remain on campuses and in communities to continue growing community engaged programs. They point to tapping into natural occurring as well as strategically designed networks with a particular emphasis on releasing a focus on power and self-promotion and unleashing instead deep, ethical commitments to others in the name of the greater good.

Adding to the insights and advice provided in this issue’s articles, readers will find abundant resources in four book reviews. Dr. Cristiane Damasceno details how Rebecca Dumlao’s book, *A guide to collaborative communication for service-learning and community engagement partners*, is “an inspiration to transform the status quo” causing readers to ask themselves, “What impact do they want to make?” and “Who are they taking with them on this journey?” Vincent Russell, a former editorial assistant to this journal and now doctoral candidate, says of Amber Dean, Jennifer Johnson and Susanne Luhmann’s (Eds.) book, *Feminist praxis revisited: Critical reflections on university-community engagement* that readers have “an opportunity to reflect on one’s service-learning courses” and in so doing consider “a radical rethinking of their approach to service-learning.” Dillon Fishman, also a doctoral candidate and attorney, remarks in his review of *Community-based language learning: A framework for*

*educators*” by Joan Clifford and Deborah Reisinger, that the book is designed for language educators with a focus on socio-political activism, critical pedagogy, and social justice. Dr. Sarah Hollingsworth, another of *Partnerships*’ former editorial assistants, offers the final of four book reviews. She says that Erica Yamamura and Kent Koth’s *Place-based community engagement in higher education: A strategy to transform universities and communities* relies on a “collective case study approach” and will appeal particularly to administrators interested in sustaining funding for their community engagement programs.

In closing, we welcome to our journal team book review editor Dr. Tempestt Adams, Assistant Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Appalachian State University. Dr. Adams notes that civic engagement has always been part of her personal life and career ambitions. In her new role as book review editor for *Partnerships*, she hopes to continue helping new teachers in training to read about and incorporate service-learning into their developing scholarly identities. That is a goal we should all welcome!

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Editor