

# **The Road Half Traveled**

## **University Engagement at a Crossroads**

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## **Section One:**

# **The Past and Present of University Engagement**

*This nation faces significant societal challenges, and higher education must play a role in responding to them. . . [There is] widespread agreement that colleges and universities have civic and public purposes, including the preparation of an enlightened and productive citizenry and engaging in scholarship that both addresses pressing problems and holds a mirror to society to allow for self-reflection and self-correction. The question is how to achieve these aims.*

John Saltmarsh et al., *Democratic Engagement White Paper*, 2009.<sup>9</sup>

## **Brief History of Universities, Community Partnerships and Economic Development**

Universities, in addition to their central role in education, play a critical economic development role. Nowhere has the connection between higher education and economic development been more clearly drawn than in the United States. This link was made explicit in 1862 when Congress passed the Morrill Act, establishing a system of land-grant colleges by allocating federal land to the states to support the establishment of public universities in each state. As James Collier of Virginia Tech notes, while the Morrill Act certainly served to expand access to university education, its "primary goal was to solidify the American economic infrastructure in anticipation of the Civil War's outcome." Senator Justin Smith Morrill (R-VT) himself, in calling upon Congress to pass the Land-Grant Act, argued that land-grant colleges not only would provide education for the "sons of toil," but would speed growth in agriculture, "the foundation of all present and future prosperity."<sup>10</sup>

Historically, community partnership work has not been as visible in U.S. higher education as economic development, but it too has deep historical roots.<sup>11</sup> One early example was the settlement house movement of the late 19th and early 20th century. In its most frequent form, a settlement house was a building in a poor community that was used as a community center. Settlement houses taught literacy and urban survival skills to immigrants and rural migrants and helped organize tenants to secure better housing. University students often lived in the facilities and provided much of the settlement houses' staffing. Hull House, organized by Jane Addams in partnership with the University of Chicago, is one of the best known of these efforts. This work was given prominent support both among the university administration and faculty. University of Chicago's first president William Rainey Harper declared that the university should be the "Messiah of the democracy, its to-be-expected deliverer." And of course it was as a faculty member at the University of Chicago where the philosopher John Dewey first developed his theories of "learning by doing" and experiential education.<sup>12</sup>

For a variety of reasons, the prominence of university-community partnerships and university economic development activity declined in the first half of the 20th century. The reasons are not hard to discern: agriculture, once the foundation of "all" prosperity (in Morrill's words) became less significant as the United States became a primarily urban and metropolitan country and land-grant colleges largely failed to shift the focus of their cooperative extension work to reflect the changing economy. Also, the issues of rural-urban migration and immigration from abroad that had led to the settlement house movement in the first place subsided, as immigration laws restricted entry to the United States. Moreover, universities became increasingly linked to the federal government, especially through military research contracts, which made local community economic development activity relatively less important to universities.

But then circumstances changed again. The roots of today's generation of community-university partnerships can be traced to the late 1960s, when activist academics began to insert community work into university curricula. Robert Sigmon and William Ramsey of the Southern Regional Education Board coined the term "service-learning" in 1967 to describe the work of university students and faculty on a Tennessee Valley Authority-project in East Tennessee conducted by Oak Ridge Associated Universities in partnership with tributary area organizations.<sup>13</sup>

As service-learning grew, it developed a strong anti-poverty cast. Michael Lounsbury of Cornell University and Seth Pollack, Director of the Service Learning Institute at California State University-Monterey Bay, write that, "While the practitioners had different origins, they were united in the belief that students could be productive foot soldiers in the war on poverty." Federal funds helped promote this work through the National Student Volunteer Program (established in 1969 by President Richard Nixon and renamed the National Center for Service-Learning in 1979) and the federal volunteer office, ACTION.<sup>14</sup> The election of Ronald Reagan as President in 1980 soon led to the end of federal support for these programs. Nonetheless, after this initial setback, service-learning in the 1980s rebounded, as advocates placed new emphasis on the academic benefits for college students, while deemphasizing activism. This shift was critical in gaining the bipartisan support that led President George H.W. Bush to sign a bill restoring federal funding to service-learning in 1990, legislation that was expanded when President Bill Clinton came to office in 1993. A decade later, service-learning had become ubiquitous, with the advocacy group Campus Compact estimating in 2004 that 98 percent of its 1,000-plus member campuses offered service-learning courses.<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile, the federal government also played a key role in encouraging the reconnection of universities to local economic growth. Specifically, in 1980, Congress passed the Bayh-Dole Act, which helped bring about a large expansion of university local economic development activity by enabling universities to profit from their professors' discoveries. From 1980 to 2000, the number of patents issued to universities increased from an average of 250 a year to 3,000 a year. Many have criticized Bayh-Dole for commercializing the university, but there is no doubt about its extraordinary economic impact. A 1999 study of the Association of University Technology Managers found that university technology-transfer activities contributed \$40 billion to the U.S. economy and helped support 270,000 jobs nationwide.<sup>16</sup>

In the 1990s, community partnership activity received a considerable boost, as a combination of factors led a number of universities to begin to develop more broad-based strategies. One of these factors was the end of the Cold War, which brought with it at least the prospect of declining military contracts. In this environment, faculty members who could add value to the university in a different way gained more clout. More broadly, the end of the Cold War promised, at least for a time, the possibility that the university would become less focused on federal research attuned to national goals and more focused on local research attuned to meeting statewide or community goals. Modest federal support also helped spur university engagement initiatives, such as establishment of the Office of University Partnerships (OUP) at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1994. OUP grew to have an annual budget that peaked at slightly over \$33 million. Additionally, roughly one quarter of the Learn and Serve America

program's budget (or about \$10 million a year) supports university service-learning programs. The Department of Commerce also has a small University Centers program in the Economic Development Administration: average funding in the 2000s was about \$6.5 million a year.<sup>17</sup>

More urgency, too, was given to the potential benefits of community partnerships when a national wave of urban crime, spurred in large measure by the spread of crack cocaine in the late 1980s, hit major U.S. cities. Meanwhile, federal funding for social service programs had been severely cut during the Reagan administration. Conditions in America's urban core grew more desperate. One indicator is the murder rate. For example, in New Haven, homicides nearly tripled, rising from twelve in 1985 to thirty-four in 1991. In Philadelphia, homicides also climbed rapidly: growing from 273 in 1985 to a peak of 503 in 1990. Nationally, the urban concentration of violent crime reached record levels: in 1991, the seven most populous cities in the United States alone accounted for more than one fourth of all homicides nationwide.<sup>18</sup>

In response, a growing number of universities decided that they literally could not afford to ignore the deteriorating conditions surrounding their campuses without risking driving away the students and faculty on whom their stature ultimately depended. Two of the universities profiled here, Penn and Yale, are very explicit in acknowledging the critical role public safety issues (including specific instances of murder) played in how they developed their initiatives. In other cases, such as Cincinnati, general neighborhood deterioration and perception of crime spurred a similar university response.

