

The Road Half Traveled

University Engagement at a Crossroads

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Chapter Three: University as Convener

Community Partnerships at Syracuse, Minnesota, LeMoyne-Owen, and Emory

The four schools reviewed in this chapter—Syracuse University; University of Minnesota, Twin Cities; LeMoyne-Owen College; and Emory University—are marked by their strategic choice to engage in collaborative community development efforts. Not faced with an immediate safety threat (such as Penn, Cincinnati, and Yale), but still embracing their institutional mission, these schools have the flexibility to focus partnerships and resources on the broader community. With the vision of comprehensive neighborhood revitalization, the institutions described here have chosen to adopt a place-based strategy as a part of a larger community engagement agenda, focusing resources on a non-adjacent neighborhood(s), where issues of poverty and economic decline are most acute. (LeMoyne-Owen being the notable exception, as the College is located within its community of need.)

Critically, these institutions have all worked to forge liaisons—both human and physical—to more closely align themselves with the needs and voices of the community. As conveners, these schools bring in community organizations and residents as co-participants in planning and operations, and ultimately as “owners” of neighborhood revitalization. In a similar fashion, these universities help to build capacity among residents and community institutions. Project-based partnerships in health and education are seen at each of these institutions, often in support of the broader community development agenda.

Support from top administration, as well as some degree of institutional alignment, has helped focus university-wide resources on key community initiatives. However, unlike the efforts of Penn, Yale, and Cincinnati, direct corporate investment has been more limited. Instead, these institutions have relied on leveraging public and private funds in support of their community development agendas. The logic of these four schools’ strategies is explored in further detail below.

Syracuse University

This is our identity as an institution. Our areas of excellence are completely compatible with the future opportunity of these neighborhoods, so it really is mutually beneficial.

Chancellor Nancy Cantor, Syracuse University²²⁸

As a private research university that literally sits up on a hill overlooking downtown Syracuse and its surrounding neighborhoods, Syracuse University could easily exist in its distant ivory tower. Indeed, in the early 1990s, Chancellor Shaw took a very intentional move to consolidate the university on its main campus. His thinking was that, if the city fails, Syracuse University could survive. When Chancellor Nancy Cantor—a social psychologist and leader in the higher education engagement movement—arrived on campus in 2004, however, she viewed the university as “an incredible test bed of how a private university, as a place-based institution, could play a role in the public good.”²²⁹ Cantor has defined the university’s neighborhood as the City of Syracuse. At the same time, the University has demonstrated its public commitment by engaging in very intentional partnerships with two particular neighborhoods in need of revitalization.

The most visible of these efforts has taken place in the Near West Side. In 2007, when the state of New York agreed to forgive universities’ loans if the money were invested in an urban economic development project, many institutions simply used the money to build new campus buildings. Cantor instead made the decision to invest in the Near West Side. Syracuse gave all \$13.8 million of its Debt Reinvestment Funds (i.e., forgiven loans from the state) to begin a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization effort that seeks to use the power of art, technology and innovation, *in keeping with neighborhood values and culture*, to revitalize the ninth poorest census tract in the United States. Specifically, \$8 million was dedicated for property acquisition and renovation; \$2.5 million was allocated for architecture, including engaging Syracuse students in urban redesign; and \$2.5 million was given to Syracuse’s Center of Excellence to improve energy and environmental performance of homes. An additional \$5 million was acquired from the Syracuse Neighborhood Initiative, Restore New York Communities grants (awarded by the state to the City of Syracuse), and private sources.²³⁰

Community revitalization efforts are being directed through the Near West Side Initiative (NWSI), a nonprofit corporation formed as a collaborative network of business, educational, and nonprofit leaders, neighborhood residents, and development professionals. NWSI’s Board Chair, Marilyn Higgins, also serves as the Vice President for Community Engagement and Economic Development, whom Cantor appointed to this new university position in 2007. Higgins has been responsible for acquiring 74 abandoned properties in the Near West Side as well as strip of abandoned warehouses. She hopes that her \$8 million will leverage another \$50 million needed for full construction. For example, debt reinvestment funds have been combined with grants from Restore New York to rehabilitate the Case Supply Warehouse, a 200,000 square-foot, turn-of-the-century structure, to house the region’s public broadcasting station along with

artist condominiums and the international literacy organization, Pro-Literacy International. This rehabilitated warehouse — partners hope — will serve as an anchor project for neighborhood revitalization. Although Syracuse provided significant seed funding and is responsible for much of the oversight of the initiative, the University had tried to remain out of the spotlight. “When Nancy [Cantor] came to the first NWSI Board meeting, she said very clearly that this is NOT a University initiative,” reflects Kathy Goldfarb-Findling, Executive Director of the Rosamond Gifford Charitable Corporation, and Co-Chair of the NWSI Board. “This provided clarity from the beginning that partnership was key.” It also meant that Syracuse wasn’t going to provide ongoing financial support but rather encourage NSWI to become a self-sustaining entity.²³¹

The Gifford Foundation is responsible for leading the neighborhood capacity building effort in the Near West Side. This has seen its challenges: with two competing minority populations

Figure 11: Syracuse Anchor Strategies

Comprehensive Neighborhood Revitalization

- Near West Side Initiative: revitalizing neighborhood through property acquisition and renovation and rehab of existing homes, with a focus on arts and culture, in 11-block area
- South Side Initiatives: efforts towards community-owned businesses

Community Economic Development through Corporate Investment

- Support to minority- and women-owned businesses through trainings and mentorship, as well as exclusive bid opportunities (8% total purchasing to MWBEs)
- Convey economic inclusion principles to contractors
- Home Ownership Grant and Guaranteed Mortgage Program extended to Near West Side

Local Capacity Building

- Near West Side Initiative established as independent 501(c)3 with shared leadership
- Southside Innovation Center supports women and minority entrepreneurs (assisted in development of 45 new businesses and profitable turnaround of 58 others)
- South Side Initiatives working to develop food co-op

- Partnership with Gifford Foundation for resident training in Near West Side

Education and Health Partnerships

- Say Yes to Education, in partnership with Syracuse City School District, provides comprehensive services, including promise of free college tuition

Scholarly Engagement

- “Scholarship in Action”: more than 400 students and 75 faculty involved in Near West Side Initiative alone
- Tenure and promotion changes to support engaged scholarship
- Imagining America (housed at SU): public scholarship in the arts, humanities and design
- Entrepreneurship Initiative through the Kauffman Foundation

Multi-Anchor, City, and Regional Partnerships

- Connective Corridor: multi-sector partnership creating cultural strip that connects University Hill to downtown
- Leader of Say Yes to Education consortia of more than 100 private and public higher education institutions

in the area, some of the Latino community views the University's and NWSI's efforts as marginalizing. Rita Paniagua, Executive Director of the Spanish Action League and an NWSI Board member, comments, "There is still a long history of distrust and disinvestment. We have a really poor Latino community here. They need to see tangible change—the new houses are a start, but there is a long way to go." A new Latina Cultural Center, which aims to bring university staff, faculty, students, and the Latino community together around culture, arts, and education, is being planned for the Near West Side. Faculty leaders hope this permanent site will signal university commitment to engagement with and access for the Latino community.

Another key member of the NWSI network is Home HeadQuarters, a nonprofit who provides mini-grants to homeowners for green renovations, constructs new homes, and provides apprentice training for low- and moderate-income individuals from the neighborhood interested in the construction trade. Syracuse's Center of Excellence facilitates home audits to determine where the mini-grants could have the most impact, and students help design groundbreaking green technology for the homes. "Centers of Excellence are usually traditional science think tanks; here, we're having a real impact on the neighborhood," comments Ed Bogucz, Associate Professor and Center Director. The Center is largely focused on the 17 percent of existing homeowners in the community. "This neighborhood has been very discriminated against and underserved, so trust with the homeowners is huge," says Bogucz. "We have to keep them strong and engaged, so we can attract new homeowners." A Syracuse graduate student, employed as an "Engagement Fellow" with the Initiative, has visited the small businesses in the Near West Side to explain the Initiative, evaluate their assets and challenges, and invite them to be involved. "We're building on what's there now," Bogucz comments. The Dean of the Law School has also urged the School's Center on Property, Citizenship, and Social Entrepreneurism to help design resident-owned business models for the Near Westside.²³²

