

## **Overview**

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Having had the opportunity to serve on the editorial board of the *Metropolitan Universities* journal, I am extremely pleased to be guest editor of this issue dedicated to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) program. Through the COPC program and HUD's Office of University Partnerships, the federal government has both been a catalyst and has provided incentives that reward colleges and universities for their work in revitalizing distressed neighborhoods in urban areas all across the country.

This issue of the journal is an excellent sequel to the Winter 1995 number on university-community partnerships, guest-edited by Ira Harkavy and Wim Wiewel. That issue included an article by Michael A. Stegman, then Assistant Secretary of Policy Development and Research, under whose direction the Office of University Partnerships (OUP) was created and the COPC program was implemented.

Although the OUP was created in 1994 through the visionary efforts of former Secretary Henry Cisneros, Secretary Mario Cuomo continues to emphasize the role of colleges and universities in assisting communities to solve their own problems, as exemplified by his support of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and COPC programs in the HUD budgeting process.

HUD understands that it is not Washington's role to pay for everything, or even to regulate or mandate everything. Rather, HUD works in conjunction with resources such as those at colleges and universities and state and local governments, in addition to community groups and private industry, to tackle such difficult problems as affordable housing, unemployment, and education.

HUD leadership recognizes the fact that colleges and universities represent tremendous intellectual, human, economic, and physical resources. Even though their primary mission is to be centers of learning that nurture scholars, students, and emerging ideas, each college and university is a significant and politically powerful economic presence within its community, serving as a major employer, landowner/developer, and both a provider and consumer of goods and services. Therefore, a college or university that is, or becomes, deeply involved in targeting critical urban issues and then assisting to resolve them helps to provide change and leadership to the community.

Through HUD's Office of University Partnership, the COPC program has recognized and rewarded 59 college and university grantees from 76 different institutions across the United States. The program has been in existence for four com-

petitive rounds of funding—1994, 1995, 1996, and 1997. Even though it was established as a five-year demonstration program, I feel confident that the agency will move to continue the funding, because demand for the program has been so strong from its inception. For example, in 1997, 112 applications were received by HUD, and 16 grants were made. With a total funding of \$400,000 over a three-year period, a college or university that is a successful grantee is expected to provide substantial matching funds through its own resources and the community with which it is working. Grants under COPC total some \$28 million to date, and, with the matching component, a substantial impact can be felt in the communities where college and university outreach activities are deeply imbedded. In fact, for the 16 new COPC grantees in 1997, \$6.3 million of HUD funding leveraged \$10.2 million.

The foundation of the COPC philosophy is that colleges and universities can no longer only play an expert role or use communities as subject matter for study, but rather must work as partners with the community to determine what the residents want and need and how these needs can be met with university resources. The emphasis in funding, therefore, is on the outreach activities a college or university can provide a distressed area, with a smaller portion of the grant funds (25%) used for applied research linked to the outreach activities.

This issue of the journal is based on papers delivered at the April, 1997, COPC grantee conference hosted by Arizona State University, on the theme of institutionalization of the COPC program on the respective grantees' campuses. As director of OUP, I stated when I arrived at HUD that if these programs were started with federal dollars, and if after three years the grantees no longer worked in these distressed neighborhoods, then there might be more harm than good. The problems of distressed areas were not created in three years, and they will not be resolved in three years. What is most important, therefore, is that colleges and universities both establish long-term relationships as part of the institution's mission and reward faculty and students involved in the outreach work. This important component of teaching, research, and service must be institutionalized within higher education and within the communities of which higher education is a part.