Lee Benson, Ira Harkavy, and John Puckett of the University of Pennsylvania highlight (albeit more diplomatically) the importance of these factors: "In the aftermath of the cold war, accelerating external and internal pressures forced research universities to recognize (very reluctantly) that they must — and could — function as moral/intellectual institutions simultaneously engaged in advancing universal knowledge, learning *and* improving the well-being of their local geographic communities (i.e. the local ecological systems that powerfully affect their own health and functioning)."<sup>19</sup> Although Benson and his colleagues refer specifically to research universities, this movement has taken hold in higher education institutions of all sizes and sorts. As a result, in the mid-1990s, community partnership centers began blossoming on a number of campuses across the country — centralized units that could galvanize and manage vast resources and programs being directed to the community. Partnership centers helped coordinate otherwise disparate community efforts, occasionally leading to comprehensive university engagement strategies. As noted above, many of these strategies developed at urban campuses as they reacted to crisis in surrounding blighted neighborhoods.

Heading into the 2000s, a new and deeper understanding of the importance of the role of universities in community economic development began to emerge, leading many universities to greatly expand their community partnership efforts — this time, less out of a sense of crisis than out of an appreciation of the opportunity an anchor institution strategy provides. Many of the institutions profiled here, including Emory, Syracuse, Portland State, IUPUI, and Minnesota were *not* faced with an immediate crisis, but chose to act anyway. As noted later in the report, such efforts typically do not involve the same level of resources as those of university "crisis response" strategies, but often, likely due in part to the *lack* of an immediate crisis, these

partnerships often do a better job of taking into account community concerns in the framing and agenda-setting of their initiatives.

As has been true since the Morrill Act, economic and educational motives remain intertwined. In terms of economics, while hardly true of all U.S. cities, a number of American cities began to rebound after decades of decline. Indeed, efforts such as Yale's in New Haven and Penn's in West Philadelphia are part of a broader trend of urban revival. (For example, the nation's capital, Washington, D.C., after decades of population decline, saw its population rise by over 34,000 to nearly 600,000 from 1998 to 2008.)<sup>20</sup> The fact that urban problems began to seem not quite as "intractable" was buttressed by the increasing realization — borne out both by practical examples such as the early efforts at Penn and Yale, as well as by academic research — that universities, acting in their economic capacity as anchor institutions, could make a powerful positive contribution to social and economic outcomes.

A number of studies have highlighted this critical university role. In 2002, the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City and CEOs for Cities discussed this untapped potential: "Despite their considerable size, colleges and universities are often an overlooked component of urban economies. Their impact on these economies can be enormous. More than half of all colleges and universities in the nation are located in the urban core: central cities and their immediate surroundings. They have significant purchasing power, attract substantial revenues for their surrounding economies, invest heavily in local real estate and infrastructure, are major employers, and help to train the workforce and nurture new businesses." Nationwide, America's 4,000 colleges and universities spend more than \$400 billion annually, own more than \$300 billion in endowment investments, and employ roughly three million faculty and staff. As David Perry of the University of Illinois at Chicago and David Cox of the University of Memphis write, "Urban universities are spending up to a quarter of a trillion on salaries, goods and services, which is more than 20 times what the federal government spends in cities on jobs and economic development." David Maurrasse, in a 2007 report for CEOs for Cities, argued that anchor institutions such as universities have "special importance to the re-making of a city and its future."<sup>21</sup>

The term "anchor institution" itself, which once would have surely received blank stares from university leaders, now is regularly a part of university president discourse. In 2007 and 2008, more than three-dozen university presidents came together to form the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities, which seeks to promote university engagement in K-12 public schools, community health outreach, and community economic development. In 2009, a number of university presidents — namely, Nancy Cantor of Syracuse University, Gerard Clancy of the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa, Eduardo Padrón of Miami Dade College, Beverly Tatum of Spelman College, and Wim Wiewel of Portland State University — joined with more than a dozen community partnership leaders and researchers to submit a report to HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan that called on the federal government to help forge a "new compact between government, anchor institutions and their communities" to leverage university resources to meet the needs of urban communities. This group, dubbed the Anchor Institutions Task Force, decided in 2010 to formalize its status as a separate entity of practitioners and leading experts in university-community partnerships.<sup>22</sup>

University trade associations have also taken note of these developments. For example, in April 2009, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) named Muriel Howard as its President. Howard, who hails from the urban campus of Buffalo State College, where she was President from 1996 to 2009, quickly moved to re-establish the group's urban steering committee. The Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) has created a new Office on Urban Initiatives and, in June 2010, appointed its first Vice President of Urban Affairs to direct the new Office.<sup>23</sup>

The growth of this anchor institution movement has also gained a great deal of academic support. Leading scholars of the 1990s (including Derek Bok, Ernest Boyer, and John W. Gardner) helped to build the argument that by strategically focusing their many resources — from academic programs and research to business practices — on locally identified problems, universities can improve their core intellectual and academic work — in part by giving students and faculty real-world experience which can inform both research and teaching. Boyer, for instance, offered a new definition of scholarship. His "scholarship of engagement" has four functions: discovery, integration of knowledge, teaching, and application. Boyer's definition has been widely adopted — meaning that many community partnerships (a form of application) are now part of the definition of the university's central educational mission.<sup>24</sup> Gardner, who served as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare under President Lyndon Johnson and as President of the Carnegie Corporation, called for government to facilitate new forms of interaction between all sectors of society (public, private and nonprofit), including higher education institutions, to strengthen families and communities. Putting these ideas together, Bok, who served as Harvard's president from 1971–1991, sharply criticized universities for not doing enough to help solve America's most urgent social problems. He urged academic leaders, foundations, and government to work together to encourage universities "to respond effectively to the full agenda of national needs."<sup>25</sup>

Today, this growing understanding of enhancing teaching, research, and learning through community engagement — and, further, the related understanding that the campus, as an anchored part of a broader community, cannot thrive if surrounded by a sea of poverty, disinvestment, dilapidated housing, and other signs of a failing social structure — has become an increasingly important element in reducing internal academic resistance to community engagement strategies. Indeed, to some extent, the extension of those strategies has become seen as central to achievement of the university's mission.

But while community engagement has gained prominence at many higher education institutions, the rhetoric far surpasses the number of tangible, mutually beneficial initiatives. John Saltmarsh and his colleagues in a 2009 white paper on democratic engagement further caution that, "Engagement defined by activities connected to places outside the campus does not focus attention on the processes involved in the activity — how it is done — or the purpose of connecting with places outside the campus — why it is done."<sup>26</sup> In other words, even when engagement initiatives are carried out, are these efforts fundamentally changing the culture of higher education in a way that will lead them to invest in the long-term economic development and improved quality of life of their local communities?

