

The collection of papers in this issue of *Metropolitan Universities* combines the analysis of the field of urban studies together with assessments of a number of university - community collaborations. Academic programs in "urban studies" or "urban affairs" constitute one of the important ways in which metropolitan universities have organized study and inquiry into the nature of the urban experience. Though I am personally growing increasingly dissatisfied with the very notion of "urban" as opposed to "metropolitan" studies, such programs exist in one form or another in almost every metropolitan university. Some programs have a high level of integration and have moved to realize their potential as a genuine "field of study." Other programs are merely "menu" based and lack coherence and a specific intellectual direction. Nevertheless these are important programs which often reflect the "urban" nature or sensibility of the contemporary metropolitan university.

Briavel Holcomb, for many years the Chair of the Urban Studies Department at Rutgers University, discusses how that program emerged out of a major institutional commitment to build a social science college which could respond to the tragic events and conditions which were behind the urban riots of the mid-1960s. Highly personal, Holcomb's account leads her to see how urban studies at Rutgers has matured into an important part of critical studies.

Scott Cummings, one of the nation's leading urbanists, and an editor of the *Journal of Urban Affairs*, discusses the centrality of graduate programs in urban and public affairs to the modern metropolitan university. His is a thoughtful and critical assessment of some of the problems in realizing the potential of such graduate level programs. This analysis suggests some of the larger institutional issues as well as some of the idiosyncratic realities at his own institution, the University of Louisville.

The academic commitment to urban studies and urban communities is expressed in ways other than formal degree programs. Over the years we have seen both the "rise and fall" of urban community centers. A number of these efforts have been reconstituted, while others have only recently been initiated. Some university-community collaborations are housed in one department or college. Others are multi-unit in nature and span several administrative units within a single institution. And still others tend to combine the resources of several institutions brought together to address the needs of a particular community. The point of departure for such projects may differ as well. Sometimes the university starts the program while still at other times the initiative derives from the community.

Victor Rubin's essay on the University-Oakland Forum traces the evolution of this highly successful and innovative program whose roots at UC-Berkeley have not inhibited its capacity to bring in other institutions to address the needs of an important urban center. The Forum has been able to grow and change to accommodate necessary conditions both within the structure of the universities themselves as well as the Oakland community.

Ken Reardon of the University of Illinois discusses the ways in which applied student and faculty research in the planning and design professions can assist the citizens of one of the nation's most at-risk communities, East St. Louis, Illinois. Reardon honestly assesses some of the barriers — institutional, political, class, and racial — which must be addressed in realistic ways before any university-commu-

nity collaboration can have a chance to build local capacity while simultaneously meeting the needs of the university. His concerns must be discussed rather than deferred.

John Thurber introduces us to the Trenton Office of Policy Studies (TOPS), a city-university partnership which, in a relatively short period of time, has been able to undertake a number of important programs and policy initiatives in a city which lacks a traditional research or four-year collegiate institution. New Jersey's innovative Thomas A. Edison State College, which is located in Trenton, serves as the key institutional sponsor of TOPS, along with the Office of the Mayor. TOPS has been able to bring together such diverse institutions as Mercer County Community College and Princeton University, among others, to work with local corporations and institutions in an evolving public/private partnership to meet some of the needs of the Trenton region. TOPS is adroit, pragmatic, and resourceful.

John Brain, Director of the Executive Advisory Board on Higher Education of Baltimore County (EAB), and publisher of *Metropolitan Universities*, helps us to understand some of the problems of building a new multi-institutional system to serve the needs of the Baltimore-centered region. The EAB has achieved a degree of national prominence in a relatively short period of time, in part because of the "Baltimore Renaissance" but also because of the ways in which the EAB has used technology to build bridges while recognizing that competition rather than cooperation often defines the market culture of institutions within the same geographic area.

Michael Paddle, a faculty member associated with the Center for Governmental Studies at Northern Illinois University, describes ways in which metropolitan universities can respond to regional needs for workforce preparation and maintenance. He reminds us that a first step must always be to gather the necessary information about what the community wants.

John Mohan, Professor and Head of Department of Geography of Queen Mary and Westfield College of the University of London, gives us the benefit of a comparative view of university-community relations in the United Kingdom and in the United States. He has been a strong voice for greater community involvement of universities in his own country and spent a year in this country as a Harkness Fellow studying such relationships over here. Critical of their limited extent in his country by comparison to what he found here, he nevertheless raises some searching questions about what he encountered during his visit.

Finally, in a very modest way I attempt to suggest a rationale for the emergence of "metropolitan studies" as both a field of inquiry and an overriding institutional commitment for metropolitan universities. Rather than a blueprint for any particular program in metropolitan studies, the aim here is to generate discussion and debate on that form, its composition, and its very direction and relevance.