Syracuse's second focused revitalization effort is in the South Side. The South Side Initiatives formed in 2005 to connect the resources of the university with the community-identified needs of this neighborhood. "The litmus test for all our partnership projects is, when Syracuse University is no longer there, [can] the community sustain the business or project?" says Associate Vice President Linda Littlejohn. For example, Syracuse matched state funds to develop the South Side Communications Center. This Center will house a community technology room, as well as a new community newspaper, where both Syracuse students and residents will be trained. Ownership and operation will eventually be turned over to the community in an effort to retain talented residents in the neighborhood. The South Side Initiatives is also working towards a cooperatively owned grocery store. In addition, the University's Whitman School of Management operates a South Side Innovation Center that supports women and minority entrepreneurs in the area through one-on-one counseling, workshops, and incubator space. This is part of the South Side Entrepreneurial Connect Project, which, since 2006, has assisted the development of 45 new businesses and in the profitable turnaround of 58 others.²³³

Another key revitalization effort led by Syracuse University is the Connective Corridor. This cultural strip aims to connect University Hill with downtown Syracuse, stimulate economic development, and showcase art, technology, and sustainable designs. A Community Working

Group, representing the City's neighborhoods, arts community, businesses, and nonprofit organizations, has been engaged in all the important steps along the way. "We're looking at all the arts and cultural organizations in the city and finding ways that SU can support them, particularly through leveraging the intellectual resources on campus," comments Eric Persons, Syracuse's Director of Engagement Initiatives. A student artist team from the College of Visual and Performing Arts, for example, developed the innovative Urban Video Project which projects artwork and other cultural video displays daily in three public venues. Another key partner is the Chamber of Commerce who is steering the business development side of the Corridor, including setting up a revolving loan fund for hospitality businesses. Persons says, "We've shied away from development opportunities that do not directly serve an institutional need." The Corridor will extend to the Near West Side, helping to stimulate the revitalization of that neighborhood.²³⁴

Also tied into the Connective Corridor development, and extending to the Near West Side, is Syracuse's Guaranteed Mortgage Program, which the University has provided for over 100 individuals since its beginning in 1994. The Home Ownership Grant Program — providing a \$1,000 grant from SU matched by \$1,000 from Home Headquarters — also encourages faculty to live in the area.²³⁵

Syracuse's business office has undertaken deliberate efforts to support disadvantaged women- and minority-owned businesses (MBE/WBE), including training opportunities provided by major contractors and university staff. Contractors are strongly encouraged, but not mandated, to support the institution's goals of inclusion. "We really go above and beyond to assist women and minority business owners," comments Eric Beattie, Director of Campus Planning, Design, and Construction. "We invite them to bid; if they're not successful, then we sit down afterwards and explain how they missed the mark. . . we're trying to get them to a level playing field so they can be competitive." In 2008, eight percent of Syracuse's purchase orders were issued to MBE/WBE vendors or suppliers. In the last three years, 17 different firms were successful in bidding and being hired to perform work on 24 different projects that were set up with opportunities exclusively for MBE/WBE firms.²³⁶

Internally, Chancellor Cantor aims to further institutionalize university-community engagement efforts through embedding collaborative, cross-sector partnerships in every school and college. These efforts are being substantially supported through a five-year, \$3 million grant from the Kauffman Foundation for a Campus-Community Entrepreneurship Initiative. Notably, Syracuse has made several policy changes, including alterations to its tenure and promotion guidelines, to encourage engaged scholarship. Cantor knew that she had to take, head on, the policy and practice implications: "The work can't just be on the back of dedicated staff and faculty. It needs to be embedded in the reward structure, and the mission." Today, "Scholarship in Action" is the bold vision of the entire institution. Put simply, Cantor defines this as "intellectual capital focused outward in a mutually beneficial way."²³⁷

Higgins emphasizes the leadership of the Deans and the role of faculty/student engagement in making the Chancellor's vision "come to life" and sustaining the initiative: "As courses and projects are developed, and students become regularly engaged in this work, the community realizes that this is not temporary effort but an integral part of the University's culture, and something they can depend upon."²³⁸

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Perhaps our greatest challenge — and the greatest opportunity — is to strengthen the connection between our research and education missions and the needs of our society.

Robert H. Bruininks, President, University of Minnesota²³⁹

As one of the nation's public land-grant universities, and one of the few located in a major metropolitan area, the University of Minnesota has been officially committed to "service" for over a century. Yet, like many land-grant institutions, the University of Minnesota developed an academic culture that often ran contrary to the idea of playing a public role. Overcoming organization inertia has proved challenging. Peer faculty interviews conducted at the University of Minnesota by Edwin Fogelman and Harry Boyte in 2001 and 2002 found that the "desire for public engagement in scholarly and other activities was widespread. But an equally widespread comment went something like: 'I could never discuss this with my colleagues.' We found strong norms of silence about that. We also found administrators that were supportive, in part because university support from the state was declining. We had a feeling there was a lot to build on."²⁴⁰

Inspired both by a Kellogg Commission for land-grant institutions in the 1990s, as well as internal activists such as Boyte and Fogelman, the University of Minnesota began rethinking its role as an engaged land-grant university. The university's shift towards a vision of itself as an "urban land-grant university" was solidified with a strategic planning process in 2004 that called for an "urban agenda;" this process also established Minnesota's goal of becoming one of the world's top three public research universities by 2014.²⁴¹ Although these objectives are complementary in an ideal future, wherein public engagement is used to advance the university's research goals, the country's current academic culture, which remains centered on the publishing of papers in academic research journals, creates some tension between Minnesota's two goals.

Prior to establishing its urban land-grant vision structurally, the University of Minnesota had taken a number of administrative steps to advance its engagement work. One of these was to create the position of Associate Vice President for Public Engagement, established in 2006, responsible for promoting and aligning engagement strategies across the University's five campuses and further institutionalizing public engagement across the research, teaching and outreach functions of the University. Associate Vice President Andrew Force works to transform the University culture in ways that embrace community engagement as a strategy for producing research of significance, conducting quality teaching, and meeting the needs of the local and broader society. Guiding this position is Senior Vice President Robert J. Jones, who has been deeply invested in the University's comprehensive engagement plan and strategic urban agenda.

Across the campus, there are several dozen units and centers that support this new direction. For example, the University's Office for Business and Community Economic Development (OBCED) has an explicit focus on leveraging university assets and resources to improve economic opportunities for underserved minorities. Established in 1999 by the Board of Regents,

“to advance the University’s interests in promoting economic development and training opportunities for historically underrepresented groups,” the office combines business and community development in a single office — something found in few universities. What guided the office’s formation, according to its director Craig Taylor, was the University’s acknowledgement that simply relying on undirected university spending to spur community improvement was proving inadequate. “[The University] realized that a focused, intentional, and strategic effort was needed that leverages resources to do much more.”²⁴²

To comply with the Regents’ Policy (1999), Taylor created a Small and Targeted Business Program, which, eleven years after its formation, now requires 10 percent of all base contracts to go to minorities and small businesses. Taylor also established formal policies and procedures to make sure these goals became an integral part of the bidding process. For several of the recent, large capital projects the University has set higher goals. Its new football stadium, for example, saw 23 percent of the \$300 million project go to women- and minority-owned businesses.

Figure 12: Minnesota Anchor Strategies

Comprehensive Neighborhood Revitalization

- University Northside Partnership and new Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center (UROC), with focus on education, health, and economic development in North Minneapolis

Community Economic Development through Corporate Investment

- Minimum 10% of base contracts to minority- and women-owned business enterprises; 34% inclusion in \$2.8 million UROC construction
- Hiring policies for contractors to recruit 29% minorities/women/disabled workers from unions, and local partnerships for apprenticeship training

Local Capacity Building

- Management and Technical Assistance Programs for Small Businesses and Nonprofits through Office of Business and Community Economic Development
- FIPSE grant aimed to enhance capacity and collaboration of existing organizations in three focus areas
- CURA Northside seed grants have linked more than 20 community-identified projects to university resources

- New Business and Technology Center in UROC (includes training and incubator space)

Education and Health Partnerships

- Five Hundred under Five: early childhood intervention program for 500 North Minneapolis children and families
- Medical School Program in Health Disparities Research
- Urban Area Health Education Center designed to introduce youth to health careers

Scholarly Engagement

- Estimated 100 service-learning courses each year partner with more than 200 nonprofits in and around Twin Cities
- Participatory action research with faculty, students, and community residents
- Community Engagement Scholars Program (20 students/year)