As we head into the second decade of the 21st century, the field is asking itself some critical questions about institutionalization, accountability and the true impacts on those most in need.

David Cox, Executive Assistant to the President at the University of Memphis and former director of the Office of University Partnerships for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (1998–99), discusses one of the field's central concerns: "We need agreed upon metrics and accountability. People write up what they are doing and get great PR [public relations] coverage. But you have to read it with a grain of salt. We need to get beyond that. Right now, when you ask universities, 'Do you really do what you claim you're doing?' — The answer is usually 'Trust me.' We're moving on ideology, and we have to move beyond that to take this work to the next level."<sup>27</sup>

Henry Taylor, Professor at SUNY-Buffalo, speaks from experience about the challenges of effecting real change: "The majority of outreach programs operate under the framework of what I call 'liberal do-goodism.' [The University is] more comfortable with the sound of rhetoric without concrete action — there's a lot more PR than substance. The university wants to 'appear' involved, and it is, but it's not strategically focused. And, as long as it's not strategically focused, then it's not about bringing real change."<sup>28</sup>

Elizabeth Hollander, Senior Fellow at Tufts University and former Executive Director of Campus Compact, emphasizes the particular challenge of community wealth development: "In thinking about the university role in improving a community without gentrifying it, it's hard to do, no matter who you are. When university and city government are equally committed, then chances are improved. Most of where this work is right now, is people being proud of doing anything at all — we too easily slide over true wealth development and the true impact on residents."<sup>29</sup>

To begin to answer some of these questions, in this study we examine in depth the community development initiatives at ten universities to see *how* they are partnering with their communities, *why* they have chosen to act in these ways, and *what* are their intended — and realized — impacts. After visiting these ten institutions, we chose to analyze six major anchor strategies being implemented by urban colleges and universities: 1) comprehensive neighborhood revitalization; 2) community economic development through corporate investment; 3) local capacity building; 4) education and health partnerships; 5) scholarly engagement; and 6) multi-anchor, city and regional partnerships. These strategies are not mutually exclusive; rather, many universities have come to develop multi-faceted approaches to anchor-based community development.

The higher education institutions chosen for this study demonstrate some of the most innovative and effective approaches to leveraging their resources as anchor institutions. In part, their success is due to the understanding of these approaches as a powerful pedagogical strategy. In other words, by actively engaging in community work, universities can make new contributions to learning, teaching and research. Demonstrating the patterns among our three clusters of institutions (facilitator, leader, and convener), Figure 4 presents the strategies and tools typically implemented by each set of schools — in other words, how these universities generally express their role as anchor institutions. In particular, the facilitative model places special

**Figure 4: Expressions of the Anchor Institution Role**

Strategies	University as Facilitator	University as Leader	University as Convener
<b>Comprehensive Neighborhood Revitalization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not very common in this model, unless approached as partner for community-led revitalization effort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very descriptive of this model; usually university-led</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Typically part of this model; joint university-community planning</li> </ul>
<b>Community Economic Development through Corporate Investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not very developed within this model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leading examples of business practices such as local purchasing and endowment investment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New and/or evolving practices that support local investment</li> </ul>
<b>Local Capacity Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals, local businesses and organizations supported through educational programs, incubator space, and in-kind resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included among goals, but not always carried out in practice (university maintains heavy influence)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key focus, seen through practices such as resident engagement, trainings, and participatory leadership</li> </ul>
<b>Education and Health Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Often led by individual faculty or interdisciplinary teams</li> <li>Typically emphasized over community development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large institutional initiatives often support focused community revitalization agenda</li> <li>Faculty and students also engage on project-by-project basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional initiatives often support broad community engagement agenda</li> <li>Faculty and students also engage on project-by-project basis</li> </ul>
<b>Scholarly Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong programs in service-learning, capstones, and community-based research; primary focus on student experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong programs in service-learning and community-based research; may or may not be connected to community development efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong programs in service-learning and community-based research; may or may not be connected to community development efforts</li> </ul>
<b>Multi-Anchor, City, and Regional Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some collaboration with city and regional partners</li> <li>Fewer partnerships with other anchors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead collaboration with other anchor institutions, city partners, and/or regional consortia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some collaboration with other anchors and/or city partners</li> <li>Occasionally part of regional consortia</li> </ul>

emphasis on scholarly engagement, as well as in-kind resources for local capacity building and education and health partnerships. The leadership model also emphasizes education and health partnerships but places an equally strong focus on comprehensive community revitalization, using their business practices for community economic development and collaborating with other anchors or city partners to increase overall impact. Finally, the convening model focuses on local capacity building *as part of* comprehensive community revitalization, as well as engages in broader education and health initiatives and in multi-anchor, city, and regional partnerships. In the following sections we will further discuss how — and why — the institutions profiled in this report have emphasized certain anchor strategies over others.

## **An Overview of Key Anchor Institution Strategies Today**

### **Comprehensive Neighborhood Revitalization**

A number of universities, including several of those featured in this report, have engaged in comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategies. Such strategies require galvanizing and organizing internal and external resources to carry out a development plan. In this manner, these universities attempt to effect broad, systemic change in multiple areas such as safety, housing, economic development, education and health. Such a multi-pronged approach almost always requires collaboration with other partners, including other anchor institutions, so that resources can be leveraged collectively.<sup>30</sup> This strategy tends to be a particular focus among universities who have emphasized leadership roles — Penn, Yale, and Cincinnati. Long-term neighborhood revitalization efforts seek to include community residents and other local stakeholders as partners throughout the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases. Collectively identified goals guide the work and provide meaningful measures of impact. Universities that have assumed the role of conveners — LeMoyne-Owen, Minnesota, Syracuse, and Emory — tend to give particular focus to this collaborative process when engaged in comprehensive neighborhood revitalization.

This pattern largely reflects the location of the institutions and whether they choose to adopt a place-based strategy. For instance, universities that employ a leadership strategy tend to focus intensely on their immediate, challenged neighborhood with a significant investment of resources, while universities serving as conveners often choose to concentrate some level of resources in a poor neighborhood that is slightly removed from campus. Universities as facilitators, on the other hand, often do not adopt a place-based strategy, instead dispersing programs and resources throughout the broader community. Occasionally these schools may focus some resources to a specific neighborhood, particularly when approached to serve as a partner in a community-led revitalization effort. This is the case, for example, with IUPUI's dedication of resources to the Near Westside as a partner in the community's quality of life plan.

