Building Bridges: Bringing University and Community Together Through a Community-Based Research Network

Presented by
Jason Willis & Deanna Cooke
Community Research and Learning Network
Georgetown University
Washington, DC
Presentation Outline

- Center for Social Justice
- The CoRAL Network Overview
  - DC CBR campus development
  - Student opportunities
  - Web-based matching making
  - Mechanisms for identifying best practices
- The Network as an Effective Tool for Developing University/Community Relationships
Principles of Community Based Research

- CBR is collaborative
- CBR demystifies and democratizes the production and dissemination of knowledge
- CBR is part of process of social change to increase social justice
Center for Social Justice
Research, Teaching & Service
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
In order to advance justice and the common good, the Center promotes and integrates community based research, teaching & service by collaborating with diverse partners and communities.
CoRAL Network

1 of 7 CBR sites sponsored by the Bonner Foundation, charged to develop networks at the local level for conducting community based research
CoRAL Network Mission

The Community Research and Learning (CoRAL) Network is a partnership among higher education institutions and community based organizations (CBOs), designed to mobilize the universities’ educational and scholarly resources for the purpose of supporting CBO’s social change missions in pursuit of social justice.
Who’s in the CoRAL network?

1. Consortium of Universities of the Metropolitan Washington Area (CUMWA)
2. Greater DC Cares
3. Urban Institute
4. Area institutions of higher education
   • Georgetown University
   • George Washington University
   • George Mason University
   • Catholic University of America
   • Trinity College
   • Marymount University
   • University of the District of Columbia
Goals of CoRAL Network

1. Maintain information about CBO’s
   - Types of Collaborative Research Projects needed
   - Type of experiential learning they are willing to provide for students

2. Maintain information about faculty, courses, graduate student researchers
   - Interested in community work
   - Specific research or technical expertise

3. Proactively link the needs and interests of communities and researchers
Goals of CoRAL, Continued

4. Provide technical assistance such as:
   - Forms
   - model agreements
   - completed reports
   - data bases

5. Develop the human and institutional resources to advance community research

6. Provide forums to present research

7. Seek resources to sustain and expand this work.
Accomplishments to date

- Seminars for researchers interested in CBR
- DC CBR campus development
- NPO Roundtable events
- Student development
- Semester/Year-long projects
- Presentations and workshops at conferences, NPO’s & Foundations
- CBR network clearinghouse website
DC CBR Campus Development

1. UDC - Helps build UDC’s capacity to expand its outreach to community based organizations.
2. Marymount - Trains and involves students in community-based education and service learning through an expanded culturally relevant cancer education and outreach program.
3. Trinity College - Develops and Integrates Community service learning in to a 2nd year seminar
4. GWU - Supports a new partnership between non-profits and Human Services Program that links advanced students with small, start up service organizations.
Student as researcher

- Student fellowship program
  - Senior Seminar, Dept. of Sociology
  - TCNJ student research program
- Alternative spring break trips
  - EMU BreakAway spring break programs
- FOCI program
  - Georgetown freshman orientation initiative
- Summer of Service
  - Georgetown alternative program
Tools and Functions of a CBR Network website

- As a clearinghouse for CBR projects
- As education to the public and interested community and university members
- As update of current events of CoRAL Network and DC CBR activities
- As information/archive warehouse
- As common meeting area for partners
Working mechanisms that help identify best practices

- **Steering Committee**
  - meets bi-monthly to discuss network activities

- **Website clearinghouse advisory committee**
  - vital tool to construct clearinghouse database

- **Governance advisory committee**
  - works on infrastructure and outreach aspects

- **Partnership advisory committee (future)**
  - formulating concepts of MOU’s and other relative documents
CBR Network: An effective tool?

1. Multiple Skills, Projects & Perspectives
   - Can learn from each other (stop “re-creating the wheel”)
   - More comprehensive package to offer organizations

2. Funders see integrated proposals

3. Researchers & Organizations have a single resource to tap into
   - Matches
   - Best practices
   - Helpful hints
   - training

4. Mechanism for advocating Policy Changes
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