Multi-Anchor, City, and Regional Partnerships

- Leading new Regional Higher Education Consortium

These efforts paid off when the University decided to establish its first place-based urban research center in North Minneapolis. The targets set for the renovation of the first Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center set a new standard in this area of compliance. The University's usual bottom line of 10 percent was tripled. By the completion of renovation in September 2009, targets for inclusion of women- and minority-owned business enterprises and for women and minority participation in the workforce had exceeded all expectations at 34 percent.²⁴³

On the purchasing side, the University has become more creative in negotiations with large contractors. For example, when Time Warner approached the University to bid on cable services for student housing, OBCED negotiated that Time Warner must provide 1) \$50,000 in scholarship funding for students of color, 2) \$100,000 towards a Management and Technical Assistance Program for Small Businesses, and 3) hire three women or minority interns every year. Taylor says, "We believe that if the contractors can't hire minority people, then we can use seed capital they provide to create programs that will build capacity and provide technical assistance." The University now uses this strategy with many of its preferred vendors: IBM has committed computers, hardware and software, and financial support to provide computer training and technology technical assistance with small businesses and nonprofits. In FY 2008, \$75 million of the university's \$700-million spend on goods and services went to women- and minority-owned businesses. According to Jones, Taylor and OBCED have "really invoked a different way of doing business for the university," including innovative thinking on minority participation, process transparency, and bidding opportunities.²⁴⁴

One of the most strategic elements of the University's urban-focused engagement approach was the creation of the University Northside Partnership, which grew out of the University's new urban vision and a series of town hall meetings wherein the community in North Minneapolis expressed its concern over the University's recruitment of a very high profile researcher who wished to work in this urban community. While there was substantial support for the University's presence, there was a small but vocal minority who felt they had not been consulted enough, resulting in a number of protests that grew into a series of difficult dialogues in community meetings with the University. "People were really nervous that the university was going to come in and then leave once they got what they needed," reflects Sherrie Pugh, Executive Director of the Northside Resident Redevelopment Council.²⁴⁵ After much discussion, and with the support of a community vote, the University Northside Partnership was formed to not only convene community residents and organizations of North Minneapolis with university faculty and staff, but also to bring representatives from city and county government to the table.²⁴⁶

Out of this set of relationships, President Bruininks and Senior Vice President Jones proposed to the University's governing board the idea to establish the first Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center (UROC) as a way to anchor the University's presence in the community and to deliver on its mission as an urban research university. UROC focuses on three core areas identified through community discussions and votes: education, health, and community and economic development. Underpinning the University's approach is participatory action research, through which community residents are engaged as collaborative partners

working alongside university faculty and staff. This approach has begun to build new, respectful, reciprocal, and sustainable relationships between the University and the North Minneapolis community.

The university administration made a significant financial investment through its purchase of a 21,000-square-foot shopping center to house UROC. The University used money from its general funds to purchase the building at fair market value of \$1.25 million from the Northside Resident Redevelopment Council. The University invested an additional \$2.8 million to renovate the facility and provides an annual operating budget (inclusive of salaries) for UROC of \$900,000. The Center also attracted external support before it opened. In fall 2007, a three-year, \$750,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) supported the creation of UROC by fostering partnerships in the areas of health, education, and economic development. In addition, OBCED received a \$300,000 Empowerment Zone grant in fall 2007 to establish the Business Tech Center now located in UROC.

The establishment of UROC in the Northside community takes the University's urban mission formally and physically to the community. UROC founding Executive Director Irma McClaurin envisioned the building itself to represent a commitment to collaboration. In an early interview she stated, "With UROC we are forging new terrain, [facing] a new frontier if you will, and we're trying to figure out the best way to do that. . . We can't just replicate the University's Research and Outreach Centers that serve rural Minnesota. And we're not a social service. We are truly trying to establish a partnership where we can be good neighbors. We believe in this place [the Northside] and we're here to stay."²⁴⁷ The University hopes that its physical presence in North Minneapolis will continue to leverage both public and private investment in the area.

UROC opened its doors in October 2009, with a grand opening in May 2010, and currently houses new and existing university-community partnership programs, including The Center for Early Education and Development's "500 Under 5" early childhood intervention program; The School of Medicine's Center for Health Equity (funded by NIH and significant resources from the University); the first Urban Area Health Education Center designed to introduce youth to health careers; Extension programs in urban youth development, nutrition education, and family development; and the University Northside Partnership Community Affairs Committee. OBCED's new Business Tech Center is also located in UROC, and provides programs in youth entrepreneurship, small business training, and computer training and refurbishing. The programs at UROC are intended to eventually reach all urban corridors throughout the Twin Cities area. In the words of Senior Vice President Jones, "Since North Minneapolis is where these issues are most acute, we are introducing best practices for our urban engagement here."

Minnesota is also looking to other partners to help drive development in the Northside. "The University wants to inspire, support, and make sure all the issues are addressed, but not do all of the addressing itself," comments UROC's strategic plan consultant Reynolds-Anthony Harris of the Lyceum Group. In agreement, Jones says, "We will need support from our partners — city and county government, business, and the philanthropic and non-profit communities — to sustain these efforts." One such partner, Erik Hansen of the City Department of Community

Planning and Economic Development, observes, "UROC is a physical presence that signals commitment, and there is great potential for the programming to really make a difference in the community. . . There is a nice rapport happening with organizations working in [North Minneapolis] right now — community, city, university, philanthropic — this area hasn't seen that type of commitment in a long time. . . But you can't undo 40 years of neglect in a three-year project. Only time will tell."²⁴⁸

Looking towards long-term collaboration, individuals across the University are beginning to better appreciate how community and cultural knowledge can complement academic knowledge. One faculty member described the desired interaction as "vital involvement," with the goal of meaningful engagement where all participants are open to change. There is also a strong sense of having all partners involved in framing the research questions and providing an opportunity for the community to "own the data." Faculty member Sarah Axtell, who holds the relatively new position of Community-Campus Health Outreach Liaison, speaks about the need for universities to think about the capacity for internal transformation: "In five-to-ten years, how will the campus be different? Unless there is reciprocal transformation, it is not a true partnership."²⁴⁹

LeMoyne-Owen College

We knew that the College was going to go through changes. As people saw community buildings go up [through the work of the CDC], it has kept hope alive that LeMoyne-Owen wasn't going to close. Most people didn't know they were separate entities. The LeMoyne-Owen CDC is something that the College can be proud of, because it's attached to it and it brings credibility.

Minister Suhkara, Community Activist, Soulsville, TN²⁵⁰

LeMoyne-Owen College is situated in the heart of south Memphis, Tennessee, and is tied closely with the identity of its local community now known as Soulsville. Like many historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) across the country, LeMoyne-Owen College has provided critical educational and economic opportunities for thousands of African Americans. Indeed, for over one hundred years, the overwhelming majority of Memphis's black leadership came from LeMoyne. Through the realization of integration, particularly at public institutions, however, many HBCUs are struggling to find their niche today. In the early 2000s, LeMoyne-Owen came close to losing its accreditation due to decreased enrollment numbers and significant financial difficulties. The work of the LeMoyne-Owen College Community Development Corporation has played no small part in this HBCU's survival.

LeMoyne-Owen has always been a strong partner with its community, providing needed resources and outreach in K-12 education and public health programs. In 1989, the

College established the LeMoyne-Owen College Community Development Corporation (LeMoyne-Owen CDC) to institutionalize its commitment to community investment and improvement. However, it was another 10 years before the CDC hired its first Executive Director, Jeffrey Higgs. From 1999 through 2009, Higgs helped the College secure seven HBCU grants from the Office of University Partnerships at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as well as raise over \$150 million in public and private funds. The CDC has an annual budget today of nearly \$5 million and serves as the leader of revitalization efforts in the Soulsville community.

As local neighborhood association president, and former LeMoyne-Owen CDC employee Eric Robertson explains, the CDC was established as “the branch to extend the College’s arm to the community. We were out there doing education and workshops to the community; we brought the College to the people and made it seem more accessible.”²⁵¹ Indeed, LeMoyne-Owen College has developed a strong reputation for community development because of the work of its affiliated CDC. The CDC, in turn, has led the effort to re-brand the community—formerly known as LeMoyne Gardens after a large public housing development in the area that was torn down in 1997—as Soulsville, marketing the community’s rich history and assets.