### **Community Economic Development through Corporate Investment**

The mere size of universities means their business and financial practices impact local economic development, whether positively or negatively, intentionally or unintentionally. A growing number of universities have come to embrace their role as purchaser, investor, workforce developer, incubator and real estate developer. Whether they choose to direct their economic power towards community development is a key question of this report. By strategically leveraging

their assets and business practices towards community economic development, universities can play a critical role in community revitalization. They can also attract significant outside investments and stimulate key public-private partnerships. These practices are particularly true of the universities we have identified as using a leadership model — i.e., Penn, Cincinnati, and Yale. These sites have demonstrated that more quantifiable impacts result when universities establish specific goals and targets for their financial practices to influence surrounding neighborhoods.

One economic practice that some universities have adopted is redirecting their purchasing dollars to support their local community. This often requires internal changes to the institution's procurement policies, whether that means providing unique opportunities for local, minority and women vendors to do business with the university (like Syracuse) or providing incentives for purchasing officers to engage in such strategies (like Penn). Additional resources or staffing may also be needed to build up local vendor capacity in order to deal with the university. By investing dollars that they would already be spending on goods and services into their local community, however, higher education institutions can help create healthy, stable, and viable communities. As Henry Webber of Washington University in St. Louis notes, "All anchors will do some local purchasing, but building or improving a local business community often requires active outreach to local vendors and intensive efforts to improve the capacity of these vendors."<sup>31</sup> A larger number of universities have given special effort to hire local contractors and/or mandate minority and local hires among their general contractors. (Of course, minority contracting is often required of public universities, but exceeding these expectations and focusing on local hires is certainly less common.) This may be linked to an apprenticeship program that enables residents to develop specialized skills on the jobs. Minnesota provides a leading example of this approach.

Another business practice geared towards community economic development is local workforce development and hiring. Some universities have targeted recruitment and training programs that prioritize hiring local residents. Through such programs, core skill set training linked with mentorship and real job opportunities can lead to significant economic opportunities for individuals while fulfilling specific workforce needs at the institution. Moreover, when universities expand their employment base from within their local neighborhood(s), it also promotes positive environmental practices by cutting down on commuting. The University of Southern California (USC), for example, has adopted a goal to increase employment from the areas immediately surrounding its campus. This goal has largely been realized through local recruitment and channeling applicants to various job opportunities, resulting in one out of seven applicants from the seven surrounding zip codes being hired at USC (a total of 170 hires out of approximately 1,200 positions, as of 2002).<sup>32</sup> Combining these workforce practices with the local purchasing practices described above, one innovative approach is to match university procurement with new community-based businesses that fulfill the needs of the university while creating opportunities for employment and asset building for local residents. Cleveland's Greater University Circle is leading the way in such an approach and will be discussed in the concluding section.<sup>33</sup>

Universities also can help shape real estate development for community benefit. Simply where institutions choose to erect new buildings has the potential for economic revitalization. Most higher education institutions have acted alone in their real estate activities, or, minimally, have maintained the lead role.<sup>34</sup> However, in order to circumvent some necessary political and financial risks that come with real estate development — as well as address broader community development goals — some universities have chosen to work with local partners, such as local community development corporations (CDCs), in whom the community may have greater trust. Other anchor institutions have partnered with private developers who can attract funding for low-income housing.<sup>35</sup> These options often mean ceding some degree of control of the development process. As Ziona Austrian and Jill Norton of Cleveland State University put it, “The direction that a university takes with respect to real estate acquisition and development ultimately depends on its leadership. The university president and top-level administrators set the agenda for physical development. Their vision for the future of the university and their perception of the role of the university as a civic partner determine what they do and how they do it.” The authors claim that anchor institution real estate development can most effectively reach mutually beneficial goals when university leaders choose to 1) align their plans with broader community goals; 2) partner with residents, city officials, and other stakeholders; and 3) ensure opportunities for community participation in the planning and decision-making process.<sup>36</sup> Leadership also influences how development agendas are financed. Some institutions have invested major dollars into real estate development in their surrounding community, such as Cincinnati’s dedication of \$150 million in endowment funds for redevelopment in Uptown. These dollars can leverage significant private investment.

University activity can also stimulate local commercial investment and the local housing market. For example, attracting and building new businesses in the area can provide jobs for residents in addition to bringing services to students, faculty, staff, and the broader community. Employer-assisted housing programs can also help revitalize the neighborhoods surrounding universities by creating more mixed-income areas. It should be noted that these practices may intentionally or unintentionally displace existing small businesses or property owners. One principle to address such issues, according to the *Anchor Institutions Toolkit* developed at Penn, is to “create retail development in context of the surrounding neighborhood — complementing existing mix versus displacing.”<sup>37</sup> In addition, universities may choose — or be required based on their funding source — to include affordable rental and low-income housing options for residents as part of their development, such as Portland State’s agreement with the Portland Development Commission. Although rare in example, universities may also support community land trusts, nonprofit agencies that use nonprofit land ownership to maintain permanently affordable housing even in a “gentrifying” area, as Duke University has done through its support of the Durham Community Land Trust.<sup>38</sup>

## Local Capacity Building

Some universities have sought to address community housing, business and economic development challenges by building resident and neighborhood capacity. Specifically, a number of universities have worked in partnership with existing, or formed new, local community development corporations that draw upon existing community strengths. This approach is particularly common among universities identified as conveners — Emory, Syracuse, Minnesota and LeMoyne-Owen — who also emphasize resident engagement, trainings, and joint leadership in these efforts. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), in particular, have been engaged in building and supporting community development corporations, an effort that grew largely from HUD dollars distributed to minority serving institutions in the 1990s (funding that continues to this day), as well as grant programs active during the late 1990s and early 2000s supported by Seedco and the Fannie Mae Foundation.<sup>39</sup>

Many universities have supported building local business capacity as part of a broader community development vision. A select number of institutions have helped establish revolving loan funds to support local entrepreneurs, such as the founding purpose of the LeMoyne-Owen College CDC. Another strategy is depositing university money in community development financial institutions and local minority-owned banks, thereby provided a larger pool of funds to lend to area businesses, as both Yale and Duke have done. Some universities operate business incubator facilities, providing a nurturing environment for emerging small businesses to develop and flourish. Other institutions provide workshops and technical assistance for local entrepreneurs. This focus on building local capacity through in-kind resources and educational programs is emphasized by universities serving as facilitators — IUPUI, Portland State, and Miami Dade College. In supporting local business development, Henry Taylor emphasizes, “The level of training should focus not only on providing market access to goods and services for the university, but actually developing groups of business owners that can go back into their community and help it grow.”<sup>40</sup>

Some university-community partnerships aim to strengthen existing community institutions. Many of the higher education institutions in this study, for example, have increased the capacity of local nonprofits through the placement of student interns and volunteers, as well as through faculty research. Many of these universities also provide trainings for local nonprofits and small businesses, led by professionals from throughout the institution and the broader community. In some cases, it is necessary for the university to commit to building local capacity in order to have a strong, on-the-ground partner organization for its community development agenda. Some universities have engaged other partners — often community foundations or well-established CDCs — to take on a more focused community capacity building role. As David Maurrasse discusses in *Beyond the Campus*, community-based organizations and residents need a “certain level of technical capacity and political savvy” to benefit most from their partnerships with higher education institutions.<sup>41</sup>

## Education and Health Partnerships

In recent years, the importance of community health and public education in urban revitalization has received mounting national recognition. Urban colleges and universities, in particular, have demonstrated growing interest in developing research and project-based partnerships in these areas. Indeed, education and health partnerships are a common element among all of the institutions profiled in this report.

