

# **The Road Half Traveled**

## **University Engagement at a Crossroads**

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at the University of Maryland

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## Acknowledgements

Research for *The Road Half Traveled* began early in 2009, but this report has a much longer gestation. The Democracy Collaborative was founded in 2000 by a group of scholars at the University of Maryland, College Park, who saw the need for a center that could promote engaged scholarship that linked research to democratic practice. Maryland itself is a land-grant university, so the Collaborative has seen as one of its goals to examine what being a land-grant institution means in the 21st century.

In 2005, The Democracy Collaborative published an article outlining its engagement vision. Later, in 2007, the Collaborative produced a full report titled *Linking Colleges to Communities: Engaging the University for Community Development*. Several dozen people participated in interviews for that report and their contributions helped frame the questions of this study. In *Linking Colleges*, we outlined the history of university engagement and examined recent developments in policy and in the field, but with limited detail on any one school. Here, we wanted to examine fewer schools in greater depth, thereby enabling us to personally visit every school we selected—and helping us to generate a better understanding of both the challenges and opportunities for universities that seek to develop and realize an anchor institution mission.

There are numerous other influences, but two are particularly important to mention. One is the Netter Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania, which produced its Anchor Institutions Toolkit in March 2008 to provide a manual for universities seeking to expand their community partnership work in a responsible way. Report author Rita Axelroth hails from the Netter Center and thus brings an inside perspective to this work on how community partnership centers function.

A second influence is the Anchor Institutions Task Force, a group created in December 2008 to advise incoming U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan on how the federal government might leverage the intellectual and economic resources of universities to better conditions in low-income communities. Both authors participated in the Task Force and in writing its report. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Ira Harkavy and the two-dozen original members of the Task Force.

Ted Howard, Executive Director of The Democracy Collaborative, has played a key role in framing the Democracy Collaborative's research. Financial support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Kendeda Fund made this project possible.

In conducting this study, we relied on the good will and contributions of literally hundreds of individuals. A full list of interview subjects and their affiliations is included in Appendix B.

For interviews on the "university" side of the community-university partnership equation, we relied on having contact people who could help coordinate our site visits. Steve Dubb did the site interviews at Emory, Penn, and Yale and gratefully acknowledges the extraordinary logistical assistance and scheduling efforts of Sam Marie Engle at Emory, Joann Weeks at Penn, and Michael Morand at Yale. Rita Axelroth conducted the site visits at Cincinnati, IUPUI, LeMoyne-Owen, Miami Dade College, Minnesota, Portland State, and Syracuse. She gratefully

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