Figure 13: LeMoyne-Owen Anchor Strategies

Comprehensive Neighborhood Revitalization

- Establishment of the LeMoyne-Owen College CDC, which focuses on housing, community, and economic development

Community Economic Development through Corporate Investment

- Modest efforts to direct purchasing to support local supply chains

Local Capacity Building

- Revolving loan fund supports emerging small businesses
- Business Development Institute has graduated 800 people and created 75 businesses and 183 jobs
- Career Express Program has trained 502 people in highway construction, with a job placement rate over 70%
- Neighborhood residents hired for an estimated 80% of local development projects
- Homebuyers’ training for residents

Education and Health Partnerships

- CDC’s Family Life Center provides after-school programs and social services
- Health and Wellness program engages college students as health ambassadors and community peer educators (e.g., delivering asthma education series to more than 200 parents in public or low-income housing)
- Student teachers work with local schools
- Public high school on campus that provides college credit

Scholarly Engagement

- Small service-learning program
- Community-based participatory research; community service included in faculty evaluation

Multi-Anchor, City, and Regional Partnerships

- Partner with City for low-income housing development

Since the hiring of Higgs in 1999, the LeMoyne-Owen CDC has become increasingly independent. In 2001, the CDC began acting as its own fiscal agent, and in 2004, it completely took over management of its accounts. "We think we have a model that works well," says Higgs, "because it insulates the College from a lot of stuff—exposure, liability, etc.—and the community benefits from a lot of things that the College might not otherwise want to be involved in, because they are focused on their mission of education."²⁵² The CDC's programs and activities, meanwhile, have been concentrated in three core areas—housing, community development, and economic development.²⁵³

Taking on its first major real estate development—and elevating its work to "an entirely new level of sophistication"—in 2003, the CDC began acquiring properties for the four acres of land where the \$11.5 million Towne Center project is now located. The CDC envisions that the building will be 77,000 square feet when complete, with about 30,000 of that occupied by a new, locally owned grocery store. Roughly 30 percent of the remaining space is to be reserved for community residents to have storefronts. Retail and mixed-use commercial space is planned for the first floor, including clothing stores and a food court. "We hope to have goods and services at the Center for residents and visitors that rival anywhere in the county," says Higgs. A 100-seat call center is planned for the second floor, established by the Veterans Corp and National Economic Opportunity Fund. This will provide opportunities for veterans and local residents to start at entry-level jobs and be trained for more advanced skills and salaries. In the spring of 2010, the CDC staff moved to the new space, and the regional health clinic will soon follow. All in all, the CDC expects the Towne Center to create over 200 jobs. The CDC is working on a façade program with existing small businesses in the area to be able to compete with the new retail.²⁵⁴

The Towne Center aims to be an anchor in bringing sustainable, mixed-use and mixed-income development back to Soulsville. An 11-house subdivision is being built adjacent to the Towne Center to be sold at market rate for middle-income families. With the model home pre-sold for \$250,000 in 2007—in a neighborhood with an average sales price of around \$33,000 in 2000—the CDC's efforts certainly seem to be catalyzing the market. Investment into the project includes \$2 million from the CDC's own equity, \$500,000 from a federal appropriation, \$2 million in New Market Tax Credits and another \$5 million in personal debt from Wachovia Bank, private funds, as well as other federal, city and county resources. The LeMoyne-Owen CDC will retain 100-percent ownership of the building. "This is truly a public-private partnership," comments Higgs. "It is also the first major development in the area, so it is important for us to see it through."²⁵⁵

To support local entrepreneurs, the LeMoyne-Owen CDC runs a Business Development Institute. An average of 30 students enroll every quarter in the 10-week course that is offered for free to residents in Soulsville and throughout Memphis. This program is directed by the CDC's Chief Financial Officer, Dr. Austin Emeagwai, who also serves as an assistant professor of accounting at the College. (Emeagwai teaches two courses at LeMoyne-Owen but receives release time to serve in this capacity at the CDC.) Besides Emeagwai, who also has a private CPA practice, professionals from across the city teach the business courses. Funded through a Small

Business Administration (SBA) Program for Investment in Micro-Entrepreneurs (PRIME) grant, at least 50 percent of the grant dollars must go to low-income individuals. The LeMoyné-Owen CDC's program exceeds these expectations, serving approximately 75 percent low-income, 70 percent females and 90 percent minorities. Since 2002, 800 people have graduated from the program, and 75 businesses and 183 jobs have been created. When the Towne Center is complete, the CDC plans to offer incubator space for seven emerging small businesses.

As part of their SBA grant, the CDC is also a micro-lender for West Tennessee. In its early years, the CDC's revolving loan pool experienced an 80-90 percent repayment rate. As of February 2007, the CDC had made 33 loans valued at roughly \$830,000. Over time, however, some entrepreneurs went out of business. The CDC now has \$700,000 in outstanding loans, and thus, has not been able to make many new loans in recent years.²⁵⁶

For the past four years, LeMoyné-Owen CDC has been collaborating with the Tennessee Department of Transportation on a statewide job-training program funded through a grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Working in the Soulsville neighborhood in Memphis, and in three other cities across the state (with local CDC partners), LeMoyné-Owen CDC provides a 16-week program in life skills and on-the-job training in highway construction. The program is geared towards recipients of Tennessee Assistance for Needy Families, high school drop-outs, and ex-offenders. In four years, the program has served 502 individuals, with a job placement rate over 70 percent; in 2009, the placement rate exceeded 80 percent statewide.²⁵⁷

Higgs hopes to create wealth for Soulsville residents through homeownership. To date, the LeMoyné-Owen CDC has built 14 new affordable homes in Soulsville, and rehabbed seven others (with most of this work completed from 2002 to 2004). The CDC provides extensive homebuyers training with residents to prepare them for ownership, and thus, according to the CDC leadership, the recent foreclosure crisis has been less acute for their "clients." The neighborhood as a whole has been unable to avoid this national trend. Community input — formalized through the Community Action Coalition — has helped shape the CDC's activities. For example, the CDC initially intended to build multi-family rental development, but the Coalition indicated that the community instead wanted more single-family homeownership opportunities; the CDC heeded this request. The CDC's next real estate initiative will likely involve redevelopment of 18 lots, many of them vacant, at the entrance to the neighborhood from downtown.²⁵⁸

Within the College, service-learning courses and other scholarly activities engage LeMoyné-Owen students and faculty from multiple disciplines. A Health and Wellness Program, for example, engages college students as health ambassadors who conduct community-based participatory research. Students also serve as community peer educators through the Partnership for Asthma Trigger-Free Homes, a program in partnership with Abt Associates to provide educational workshops to families in public and low-income housing. "We create leadership opportunities for our students and set expectations for their involvement in the community," says Sociology Professor Dr. Femu Ajanaku.²⁵⁹

The CDC is looking to further institutionalize its collaboration with the College, partly by expanding its student internship program — through which students participate in a semester-long paid internship with the CDC or another local community group while often receiving

service-learning credit — as well as developing a stronger community development curriculum to be offered at the college. For now, there remains great opportunity to more strategically align the College's outreach efforts (let alone its existing capital expenditures) with the community development work of the LeMoyne-Owen CDC; however, many of these outreach programs have weakened in recent years because of financial and staffing limitations at the College. As LeMoyne-Owen College implements its 2008 Transformation Plan, they are looking to increase their community engagement efforts, and "claim a leadership 'niche' in urban higher education by building on our expertise in teaching urban students and catalyzing urban community development."²⁶⁰ First, however, they must continue to build their enrollment and guarantee survival. Meanwhile, the LeMoyne-Owen CDC seems well positioned to help gradually transform Soulsville into the vibrant, mixed-income community it was 50 years ago.

Emory University

What we have done is select five-to-six communities that are our focus areas, where we can pair community-based [scholarship and learning] with our investments to better meet the needs of our neighborhoods. Not in two years, not in five years, but over a decade or more, then we'll have a long enough longitudinal set of data to know if we are succeeding. [So far], no one has had the patience to stay the course long enough to know what works or what doesn't.

Earl Lewis, Provost, Emory University²⁶¹

Geographically speaking, Emory and LeMoyne-Owen are not so far apart. And yet, the differences between the two schools are vast. At LeMoyne-Owen, the school's endowment stood in 2010 at an estimated \$12 million. By contrast, Emory's endowment ranked 16th in the nation and its endowment stood, even after the 2008 financial crash, at \$4.3 billion. Another key difference: LeMoyne-Owen in the pre-civil rights era was the leading school for educating Memphis' black leadership; Emory was home to Atlanta's *white* elite. In fact, Emory still sometimes finds itself having to downplay its old reputation as the "chill on the hill."²⁶² Despite these differences, however, Emory has gradually moved to prioritize black Atlanta in its community development strategy.