As the 2009 HUD Anchor Institutions Task Force emphasized, "Successful community development and successful schooling are interconnected and interdependent." Moreover, successful public schools are intrinsically linked to the success of higher education institutions. This is not only because public schools prepare the next generation of college students and universities train the next generation of K-12 teachers and principals, but also because universities need strong neighborhoods to succeed, and strong neighborhoods rely on strong public school systems. Furthermore, public schools have a direct economic impact, as completing high school is one of the most important predictors of a young person's lifetime earning potential. According to a 2009 study by the Alliance for Excellent Education, if the number of high school dropouts in the nation's 50 largest cities and their surrounding areas were reduced by half, these 300,000 new graduates would collectively earn over \$4.1 billion in additional wages in an average year compared to their expected earnings without a diploma. As a result of higher incomes and increased spending, these graduates would also increase local tax revenue by nearly \$536 million during the average year.<sup>42</sup>

Community schools are one promising model of university engagement in public education, which implements a school-centered community development approach. A community school serves as the hub of its neighborhood, drawing in partners and community resources to improve student learning, strengthen families, and promote healthier communities. A growing body of research shows that community schools have a significant impact on increasing attendance, reducing the dropout rate, improving student academic performance and behavior, as well as increasing parent involvement and adult education. Moreover, more efficient use of school buildings, increased security, and better rapport between students and residents contribute to more stable neighborhoods.<sup>43</sup> Two of the universities featured in this study—Penn and IUPUI—have served as anchors in community school partnerships in their local neighborhoods. Through this university-assisted community school approach, and others, universities can provide a wealth of resources to local school partners, including the use of undergraduates in tutoring, mentoring, and staffing after-school programs. Professors and graduate students can also help develop curriculum and provide assistance with professional development for K-12 teachers.

A number of universities have taken a different direction in educational partnerships by adopting local schools or opening new schools (often charters) designed for low-income students. These approaches typically involve significant financial investment and intensive professional development, such as the University of Pennsylvania's support of the Penn Alexander School in West Philadelphia.

Improving community health is not only an intrinsic element of the university-assisted community school approach, but is also an increasing focus of health professional schools.<sup>44</sup> IUPUI, with the nation's largest nursing school (in terms of degrees offered) and one of the largest medical schools, exemplifies the mutually beneficial potential of neighborhood clinical outreach as a means of educating health professionals. Public health programs are also growing at universities across the country, with or without academic medical centers, through which faculty and students are engaged in community-based participatory research, health education and outreach. Community-Campus Partnerships for Health is a growing network of over 1,800 communities and higher educational institutions across North America that demonstrates this trend.<sup>45</sup> Community health partnerships need not have an economic focus in order to have an economic benefit — scientific studies have proven that healthier individuals have the capacity to learn better, work harder, and have greater productivity. Going one step further, Victor Rubin of PolicyLink claims, "Health is such a large industry. If a university puts a new [health] clinic in a low-income neighborhood, it can have its own economic impact by creating jobs and real estate. It becomes sort of a mini-anchor."<sup>46</sup> Miami Dade College's Medical Center Campus and Penn's Netter Center have both helped to open community health centers in their local neighborhoods. These centers are providing much needed services to community residents, as well as invaluable experiences to college students in the allied health fields; they may one day enjoy the spillover economic benefits to which Rubin refers.

## Scholarly Engagement

Scholarly engagement refers to the variety of ways that universities can leverage their *academic* resources to achieve community development objectives, generally carried out in ways that are mutually beneficial for the university, including enhanced learning, research and teaching. Scholarly engagement may include service-learning, semester or year-long "capstone" projects, practicums, health clinicals, internships, community problem-solving research, and more. In one form or another, scholarly engagement is a common feature among all of the institutions in this report; still, service-learning and community-based research is *most* emphasized by universities identified as facilitators, largely driven by their emphasis on student and faculty engagement while meeting partnership requests. Indeed, IUPUI, Portland State, and Miami Dade College have three of the largest service-learning programs in the nation.

Some universities, including several in this study (Syracuse, Portland State, Minnesota and IUPUI), have made revisions to their tenure and promotion guidelines to include a broader definition of scholarship. For example, in addition to IUPUI's "Public Scholar" designation for faculty hiring, and faculty awards from the Chancellor's Office, the university also encourages effective faculty engagement by providing fellowship opportunities to work in one of five targeted areas of community revitalization. Such policies and practices can encourage faculty to conduct more, and more ongoing, community-based participatory research. Other institutions have worked to imbed service-learning opportunities within their curriculum, helping to create a "culture of service" in a generation of youth. Service-learning, per se, although it is perhaps the most visible result of the growing university engagement movement, is not a major focus

of this report, in large measure because the nature of the work (the overwhelming majority of which is tied to the academic calendar of quarter-long or semester-long courses) does not easily lend itself to transformative community change.<sup>47</sup> Still, students in service-learning courses can provide labor for immediate nonprofit and public school needs. They can also be linked to sustained partnerships and programs, providing a consistent source of volunteers and leading to greater potential impact. Some institutions, like Portland State and Emory, provide year-long capstone courses as a means to engage students in deeper relationships with community partners, as well as connect students' experiences to a broader field of study. These capstone projects involve interdisciplinary teams of students working collaboratively with community partners to identify, and aim to solve, pressing community problems or assist community partners in pursuing important new opportunities for improving the well-being of their residents and neighborhood.

When scholarly efforts are connected to sustained partnerships, such as IUPUI's Faculty Community Fellows working in the Near Westside, Emory's year-long Community Building and Social Change Fellows program for students, and Penn's service-learning faculty and students working in community schools, the potential for community transformation is greatly enhanced.

### Multi-Anchor, City and Regional Partnerships

Many colleges and universities have looked to expand and deepen their external partnerships—including with other educational institutions, medical institutions, corporations, and city and state government—in order to share resources and services invested in their local community. The common rationale is that urban revitalization efforts may have a greater chance to succeed if there are collective resources, ownership and accountability among many partners. In some cases, the university may choose to partner with local government for more strategic reasons, such as acquiring funding and land. As Perry and Wiewel observe, "Relations between universities and city governments tend to be project- or task-oriented, episodic, and subject to political and personal vagaries. Given the importance of universities to their cities and the importance of local government to university projects, it would make sense for both to engage in more systematic, continuous, and comprehensive joint planning."<sup>48</sup> Portland State portrays a leading example in which the university and the city have participated in joint planning that has met the needs of the university while contributing to the vitality of the neighborhoods surrounding campus.