The authors of this issue provide excellent examples of how this institutionalization has taken place. They represent COPC grantees from many different sections of the country, with an equally wide representation of administrative structures and disciplines within their respective universities. All COPC grantees were invited to present papers at the Arizona State COPC conference, and those who did were in turn invited to submit their papers to be considered for publication here. The review panel that critiqued the papers and determined which ones should be published included: John Stuart Hall, Professor, Arizona State University; Henry Lewis Taylor, Director, Center for Urban Studies, State University of New York at Buffalo; David Sweet, Dean, College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University; and Jane Karadbil, Senior Policy Analyst, Office of University Partnerships, U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Because the COPC program is in its fifth year and is scheduled for evaluation, our first article is authored by Victor Rubin, James J. Fleming, and Judith Innes and entitled, "Evaluating Community Outreach Partnership Centers as Complex Systems: In Search of the 'COPC Effect'." These authors were chosen, in fact, as one of three COPC grantees to submit a model for the national evaluation to HUD. Their article builds on that submission and provides an important framework for understanding not only the program's goals but also its long-term impact and that of COPC's work. The authors caution against an evaluation that focuses on short-term impacts rather than on what they term second and third-order effects. With COPC's scope and diversity embedded in local issues, the most worthwhile evaluation of its program will be the long-term linkages nurtured among a diverse group of local community players and their ability to "boost the system to higher performance." They believe that this long-term learning process will synergistically build the capacity of communities to help themselves with universities as constructive participants and partners, which, of course, is the essence of institutionalization. In their view, the community is a co-teacher in the process and each partner must regard the partnership as in their best interest to continue because of the social, intellectual, and political capital it creates. Therefore, the evaluation must be both quantitative and qualitative, and evaluators must understand that mistakes and failures are expected as the learning process evolves.

The second paper is entitled, "Cluster Analysis: A New Tool for Understanding the Role of the Inner City in a Regional Economy," authored by Mary Jo Waits, Tom Rex, and Rob Melnick of Arizona State University. Their work demonstrates how cluster analysis can be utilized in metropolitan/regional economic plans for the urban revitalization efforts of inner cities, in this case two areas of Phoenix. With such an important tool for applied research, they highlight the point that universities are more empowered than cities to be on the cutting edge of economic development concepts and must link these concepts to practical application. In addition, universities have the ability to champion unique or controversial policies for urban revitalization. This excellent example of interdisciplinary research shows that, even though it may be difficult to conduct, there are significant payoffs in providing access of information and knowledge for inner city economic development.

The third article, "Positioning a University Outreach Center: Strategies for Support and Continuation," authored by Kristen D. Skivington, contains the key to the institutionalization of the outreach center as strong central administration support (the director reports to the Chancellor) and emphasis on a value-added approach for faculty and student involvement in outreach activities that also add value to the community. Through Skivington's effort to initiate strategies that position outreach and develop a power base, she has been successful in bringing both a COPC grant and a Title XI (U. S. Department of Education) grant to the University of Michigan-Flint.

Linking the outreach and education mission of the university, Daniel Folkman, Stephen L. Percy, and Kalyani Rai's "Education for Empowerment: Creating a Community Action Scholars Program" discusses the lessons learned from the creation and implementation of the program. Their discussion provides insight into the theoretical framework, community involvement, constraints, and an action research approach to the Community Action Scholars seminar, and it would be particularly useful for those interested in initiating a similar program because of its critical approach to how such efforts should be undertaken in the future.

David N. Cox, Stanley E. Hyland, and Cindy L. Martin's article, "Memphis Maps: A Partnership for Community Building," documents the use of technology—and in this case geographic information systems—as tools for community building. Of particular interest is the broad-based community partnership that included the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, the City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development, and the Shelby County Community Services Agency, in addition to the private sector support of NationsBank, that undertook the program and the continued sustainability of the effort. The program itself is focused on high school students and involves a six-week summer training program in which they obtain a better understanding of their own community through GIS technology.

The final essay here is authored by Hugh Sockett and called, "Levels of Partnerships," and it both provides a topology for partnerships and helps the reader with an understanding of the needs and levels of intervention in a partnership, by providing a good critical perspective and examples that make the issues concrete. Through the COPC involvement and his involvement, Sockett reflects on the elements required to undertake and succeed at a university-community partnership.

This issue culminates with the addresses of two metropolitan university academic leaders who were part of the April, 1997, COPC conference hosted by Arizona State University. The first is by Paige E. Mulhollan, President Emeritus of Wright State University, who supported the development of the concept of metropolitan universities and who helped to initiate this journal as a forum for dialogue about the excellent examples of community work these universities undertake. The second address is by Judith Ramaley, former President of Portland State University and current President of the University of Vermont, who was instrumental in developing Portland State into a prototype metropolitan university by linking the undergraduate education program to community-based work and instruction, and by revising the promotion and tenure process to ensure reward for outreach activities.