Unlike Minnesota, Syracuse, or LeMoyne-Owen, Emory to date has no signature multi-million dollar projects. The one major exception to this came as a crisis response. Recognizing the critical role that Grady Hospital (at which roughly a third of Emory medical faculty work) plays in providing health care for Atlanta's least fortunate, Emory agreed in December 2008 to forgive \$20 million of the \$62 million in debt it was owed from the hospital as part of a community effort to restore the hospital to fiscal health. Emory's action is particularly remarkable

considering that it came just months after the September 2008 world financial panic had sent endowment values tumbling.²⁶³

At Emory, the notion of service has a strong “echo,” in part because Emory comes out of a Methodist tradition. Although highly secular today — Theology Professor David Jenkins claims that most students would ask “What’s Methodist?” if one mentioned Emory’s religious denomination — Emory remains home to the Candler School of Theology, which enrolls approximately 425 divinity students in its 3-year program. The Candler School itself requires all of its first-year divinity students to do eight hours a week of a non-church ministry, which involves a mix of pastoral and social service work. Service sites include three area hospitals, Metro State Women’s Prison, the Poverty Rights Center and the Decatur Cooperative Ministry, a homeless shelter.²⁶⁴

The Candler School is hardly unique in its service work. The School of Nursing at Emory requires that all students, be they undergraduate or graduate, have “a service-learning experience at least once in their academic career.” Campus-wide, 24 percent of Emory College undergraduate students engage in “community-benefiting activities” as part of their coursework. At some of the professional schools, these numbers are much higher — Nursing, of course, is 100 percent since community learning is a School requirement, but numbers are also high in Theology (87 percent) and Public Health (85 percent).²⁶⁵

Figure 14: Emory Anchor Strategies

Comprehensive Neighborhood Revitalization

- Moving towards place-based strategy in neighborhoods of Greater Atlanta

Community Economic Development through Corporate Investment

- Focus on sustainability: 48% of produce purchased locally

Local Capacity Building

- Support to existing community development organizations, with continuity provided through OUCP
- OUCP hires from within the community development community
- Community Building and Social Change Fellows Program involves multi-year ongoing partnerships
- \$20 million debt forgiveness to help maintain the viability of Grady Hospital, Atlanta’s leading charity hospital

- Resource development in immigrant communities, such as immigrant radio station (Sagal Radio)

- Neighborhood indicators and data provision for community development initiatives

Education and Health Partnerships

- Individual faculty projects, loosely coordinated

Scholarly Engagement

- Service-learning participation high: 24% college-wide; 100% School of Nursing; 87% Theology; 85% Public Health

Multi-Anchor, City, and Regional Partnerships

- Community development partnership effort led by community foundation in formation
- Partnership Center hosts Equity Atlanta, a public policy and foreclosure mitigation coalition
- Developing urban health initiative with local place-based foundation coalition

While Emory's service numbers are impressive, the path from "presence" to "impact," as Emory's Associate Vice Provost for Academic and Strategic Partnerships Alicia Franck puts it, has been complicated.²⁶⁶ Indeed, Emory has pursued two paths that have operated largely independently of each other. One, the Clifton Community Partnership, aims to improve relations with Emory's immediate, largely middle-class neighbors. Meanwhile, Emory's community outreach and partnership center has focused on building relationships in low-income neighborhoods.

The Clifton Community Partnership, as Emory's Associate Vice President of Finance David Hanson explains, was prompted by the fact that Emory for years "had not had the best relationship with the community." The Clifton initiative, which focuses resources within a three-mile radius of Emory, was formally established in spring 2006. The Partnership has helped plan an 870-unit housing project (with 20 percent of the units set aside as below-market rates), has conducted planning charrettes that have resulted in many neighborhood streetscape projects, and coordinates an advisory council that oversees Emory partnership programs with the local schools. Hanson estimates the initial annual cost to Emory at close to \$1 million a year. Now, Hanson says, the need for expensive planning consultants has diminished, but the university continues to pay about \$500,000 a year for core staff.²⁶⁷

While the Clifton Partnership has focused on Emory's immediate neighborhood, the Office of University Community Partnerships (OUCP) has concentrated on the more impoverished sections of metro Atlanta. Founded in 2000, in its early years, OUCP was a small center with three full-time staff and one part-time employee. In 2002, OUCP began to run an innovative program directed at community building and social change. The exact shape of that program has changed over time, but the basic theme of having a small, dedicated groups of students, guided by faculty and graduate students and working in teams on intensive summer projects has stayed fairly consistent. Community Building & Social Change Fellows now receive a stipend of \$3,500 to work 32 hours a week during the summer (an effective wage rate of roughly \$9 an hour) as well as free housing and a summer tuition waiver.²⁶⁸

The fellows' projects vary, but they are designed in close consultation with community partners — indeed, the three 2009 project teams each worked in one of the three priority areas identified by Atlanta's place-based funders (including the Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta and three foundations that have concentrated grants in these neighborhoods). One year's projects at Emory build on previous years. Kate Grace, OUCP's Director of the Community Building & Social Change Fellows Program, notes that, "In the first few years, there were open calls for proposals. Now we have shifted to longer-term partnerships with community groups. This has benefits for the students — they can see how they fit into a longer continuum — and it also better matches the needs of the organizations." Indeed, two of the three focus areas in 2009 were also focus areas in 2002. As Nathaniel Smith, OUCP's Director of Partnerships and Research for Equitable Development, puts it, "It is how we operate as OUCP. . . We build relationships with the community."²⁶⁹

In 2006, Emory's administration committed to invest \$12 million over five years to boost OUCP's ability to link Emory with the community. This has enabled OUCP to expand its staff from three-and-a-half to 13, and they have given priority to hiring employees who have worked

with community groups and thus are able to serve as effective liaisons or translators between the university and the community worlds.²⁷⁰

Adding staff has allowed OUCP to boost its capacity in two key areas: 1) data analysis, such as the ability to use geographic information systems (GIS) mapping tools, which enables OUCP to be a key data supplier for community groups, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies working in Atlanta neighborhoods; and 2) convening and community outreach. For example, in 2008, OUCP agreed to act as the host of "Equity Atlanta," a regional alliance of community groups, nonprofit organizations and government agencies, which are working with the national group PolicyLink on issues of regional equity and equitable development in metropolitan Atlanta. Recently, Equity Atlanta helped spearhead efforts to ensure that funds provided by the 2009 economic stimulus bill reached disadvantaged neighborhoods.²⁷¹

The level of trust OUCP has built up among community groups is impressive and has enabled OUCP to play a broker role that few universities are positioned to provide. "People are showing a greater willingness to coordinate their activities," notes OUCP Director Michael Rich. "Our role is to provide research, data, and try to work as a matchmaker. Where are the communities in most need? Can we find a way to develop a holistic coordinated approach? Can we help build local capacity for planning and action?"²⁷²

At the same time, Emory faces broader challenges as it struggles to implement a new, more focused, place-based approach. Rich notes that, in 2008, Emory "had school projects involving 42 school districts and 350-plus schools across Georgia. We are now trying to adopt a place-based strategy that better aligns Emory's resources with [communities and schools] that need help and assistance." In particular, Emory has chosen to focus on five geographic areas: Edgewood, East Lake, Pittsburgh-Mechanicsville (or, more broadly speaking, Neighborhood Planning Unit V),²⁷³ Northwest Atlanta, and Clarkson in central DeKalb County. The first three neighborhoods correspond with areas of focus of Atlanta's place-based funders (two family-based foundations and the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Atlanta Civic Site), while Northwest Atlanta and Clarkson represent two other neighborhoods where OUCP has been engaged since nearly its founding. The Emory administration is on board with the approach. David Hanson, Associate Vice President of Finance, notes that these days, when one talks about community at Emory, "We are normally talking about Greater Atlanta. It is a balanced approach. In the early years, we focused a lot on the immediate community relationships [in the Clifton Road Corridor], which were not great. Now we think more broadly."²⁷⁴

Looking Across the Cases

Creating an Engaged Community

Syracuse, Emory, and Minnesota are immediately surrounded by middle to upper-middle income neighborhoods. Yet all three have chosen to focus university resources in non-adjacent, underserved and impoverished communities as a part of their broader engagement agendas.