Four of the universities in this study—Penn, Syracuse, Cincinnati and Minnesota—have formed consortiums with higher education and/or other anchor institutions in their region. In other words, multi-anchor partnerships are most common among universities emphasizing a leadership or convening role. Such collaboration provides an opportunity to share and leverage resources as well as learn from each other. Similar to coordinating activities across one campus, bringing together the strengths, assets and programs from multiple institutions has the potential to have greater collective impact on the community. Of course, these local institutions should also build on the skills of local residents and the strength of neighborhood associations to support community development that can be sustained.

## ‡ Addressing the Challenges

Colleges and universities that incorporate any, or all, of the above anchor institution strategies face numerous challenges and critical decisions along the way. We briefly discuss several of these issues below: creating an engaged community; establishing partnership programs and goals; institutionalizing an anchor vision; securing funding and leveraging resources; building a culture of economic inclusion; sustaining participatory planning and robust community relationships; and, where the rubber hits the road, actually meeting at least some of the key needs of the low-income residents and neighborhoods who are partners in these efforts. These same issues will be explored further in each of the comparative segments of the next section. We have chosen not to explicitly discuss type of institution as one of these factors, although institutional size, funding, resources, demographics, and culture are just a few of the characteristics that shape the type and nature of campus-community partnerships. Many of these ideas are woven throughout the rest of the report as we discuss individual strengths and approaches among our cross section of cases.

### Creating an Engaged Community

Individuals, groups, and entities across the world define community in many different ways, and higher education institutions are no exception to this rule. Some universities view their community as the scholars who work and study within the boundaries of their campus. Others see themselves *within* a broader community—for many urban institutions, a community of poverty and blight—one with which they may or may not choose to engage. A growing number of universities have begun to see themselves as *part of* their surrounding community, their futures intertwined with the success of their neighbors. As Michael Morand of Yale puts it, “The inextricable bond [of a university as a community institution] is expressed by the fact that our marvelously urbanized campus is continuously intersected by public streets and sidewalks, that the art museums are free and open to the public as are over a thousand lectures, concerts, and events each year. . . That engagement and rootedness is what fundamentally sets places like ours apart from hospitals, foundations, banks, corporations, and others that support community development.”<sup>49</sup>

For universities that have taken the view that they are *within* and *part of* their surrounding community, definitions and tactics still vary. The historical relationship between the institution and the community plays a key role in the approach to engagement. Several universities have engaged in community development in response to crisis, such as violent crimes in the neighborhood surrounding campus. Some universities strategically focus on neighborhood-level impacts while others look to impact regional development. Some do both. Syracuse University, for example, has taken on the entire City of Syracuse as its community while still

focusing on revitalization of two local neighborhoods. Not all urban universities are immediately surrounded by poverty. In such cases, they may choose to focus their partnership efforts on relations with their immediate neighbors and/or government agencies, such as Emory's early partnership programs in the Clifton Corridor and surrounding neighborhood area. Or, they may choose to invest at least some level of focused resources in a targeted neighborhood that is not directly adjacent to campus but is most in need of the resources and relationships that a university can provide, such as the University of Minnesota's efforts in North Minneapolis or Emory's work through the Office of University Community Partnerships in low-income metro Atlanta neighborhoods.

Regardless of their definition, the universities in this study have all demonstrated meaningful impacts on their surrounding communities. We argue, however, that those who adopt a place-based strategy, focusing resources on specific geographic area(s), have greater *potential* to directly influence community economic development. This is discussed further in the concluding section.

### Establishing Partnership Programs and Goals

The specific programs and activities enlisted by campus-community partners vary greatly, although they generally align with the partners' chosen methods of engagement, such as the six anchor strategies described above. They also depend upon the identified assets and needs of all local partners. A community needs assessment may be conducted to assess these prioritized areas, while asset mapping may be conducted to identify the capacities and strengths of local individuals, organizations, and institutions. The selected programs and goals will also depend upon existing relationships, financial capacity, and leadership. As Henry Webber and Penn's *Anchor Institutions Toolkit* both suggest, anchors may want to conduct a risks-and-benefits analysis when evaluating potential strategies and projects.<sup>50</sup> In the most collaborative approaches, community residents and other key stakeholders are involved in these assessments and at all stages of the planning process to collectively identify goals and activities that will mutually benefit both the community and the institution.

Another distinction among higher education institutions engaged in their communities is whether the university takes a reactive or proactive approach to community development. As described previously, a growing number of universities are taking a lead role in community revitalization efforts. Some universities are reacting in response to a crisis within or on the edge of campus, as mentioned above, while others take a more proactive approach to turn around a nearby blighted community. Other universities do not have the capacity to lead a community revitalization effort, but have served in a convening role, pulling resources and stakeholders together. Still other universities have served as key partners in a collaborative effort for community revitalization but have taken less of a leadership role, instead allowing community leaders, or other anchors, to guide the initiative.

## Institutionalizing an Anchor Vision

As defined by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, “institutionalized practices of community engagement” among universities and colleges demonstrate “alignment among mission, culture, leadership, resources, and practices.”<sup>51</sup> For universities and colleges implementing anchor institution strategies, there are no substitutes for high-level administrative support. University presidents and chancellors, in particular, set the institution’s vision and priorities, as well as its budget. When these leaders support community engagement efforts—beyond rhetoric—partnerships work more effectively, more efficiently, and achieve greater impact. Still, sustainable community partnerships must go beyond the commitment of a few dedicated individuals or presidential leadership. Otherwise, few efforts will persist beyond a single administration. Depending on the university’s anchor strategies, this may mean developing such measures as increasing the number of faculty as leaders in community-based research and curriculum or changing the culture among purchasing officers to focus on local procurement. Specifically, engaging faculty members—who do the vast majority of teaching and research at the university *and* who are often the longest standing members of the institution—certainly plays a critical role in institutionalizing an anchor vision.

Further, community development strategies have the greatest potential impact when the administrative and business sides of the university work together with the academic side.<sup>52</sup> As Maurrasse puts it, “The irony of partnerships of this sort is that each side of the equation must effectively prepare and collaborate *internally* in order to do so externally. . . Higher education/community partnerships historically have often been inconsistent and uncoordinated, leaving neighborhood residents wary of even the best intentioned outreach efforts.”<sup>53</sup>

One promising approach to internal coordination and collaboration—and sustainability—is the presence of a centralized unit that promotes and manages outreach activities. Some of these units are focused almost exclusively on service-learning, while others have broader community partnership agendas. At the same time, major community development efforts led by university administration are often managed—and funded—separately from their community partnership centers. The degree to which these approaches, and their resources, are strategically aligned has much to do with the institutional leadership and the specific programs and goals being implemented, as well as largely affects how the *university* is impacted by engagement with its community.<sup>54</sup> At many of the universities featured in this study, for example, high-powered faculty or staff person(s) often lead a centralized partnership center whose efforts are supported by, and closely aligned with, the central administration. For instance, the University of Minnesota has a Dean of Extension and three Associate Vice Presidents in positions that are responsible for community engagement: Beverly Durgan, Andrew Furco, Geoff Maryuma and Irma McClaurin. All of these leaders report to Senior Vice President Robert Jones, whose commitment to advancing both the community engagement agenda and the urban agenda have brought together these university-wide efforts. This leadership and alignment often promotes more effective—and efficient—use of internal resources.

## Securing Funding and Leveraging Resources

While federal, foundation, and donor dollars have supported many universities' engagement efforts, internal funds are essential for sustained community-campus partnerships. Endowment and operating fund allocations are two ways to leverage university assets for community development. Targeted alumni-giving campaigns have also raised dollars for partnership efforts. Although state institutions often have more restricted funding, those in this study have been able to draw from their central budget to support community partnership activities. University leaders often feel greater justification in the use of core funding and endowment dollars towards community engagement when the activities also help realize the core missions of their institution; this investment typically involves annual expenditures to campus partnership centers and programs that are also helping to advance research, teaching and learning. In several cases, it involves substantial capital expenditure.

Higher education institutions can also invest in community development in ways that require less direct expenditures — and more cultural transformation — such as through adopting economic inclusion practices in their employment, purchasing, hiring, investment, and contracting, as noted above. Efficient use of internal resources also requires the reallocation of existing funds to community partnership activities, such as faculty time, whose research and/or students are focused on community problem-solving.

Internal support must also be matched with external funding. Many of the universities in this study have been supported through federal dollars, such as Office of University Partnership (OUP) grants administered through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) — typically in the range of \$400,000–\$700,000 and administered over three-years. Reaching more than 300 universities in its first decade, OUP has had significant influence on the evolution of university-community partnerships, although funding for the program has always been limited.<sup>55</sup> The universities in this study have also received significant grants from local and national foundations. Too many campus-community partnerships, however, rely on grant funding, which are often limited in dollar amount and in time. "A discontinued program is a common reality in the academy, but a discontinued community partnership could prove disruptive or even devastating to local residents," observes Maurrasse.<sup>56</sup> External grants often do not allow for the necessary time to build relationships and have an inclusive planning process, which is essential for any ongoing efforts for community revitalization. Thus, the combination of internal and external resources may prove most sustainable for community partnerships.

Many universities and colleges have looked to diversify and expand their funding base for community partnership efforts. Universities focused on real estate development, in particular, have been able to leverage funding through Tax Increment Financing (TIF), New Market Tax Credits, revenue bonds, standard commercial loans and other sources. Some universities have helped form non-profit organizations that operate as independent entities but remain closely associated with the institution. This allows not only for the organization to attract funding using the university name but also to avoid bureaucratic and other restrictions on university funds. The LeMoyné-Owen College Community Development Corporation is a chief example of this

type of approach, where the university is able to participate in community development activities through association with and support of this separate entity. Urban planning and mixed-used real estate specialists David Dixon and Peter Roche's rationale of Ohio State University's decision to form a new entity ("Campus Partners for Community Urban Redevelopment") also helps explain such an approach:

- "The revitalization should be led by an entity with a clearly defined mission and full-time staff dedicated to this task. Flexibility and effectiveness in conducting planning and real estate development activities would also be key, and the university itself could not provide that expertise.
- Clear authority for making decisions, independent of the very collegial decision-making process of the university, would be critical.
- Distance from the university structure would be important, both to shield OSU from potential controversy and to inspire community acceptance. . .
- Campus Partners would need to live up to private-sector expectations by playing the dual role of the redevelopment authority (assembling land and handling relocation, demolition, and environmental cleanup) and the source of 'patient capital' (taking early risks related to planning and market studies, land purchases, etc.)."<sup>57</sup>

### Building a Culture of Economic Inclusion

Similar to the differing interpretations of community, universities view their role in promoting economic inclusion in various ways. For some institutions, providing access to higher education is their primary vision — and perhaps greatest potential — for providing economic opportunity. This is particularly true of universities serving as facilitators. Miami Dade College's open-door policy and Portland State's agreement with local community colleges both speak to this objective. Some institutions, community colleges in particular, also offer credit and non-credit courses at no charge to community residents.

Other higher education institutions try to impact community economic development in a more direct way. While many university-community partnerships have led to reductions in the rate of neighborhood crime, few universities have made significant impacts on poverty. Similarly, while considerable success has occurred in a number of partnership programs, these efforts have rarely been sufficient to eliminate the health disparities and educational achievement gap that poverty most often brings. As Stephen Viederman claims in an essay entitled, "Can Universities Contribute to Sustainable Development," "Most efforts at social change are, in effect, ameliorative: they seek to remedy immediate problems, but do not deal with root causes."<sup>58</sup> However, a range of strategies has emerged in the last 15 years to begin to directly and systemically address such issues and create greater economic opportunity for local residents. Some universities have dedicated intellectual and human resources to solving these real-world problems through service-learning, community-based participatory research, internships and fellowships. More tangible economic benefit — though more limited in example — comes through the dedication of purchasing and contracting dollars, employment practices, training and technical assistance,

investment, and real estate development towards community economic development. These innovative practices are largely being demonstrated by universities serving in leadership roles. Several other institutions in this study have been encouraged by state or city policies to offer assistance to minority and disadvantaged business owners. Many of the studied universities have also supported local entrepreneurs and small businesses through training, technical assistance, and seed funding. Universities in convening roles typically embrace this capacity-building focus as a means to economic inclusion.

The University of Pennsylvania's "West Philadelphia Initiatives" is one of the most highly recognized commitments to economic inclusion, which involved a combined effort of the business practices and academic programs described above.<sup>59</sup> This approach, however, can be challenging, as there is often a tension between the economic development mindset, and the partnership mindset, of a university. As Maurrasse phrases it, "As much as higher education appears to be moving toward involvement in local communities, the institutions also are becoming increasingly corporate in nature. . . The core academic mission holds one set of priorities; economic aspects of the mission drive another set of priorities. The two are intertwined but not always in sync."<sup>60</sup>

### Sustaining Participatory Planning and Robust Community Relationships

Building relationships and trust among campus and community partners takes time. And, as Maurrasse wryly comments, "If the historical relationship has been contentious, it takes even more time."<sup>61</sup> Sustainable campus-community partnerships involve inclusive planning processes that allow for an inventory of strengths of the various partners involved, prioritization of the most pressing needs, and agreement upon mutually beneficial strategies. Transparency is a necessary element of trust between campus and community. As Rachel Weber, Nik Theodore, and Charles Hoch of the University of Illinois at Chicago write, "Transparency requires that informational channels allow partners to comprehend the interest, intentions, and capabilities of each partner. It does not mean that all information is disclosed indiscriminately (which, in fact, may constitute a dereliction of fiduciary duty), but rather that information be relevant, actionable, and delivered on a timely basis."<sup>62</sup>