Syracuse University has taken on the entire city as its 'neighborhood,' most visibly seen through its leadership in the Connective Corridor, while maintaining focused neighborhood initiatives in the South Side and Near West Side. Minnesota also takes on a view of the larger community. As Andrew Furco puts it, "We are the only research university in all of Minnesota, and a public institution — ultimately, we have responsibility to address issues across the state."²⁷⁵ The University also partners with the neighborhood organizations and business associations directly surrounding its campus, through the University District Partnership Alliance. Minnesota's urban efforts, on the other hand, are being manifested through its work in North Minneapolis — a community located six miles from campus that is one of Minneapolis's most diverse and most economically challenged. Whereas Syracuse has intentionally designed the Connective Corridor to extend to the Near West Side, as well as expanded their employer-assisted housing programs to the area, University of Minnesota's homebuyers program is focused exclusively in the University District, and — beyond the recent placement of UROC in North Minneapolis — there have been no other efforts to physically connect the campus and the Northside community.²⁷⁶

For many years, Emory has engaged in partnerships with the surrounding upper-middle class Druid Hills and Clifton Corridor neighborhoods, which has absorbed considerable time and energy. Emory, especially through OUCP, however, has begun to direct its mission — and resources — to target specific low-income neighborhoods in Greater Atlanta. Unfortunately, Emory's failure to do this before 2009 has reduced the impact of interventions, as well as limited opportunities for institutional resources to be strategically invested.

LeMoyne-Owen College stands alone amongst this group, as the work of the LeMoyne-Owen CDC is focused almost exclusively on revitalizing the community surrounding the campus now known as Soulsville. As President of the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, Bob Fockler, puts it, the College is "in and part of this" historically underserved neighborhood, which has a strong African-American heritage and soul music legacy, and is located just a couple of miles from downtown Memphis.²⁷⁷ The connection between the welfare of LeMoyne-Owen College and its community is more immediate than at Syracuse, Minnesota, or Emory.

Establishing Partnership Programs and Goals

Syracuse, Minnesota, and LeMoyne-Owen are reaching towards comprehensive neighborhood revitalization, while Emory's efforts are more focused on neighborhood capacity building. Education and health partnerships are strong at all four of these institutions, as is some degree of service-learning or scholarly engagement. Some of these curricular and project-based partnerships are in support of the larger community development agenda; others are only loosely connected. Neighborhood and nonprofit capacity building is prioritized among all institutions in this cluster.

Syracuse University's engagement initiatives, in particular, maintain strong principles and rhetoric of sustainability and community ownership. The Near West Side Initiative in Syracuse builds on the strengths of each member organization and the assets of the neighborhood. "NWSI has strong institutional partners, with their own missions and their own tools," comments

Higgins. "Instead of the traditional process of setting up a 501(c)3 (hiring a Director, etc.), we decided, no, let's make sure the resources are really going into the neighborhood. So the five main entities each dedicate staff to work on this effort." The University marches forward with real estate development, home renovations, and student and faculty engagement, while the Gifford Foundation has taken on the process of community capacity building. "There is a constant tension trying to keep residents' voices heard, but keeping the engine going around real estate development," says Goldfarb-Finding. "You have to really balance the capacity needs of the neighborhood with very real economic needs. Neighborhood development takes a long time; real estate development, relatively, takes no time at all."²⁷⁸

Syracuse has also taken on the largest education initiative amongst this cluster, through its partnership with Say Yes to Education and the Syracuse City School District. In this district-wide program for public school students, university volunteers and interns provide mentoring, curriculum, and even legal support, according to Rachel Gazdick, Executive Director for the Say Yes to Education Syracuse Chapter. Syracuse also leads a network of 23 private institutions and nearly 100 New York public institutions to offer a free college education for any student who graduates through the Say Yes program. By building stronger schools and a stronger workforce, Syracuse Say Yes to Education intends to serve not only as a model of urban education reform but also of urban economic development.²⁷⁹

Prior to the establishment of the University Northside Partnership or the Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center, the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) had been involved in North Minneapolis for 40 years. CURA is the University's oldest center for institutionalized community engagement efforts, founded to match community requests with university resources, particularly responding to the "demands" from low-income and minority communities, many of which were located in the Northside.²⁸⁰ The launch of the University Northside Partnership (UNP) in 2005 signified the first university-wide, administrative-led, collaborative effort with the community. After much discussion with the community, the Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center (UROC) was then established to serve as the anchor mechanism through which university resources could be coordinated in North Minneapolis.

Minnesota's commitment to an urban vision is manifested through UNP and UROC and is focused on three key areas identified by the community as priorities — education, health and wellness, and community and economic development. Those involved in UROC, and others like CURA with its deep connections to North Minneapolis, hope that matching community-identified priorities with university resources will enable them to strategically see solutions to the complex and most pressing issues facing North Minneapolis and other urban communities in the Twin Cities, and track measurable outcomes. This alignment is not always easy; according to a report prepared by the Lyceum Group, faculty have their own agendas, and when establishing new university-wide centers, there is sensitivity as to who was doing what first.²⁸¹ Some programs have chosen to keep their distance from the effort to coordinate urban engagement at an institutional level because they have already established their own relationships and partners in the community and would not necessarily benefit from greater university alignment.²⁸²

On the other hand, the Lyceum Report suggests that the community would like to see greater coordination of the University's efforts, and have better access to the reports and findings that result from individual research projects.

Emory's community development partnership efforts have had transformational effects on partner organizations. Andy Schneggenburger, Executive Director of the Atlanta Housing Association of Neighborhood-based Developers, the City's association of community development corporations, explains the reasons for Emory's high standing. "The ability to have access to the resources of Emory through OUCP is a tremendous help," Schneggenburger notes. "They are very aware of the resources that they have and the importance of not enforcing an approach or attitude towards community work. They are very congruent in the need to let the community's voice be heard and play a primary role in the decision-making process."²⁸³ But while Emory's OUCP office has strong connections to community groups, OUCP is just beginning the process of coordinating partnerships in specific regions to achieve more concentrated impact. At present, many Emory health and educational partnerships, for example, are individual faculty projects that are loosely coordinated, rather than strategic interventions.

LeMoyne-Owen College's community development efforts are directed through its affiliated CDC, while the College oversees opportunities for students to be engaged in service-learning, health and education outreach, and urban leadership. In addition to its housing and economic development activities, the CDC runs a Family Life Center, providing after-school programs and social services, particularly for boys with behavioral problems. With a strong teacher education program, the College also provides tutoring and student teaching to local schools as well as operates a public high school on campus that provides minority students an opportunity to earn both a high school diploma and two years of college credit.²⁸⁴ Because of the focus on the Soulsville community, these efforts present a holistic approach to neighborhood revitalization; however, the activities of the College and the CDC remain largely distinct.

Institutionalizing an Anchor Vision

To a large extent, Minnesota and Syracuse have aligned their institutional priorities for engagement, from top administration through partnership centers to faculty and staff. Due in large part to its size and broad land-grant mission, however, Minnesota continues to have urban-focused partnership efforts that remain diffuse and disconnected; the establishment of UROC as a coordinating entity is an attempt to correct this situation and invest strategically in local urban communities. Emory's community partnership center and the LeMoyne-Owen College CDC, on the other hand, have strong support from their administration, but remain largely independent in their focused missions and activities.

When Nancy Cantor became President and Chancellor of Syracuse University, she pushed a new philosophy throughout the university: that scholarship in action was critical to a vibrant local community and economy, and mutually beneficial for the institution and its partners. This took Syracuse to a new level, although many throughout the university were already committed to community engagement and economic inclusion. "This has always been a belief of ours;

no one had to sell this to us, but it did take on a new emphasis with Cantor. It became more of a priority for the entire institution," comments Louis Marcoccia, Syracuse's Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. Marilyn Higgins' role as Syracuse's Vice President for Community Engagement and Economic Development puts her in a critical position of power for bringing the university's resources to bear on key community initiatives. And, as Chair of the Near West Side Initiative Board, Higgins provides critical oversight of the real estate development in this community, as well as engages faculty, staff and students in the comprehensive revitalization efforts. "Our students are deeply engaged in the NWSI. . . in real problem solving—feet on the ground—engaged scholarship. I would estimate that over the past three years the number [of students involved] is close to 400."²⁸⁵

Minnesota's President and Senior Vice President are committed to public engagement and to their urban vision in particular. "It's not enough to be a land-grant . . . we have to more strategically focus our resources and expertise with the community and with others' resources and expertise," says Senior Vice President Jones. Jones was appointed by University President Bob Bruininks, who took his position in 2002, and whose scholarly work in child psychology has made him a strong leader for community engagement. Central to a new policy adopted by the Board of Regents in governing university purchases was creation of the Office of Business and Community Economic Development (OBCED). Bruininks' and Jones' no-tolerance policy on discrimination has further supported the OBCED Director in creating innovative and sustainable initiatives. Probably the most significant change that has occurred at the University, which has not been replicated elsewhere, is the Board of Regents' approval of changes to the tenure and promotion policy to now include scholarship that promotes "ideas of significance and value to society" and teaching that is "not limited to classroom instruction" among its criteria for tenure and promotion.²⁸⁶

Emory's community partnership center has significant support from the administration and a growing budget, despite university-wide cutbacks. The Center's Director, however, is not an Associate Vice President (as seen at many of the other institutions in this study), which inherently limits some institutional alignment. Moreover, at least until this was clarified in 2009, there had been some conflict and confusion in Emory's strategic direction with respect to the community between those who emphasize relations in the narrow three-mile radius of campus and those who see a mission to serve the needs of the disadvantaged neighborhoods of Greater Atlanta.