Community buy-in is essential, prior to — and during — implementation. "For community buy-in, people from the university have to be seen as trustworthy, of their word, and bringing a tangible benefit for the community. One way to be trustworthy is to not be a direct representative of the institution (faculty or student groups, for example); or, be a representative of the institution and admit your past wrongdoings," says Rubin. "You need to be able to describe what it is the university wants to do, and be clear that you are willing to share the planning and decision making with community groups."<sup>63</sup>

Ongoing communication is also indispensable for sustained partnerships. Forums, town halls, and other gatherings can provide opportunities for community and university stakeholders to exchange ideas and discuss strategies for partnership and redevelopment. In Penn's case, monthly meetings called First Thursdays are held in a public library "to which all community

stakeholders and university administrators are invited and regularly attend to nourish the process of transparency.”<sup>64</sup> Yale holds a similar monthly forum. Universities may also provide opportunities for residents and other stakeholders to counsel and monitor their partnerships through a community advisory board.

Power dynamics play an important role in campus-community partnerships. Austrian and Norton’s analysis of university real estate development holds true for many university engagement initiatives: “The extent to which community groups can affect the development process is partly a function of their sophistication. Well-organized groups with highly skilled leaders are better able to exert pressure and more equipped to negotiate with the university.”<sup>65</sup> Some institutions have signed community benefit agreements with their neighborhood, in order to negotiate results and expectations. “There’s a principle behind this: it’s not a benefit if the community doesn’t want it,” says Rosalind Greenstein, an urban policy analyst. “[A community benefit agreement] is the second best thing, though. The best thing is a really good community planning process.”<sup>66</sup> This process is most successful when there is “consistent, committed leadership on both sides of the partnership—the university and the community,” adds Elizabeth Hollander. She also emphasizes the need for “very skilled bridge people who know how to work between the two entities.”<sup>67</sup>

Maurrasse goes a step further to discuss the importance of empowering the community. “It is important to ensure that knowledge is being transferred from higher education into local communities, promoting self-sufficiency rather than fostering dependency among local constituents. . . Capacity building would suggest the transference of power from one party to the other. Furthermore, when both parties are treated as if each has something to offer, the opinion of the transitional ‘recipient’ influences the nature of the relationship. Ultimately, the ‘recipient’ is more likely to buy into the partnership when engaged as a contributor through the process.” Such practice reflects an asset-based community development approach.<sup>68</sup>

In this vein, a small but growing number of university administrators and faculty are recognizing and respecting the value of resident and community knowledge, which helps to break down some of these power structures. According to Harry Boyte, Founder and Co-Director of the Center for Democracy and Citizenship (now at Augsburg College), the “main obstacle to genuine and productive partnerships” between higher education institutions and their communities is a “‘knowledge war,’ full of invisible hierarchies and exclusions” that dramatically limits their capacity to solve neighborhood (and greater societal) problems.<sup>69</sup>

## Meeting the Needs of Low-Income Residents and Neighborhoods

For this report, we sought to move beyond public relations and anecdotes to assess the universities’ overall approach to community development, how these efforts affect those most in need, and how such strategies can be focused for the greatest positive outcome. As anticipated, few universities have engaged in comprehensive, longitudinal evaluation of community outcomes (or university outcomes, for that matter). Much of the assessment to date has been measured against specific goals and targets for individual programs or initiatives. For example,

the University of Minnesota exceeded a 30-percent women- and minority-owned business target for the \$2.1 million renovation of their new Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center, and Portland State's Business Outreach Program has assisted more than 400 small and emerging businesses to develop as well as create 150 new jobs in the last three years alone.

A few institutions are beginning to look at neighborhood-level impacts, including educational achievement, employment levels, and per capita income. IUPUI's partnership with George Washington Community School, for example, helped its 2009 high school graduates enjoy a 100 percent acceptance rate into college. In 2009, Miami Dade College awarded nearly 8,000 associate degrees and 200 bachelor's degrees, as well as helped 600 residents earn their GEDs. Remarkably, LeMoyné-Owen College has seen its surrounding neighborhood's per capita income increase from \$8,000 to \$13,500 over the last ten years, while the percentage of residents earning under \$10,000 per year improved by 21 percent.

Some impacts of university engagement strategies — particularly those with large development agendas — have also been mixed. The University of Pennsylvania's creation and support of the Penn Alexander School, for example, achieved its desired result of high achievement for local students and attraction of Penn-affiliated families to live in the local community; real estate values have skyrocketed, however, which has displaced some of the families that once lived in the area. Cincinnati has also displaced residents and small business owners through its commercial and real estate development; to combat such consequences, they have helped acquire façade improvement grants for existing businesses as well as provided subsidized rental space.

Some university initiatives have more indirect community economic development benefits. Yale's homebuyer program, for example, has provided \$22.5 million in subsidies to support more than 925 university-affiliated individuals or families to buy homes in New Haven. Emory's Office of University Community Partnerships has focused on building capacity among existing community development corporations.

Many of the university initiatives focused on community development are too young to see the desired results. Syracuse's Near West Side Initiative, for instance, has made great strides in its efforts to acquire and renovate land as well as rehabilitate old homes with sustainable green technology. Realization of the initiative's goal to improve the overall quality of life in the Near West Side (through such measures as increased employment and homeownership), on the other hand, can only be seen in time. It is also worth recognizing at this time the deep and terrible impact that the subprime mortgage and foreclosure crisis has had on low-income neighborhoods throughout the United States, including many of the communities that universities have been helping to develop. As Victor Rubin puts it, "I fear a lot of the gains that came about in university-related neighborhood revitalization may be swept away. . .it is certainly a very critical issue and will shape all these endeavors for years to come."<sup>70</sup> Promisingly, while conducting this study, we saw few signs of campuses pulling back from their community investment.

## Summing Up

Universities' engagement with their local communities has a deep history. The movement has particularly evolved over the past five decades and is now entering a new era. Increasingly, urban colleges and universities are seeking to employ their capacity as anchor institutions to meet the social and economic needs of their local communities. However, universities engaged in this work face many challenges. As noted above, some of the key issues universities face when deploying anchor strategies include creating an engaged community; establishing partnership programs and goals; institutionalizing an anchor vision; securing funding and leveraging resources; building a culture of economic inclusion; sustaining inclusive planning and robust community relationships; and creating meaningful impacts on low-income residents and neighborhoods. Section Two, which details the anchor strategies at ten colleges and universities, will explore these issues further.