When President Burnett Joiner established the LeMoyné-Owen CDC in 1989, it was originally staffed and operated by the College Dean and faculty on a part-time basis. Although the initiative received strong support from top administration, little was achieved without dedicated staff. Now a distinct entity from the College, the CDC has maintained a leadership team of at least six full-time staff. The College President and two vice presidents sit on the LeMoyné-Owen CDC's Board of Directors. "One of the big advantages is that the CDC doesn't have to wait for our College Board to meet to move its ideas and projects forward," remarks President Johnnie B. Watson. Beyond board representation and limited involvement of faculty and students in

CDC programming, there is no formal structure in place through which the College is involved in the CDC's community development work.²⁸⁷

Securing Funding and Leveraging Resources

Financial commitments towards community development from the four institutions in this cluster, while limited in comparison to Penn, Yale and Cincinnati, are still significant and have attracted major public and private investments. University trustees have also continued to play a strong role. According to Chancellor Cantor, Syracuse's Trustees "get the idea of a place-based institution, both the pragmatic and ethical responsibility." They were excited about the \$13.8 million loan repayment being redeployed to the Near West Side Initiative (NWSI), which has attracted significant public and private investment. Trustees also raised \$350,000 in tuition scholarships for Say Yes to Education when the state fell through on providing these funds. Cantor has learned, however, that, "In an economic crisis, you have to hone in on the rhetoric about why this work is good for the institution. When we're talking about salary freezes, but still carrying out our neighborhood initiatives, I have to explain." Although significant in-kind support will continue to filter through Higgins' office, the Center of Excellence, and other faculty, the NWSI hopes to be self-sustaining.²⁸⁸

Minnesota made a significant financial investment of over \$3 million to purchase and renovate the new UROC building, and an additional \$900,000 annually for UROC's operations. Half of the Office of Business and Community Economic Development's \$1.5 million budget also comes directly from university administration (with the other half coming from grants and contracts). Most recently, the University used over \$700,000 of its own resources to serve as a match to a federal grant proposal. In December 2009, Minnesota was the only university to receive funds through the Department of Commerce Broadband Technology Opportunity Program. The \$2.9M grant will be administered through UROC in collaboration with OBCED and a community partner, Minnesota Multicultural Media Consortium. The three-year grant provides for nine existing public computer centers in empowerment and enterprise zones in Minneapolis and St. Paul to receive new equipment, furniture, training, and staffing, and for two new centers to be established, including one in a public housing facility. This "demonstration model" also will result in job creation for community members as UROC Broadband apprentices.²⁸⁹

LeMoyne-Owen College began the work of its CDC with modest operating funds nearly 20 years ago. In the last ten years, they have received seven HBCU grants (most recently, \$800,000 in 2009) as well as raised nearly \$150 million. Starting in 2001, the CDC has acted as its own fiscal agent, with the College serving as the conduit through which HUD HBCU funds could be accessed. "The HBCU funds still have the least restrictions, which is a major advantage," says Emeagwai. "They've allowed us to acquire, demolish, build, and purchase assets." The CDC's largest real estate effort, the \$11.5 million Towne Center project, has brought in numerous public and private resources, including \$7.3 million from Wachovia through New Market Tax Credits and their own debt. "It is still a challenge that it requires so much public investment to

attract the private sector,” comments Robert Lipscomb, Director of City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development and Executive Director of the Memphis Housing Authority, as well as Chair of LeMoyne-Owen College’s Board of Trustees. The College’s financial support for the CDC has primarily involved in-kind donation of office space, utilities, and technology support. Regarding the College’s investment into community development, Lipscomb adds, “We would like to see the College even more involved: more technical assistance to small businesses, more summer programming for kids and families. . . . But it’s a matter of resources — how to identify the dollars to do that. The Trustees have bigger concerns right now — mainly, can we sustain this business model for the College? It’s about survival.”²⁹⁰

Emory’s community partnership center has support from the administration and a growing budget. Staff has grown from 3.5 to 13 since 2002. Their budget has also grown to over \$2 million a year, and, in 2009, when other departments got cutbacks, the administration reaffirmed its support and held funding nearly constant, though small cuts in funding did occur.

Building a Culture of Economic Inclusion

Both Syracuse and Minnesota have taken very deliberate efforts towards economic inclusion, and are using their economic and purchasing power to create opportunities for local, minority and women business owners. “When utilizing small, inexperienced contractors and vendors for the first time, the University is required to provide significantly more supervision effort,” says Marcoccia of Syracuse. “Until practices and processes are fully understood by both parties, the chance is greater for error or misunderstanding. By increasing communication and physical supervision efforts, practices and processes become routine. . . . We had concerns in the past of whether [economic inclusion programs] would work, but now we are pretty confident.”²⁹¹

Inspired by the University’s new urban vision, Minnesota’s Office of Business and Community Economic Development has created unprecedented policies and goals for the university’s capital projects, purchasing/supply chain, and job creation. Director Craig Taylor aims to leverage university assets and resources — intellectual property, research, and technology transfer — to impact the quality of life in local communities as well as shift the university’s business practices. The unusually high targets (over 30 percent) set for the renovation of UROC, in particular, can serve as a model for how the University can be inclusive — every aspect of UROC’s development involved community engagement.

Emory University, on the other hand, has not given much focus to the impact of its business practices on local or underserved populations. There are some institutional efforts to buy food locally, but (like Portland State) they largely focus on sustainability — an important issue at a campus that has the most square feet of LEED-certified buildings of any university in the United States — rather than community economic development. Ciannat Howett, Emory’s Director of Sustainability notes, “We are trying to flex our muscles in the marketplace in relationship to food to influence what supply is available. We certainly aren’t to our 75 percent goal yet, but we have a written plan, we are working with our food vendor . . . it is in process — we’ve increased our purchases of local food significantly, especially produce — 48 percent of produce is locally

purchased." But Howett concedes that purchasing is "one of the areas we have done the least at Emory historically." Ozzie Harris, Senior Vice Provost for Community and Diversity at Emory also acknowledges that Emory is still at the early stages of aligning its business practices with its partnership work, but wants to move in this direction. "Hiring, recruitment, temporary service, procurement — we should at least take the easy steps," Harris says.²⁹²

Because LeMoyné-Owen's community development efforts are directed through its CDC, all related activities are geared towards creating local economic opportunities. Its new Towne Center, for example, plans to create over 200 new jobs, incubate new businesses, and provide services for all residents. "We've said to the tenants that we expect you to hire locally. It's in the language to [our funders]. Urban economic development is about hiring locally — that's what we do," says Higgs. Through agreements with contractors, the CDC has also helped employ residents from the neighborhood on an estimated 80 percent of local development projects. The College itself now owns a decent amount of property in the neighborhood, including a recent purchase of a vacant lot for new student dorms, which they turned over to the CDC to develop and manage — a \$5 or \$6 million project. Although the CDC has reached great measures of success in building economic opportunities, leaders agree that more must still be done to build local wealth through workforce and business development.²⁹³

Sustaining Participatory Planning and Robust Community Relationships

All four of these institutions have spent time developing relationships with their local neighborhoods as well as involved residents and other stakeholders in the planning of their community development initiatives. At Syracuse and Emory, in particular, the institutions have strived to be invisible in their partnerships — the focus is on the partner and the community, not the university. Nancy Cantor's first year at Syracuse was called "Discovering the Soul of Syracuse." She spent her first 16–18 months on campus going to church dinners and neighborhood gatherings and listening to the voice of the community. "She told them, 'Where we have excellence and can have impact, we will work with you. It's good for us, and it's good for you, and we want it to be sustainable,'" reflects Bogucz.²⁹⁴

"We've seen in other cities that when the university is the gorilla in the room, people are just habituated to go with what they want. Not here. [In Syracuse], there is a healthy give and take. The university provides a fulcrum through which strategy and vision can be catalyzed through resources they have that wouldn't otherwise be available," comments Frank Caliva and Kevin Schwab from the Metropolitan Development Association of Syracuse and Central New York.²⁹⁵

As discussed previously, the University of Minnesota spent over two years in dialogue about the potential of having a physical presence in the community before UROC was agreed upon. Although the community's desire to establish a community benefits agreement has yet to be realized, the University has established several activities that have provided ongoing opportunities for communication and collaboration. UNP work groups, FIPSE work groups, the Community Affairs Committee, and participatory action research groups are four specific initiatives that engage community residents, who work alongside university faculty and staff,

on focused neighborhood projects. Most significantly, UROC's strategic planning process to set direction for its first three years was inclusive of community voices from beginning to end. Guided by a Futures Conference model, led by founding Executive Director Irma McClaurin and Erline Belton of the Lyceum Group, the strategic planning process included a two-day conference attended by over 50 community residents, leaders, and elected officials to envision what UROC might be in the future. Afterwards, an Action Planning Team comprised of 15 members (of whom the majority were from the community) crafted six goals, a set of belief statements, and the guidance partnership principles that are the cornerstone of UROC's three-year strategic plan. In draft form, the plan has been shared with those who attended the original conference, focus groups, as well as faculty. At every stage, a draft of the plan was available on line for everyone to follow its development. "Transparency is what we have aimed for, in the building (which has glass windows in the front and back), and throughout the strategic planning process," says McClaurin.²⁹⁶

Critical to effective communication and trusting relationships is having "translators" on staff. In this vein, LeMoyne-Owen College perhaps has the most direct relations with its community. President Johnnie B. Watson grew up across the street from his current office in the LeMoyne Gardens housing project. He and his five sisters all attended LeMoyne-Owen. Minister Suhkara A. Yahweh, who has played a significant role in the evolution of the College's community development initiatives, has been a community activist for several decades. Managed expectations and strong communication have helped keep residents content. "This community understands that development takes time," says the Minister. "I also let them know about road blocks. They feel they have input, and it keeps our efforts visible. After 41 years here, I've got my fingerprints on all changes. I have a reputation and respect in this community."²⁹⁷ Although the LeMoyne-Owen CDC Director himself is not from the neighborhood, Higgs spent his first months on the job meeting all the leaders from the community and establishing relationships. He also formalized the Community Action Coalition, a group of resident stakeholders who advise and guide the work of the CDC.

Notably, Emory's Office of University Community Partnerships has always valued the role of translators. With its expanded budget and staff, OUCP has hired from within the community development community. They also ensure continuity in their partnerships and have been very effective in building nonprofit capacity. Their Fellows program, for example, involves small teams of undergraduates working with three nonprofit partners each year, which has provided ongoing connections with many of these community-based organizations. Guided proposals for students and faculty, rather than open calls, has also helped ensure continuity and increase impact. This has helped establish Emory's OUCP as a trusted partner with Atlanta-area CDCs, a phenomenon unknown to many universities, even if Emory as a whole still has not fully lived down its reputation as the home of the Atlanta elite.

The University of Minnesota has several community liaisons with community organizing backgrounds. One of these people is Makeda Zulu-Gillespie, university-community liaison for the University Northside Partnership and UROC, whose involvement started when she was working as a community organizer for a CDC in North Minneapolis. When the University

approached the CDC about working together, she helped initiate critical meetings between the University and the larger community. Zulu-Gillespie now co-chairs the Community Affairs Committee, which serves as the working body of the UNP, along with a community resident. The UROC building will also serve as a “physical translator” between the University and the North Minneapolis neighborhood.

Another physical translator is Syracuse’s “The Warehouse,” a former furniture warehouse at the western edge of downtown and neighboring the Near West Side, which the University purchased and renovated in 2005 — an action driven by the vision of Mark Robbins, Dean of the School of Architecture. The Warehouse now serves as a multi-use facility that brings 600 students, faculty and staff into the central business district on a regular basis. Syracuse’s Office of Community Engagement and Economic Development (overseeing the NWSI and the Connective Corridor), as well as COLAB (a new interdisciplinary initiative based in the College of Visual and Performing Arts) are housed at the Warehouse. In addition, twenty percent of the building space is reserved for community activities, including a gallery for local artists and a lecture hall for public events. Robbins also initiated an international design competition that has led to construction of three of the nation’s most innovative green homes in the Near Westside.²⁹⁸

Meeting the Needs of Low-Income Residents and Neighborhoods

With goals of comprehensive neighborhood revitalization, these institutions must be patient in their desires for change in the quality of life and economic opportunities for local residents. The LeMoyne-Owen CDC’s perseverance and leadership over the last 10 years has begun to realize tangible impacts. “I measure our success by per capita income. In 1999, it was \$8,000 in this neighborhood,” says Higgs. “Now, it is \$13,500 and climbing.” Tk Buchanan, Senior Research Associate for the Center for Community Building and Neighborhood Action at the University of Memphis, confirms that “the ‘poorest of the poor’ [in the zip code containing Soulsville appear to] have also made progress: in 2009, 47.3% of tax filers made less than \$10,001; yet, in 2000, that figure was higher, at 68%.” The CDC continues to work to increase homeownership and support workforce and business development in Soulsville. “The goal is to be self-containing, self-sustaining, and self-maintaining,” says Minister Suhkara. However, the community has not been able to escape national trends resulting from the subprime mortgage and foreclosure crisis. Buchanan observes, “Before the foreclosure crisis, the LeMoyne-Owen CDC was among the most proactive, effective CDCs in our city and did great work creating homeownership opportunities for their service area. Post-housing-disaster, they’re bailing water as fast as they can, but this knocks them (and their homeownership agenda) back a few decades.” Despite these setbacks, significant community development and re-branding efforts led by the CDC have caused attitudes towards Soulsville (and, by default, LeMoyne-Owen College), both within and outside of the community, to slowly but significantly improve.²⁹⁹

This reputation change in Soulsville is something that UROC hopes to create in North Minneapolis. The building and investment into UROC signals new levels of commitment from the University; however, the potential is yet to be fully realized. According to UROC’s strategic

plan consultant, Reynolds-Anthony Harris, one challenge is that the need in North Minneapolis is so great, and the University needs to focus on just a couple of attainable goals that can be realized within the first three years of UROC's opening. "The University has to remind itself to go slow to go fast," says Harris. University leaders hope that their physical presence in the Northside will build community infrastructure, stimulate commercial development, and attract other organizations to set up satellite offices. They made a strong initial investment by having more than 30 percent of their \$2.8 million renovation for UROC be awarded to women- and minority-owned businesses. The University is now beginning to leverage this opportunity to meet broader social and economic challenges of the community.

Syracuse's work throughout the City, and particularly the Near West Side, is also young, although they have made great strides in only a couple of years. "Through the Connective Corridor, we're already seeing development by private developers. But we have to be patient for change. . . The University is playing an increasing leadership and catalytic role," say Caliva and Schwab. In the Near Westside, new homes have been built, old homes have been greened, abandoned warehouses are being renovated, and residents are being engaged in the efforts. A city agreement has allowed for a seven-year tax exemption for the vacant lots being redeveloped with subsidized funding through NWSI; this is an effort to protect current homeowners. Of course, some are concerned about the sustainability of using public dollars to subsidize new development. The hope is that, in seven years, revitalization will create greater economic prosperity for everyone in the community through newly created jobs and greater real estate values. "You can never underestimate how much patience and persistence this work takes," comments Daniel Queri, a private developer and consultant to NWSI. "We can't go just to go. We have had to execute our plans with real discipline."³⁰⁰

Emory's work so far has been more process than outcome-oriented — as well as less geographically-focused — and hence difficult to measure. On the one hand, the strong relationships that OUCP has built with community-based organizations, particularly in the East Lake, Edgewood, and Mechanicsville-Pittsburgh neighborhoods, have enabled it to take a leadership role in convening a number of Atlanta community forums, particularly geared to foreclosure issues, equitable development, and the 2010 census. But while OUCP's efforts are increasingly focused on specific neighborhoods, the greater University's community work has not yet gotten there. Emory's strong relationships leave it well positioned but still aware of the challenge ahead. "You need internal change agents," Emory Provost Earl Lewis observes. "Major movements of institutions require these. Ten years from now we are likely to be part of the way to where we would like to be."³⁰¹