# Table of Contents

**Introduction** ........................................................................................................................................... 2

**Partnerships for Education** ........................................................................................................................ 3

Lehman College: A Mission Anchored in Our History ................................................................................ 4
José Luis Cruz .................................................................................................................................................. 4

Aligning Anchor Strategies Within A Catholic Mission ............................................................................... 12
James T Harris III .......................................................................................................................................... 12

Opportunity and Access: Democratizing Higher Education ..................................................................... 19
Phoebe A. Haddon and Nyeema C. Watson ................................................................................................. 19

**Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities** ............................................................. 26

Tackling “The Two Americas” with City-Wide Collaboration in Newark .............................................. 27
Nancy Cantor, Tai Cooper, Marcia Brown, and Peter Englot .................................................................... 27

San Francisco exploring the promise of partnerships with Anchor Institutions ..................................... 39
Sheryl Evans Davis ........................................................................................................................................ 39

The Port Richmond Partnership: The College Readiness Pipeline ........................................................ 48
Richard Guarasci ......................................................................................................................................... 48

**Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships** ...................................................... 53

Central Corridor Anchor Partnership: Securing Regional Prosperity ................................................... 54
Paul Pribbenow and Laura Beeth ................................................................................................................ 54

So much more than a stage: How New Jersey Performing Arts Center embraced its role as Newark’s anchor cultural institution .................................................................................................................. 67
John Schreiber ............................................................................................................................................. 67
Introduction

Welcome to the second Volume of the Anchor Institutions Task Force’s (AITF) *Journal on Anchor Institutions and Communities*. This issue continues to capture some of the evolving trends in the role of anchor institutions in their local communities. Our Journal has been an important way to build upon initiatives and ideas discussed during AITF’s Annual Conferences. Authors in this Volume have been speakers at recent conferences.

This issue is organized in three sections: *Partnerships for Education*, *Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities*, and *Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships*. These are all areas of great importance for how anchor institutions are engaging in their communities.

*Partnerships for Education* have always been a priority for AITF. Every AITF conference features a plenary session on how anchor institutions build partnerships with local schools and school systems to expand educational opportunities, particularly for vulnerable children and young people. This section of the *Journal* features the education collaborative strategies of Lehman College in the Bronx, New York, the University of San Diego, and Rutgers University-Camden.

The idea of *Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities* is particularly important to the future of the anchor institutions movement. In order to truly transform communities, local governments and anchor institutions will have to work together. Anchor institutions can be crucial partners to municipalities in extending the impact and potential of local governments. This section of the *Journal* details ways in which the cities of Newark, New Jersey, San Francisco, California, and Staten Island, New York have been collaborating with anchor institutions.

*Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships* represent one of the most innovative ways in which anchor institutions are contributing to their communities. Every community represents an ecosystem of different types of institutions that share a stake in the future of their geographic areas. In recent years, anchor institutions’ local partnerships have become more complex and inclusive of numerous different types of anchor institutions and community partners. This section of the *Journal* includes a discussion of the Central Corridor Anchor Partnership in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It also includes perspectives of the role of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center as an anchor in Newark, New Jersey, which partners with Rutgers-Newark and others in the Newark Anchor Collaborative. The significance of arts and cultural anchor institutions has been increasingly highlighted in the anchor institutions movement.

Overall, this Volume presents a range of examples as to how anchor institutions demonstrate their commitment to AITF’s values – democracy and democratic practice, collaboration, equity and social justice, and place, and, in so doing, strengthen their neighborhoods, cities, and regions.
Partnerships for Education
Lehman’s story began 50 years ago. Originally designed as Hunter in the Bronx, a satellite of CUNY’s Park Avenue campus, a rebellious faculty gained institutional autonomy from Hunter College and went on to transform what was then a 37-year-old branch campus — with its own illustrious history — into what today is one of our country’s premier public, urban-serving institutions. No longer an extension of a college located primarily in Manhattan, Lehman was free to focus on serving the needs of the Bronx neighborhood in which it is located.

Such a mission is part of the fabric of Lehman College. When Leonard Lief, the College’s founding president, was asked if Lehman College would take a leadership position in helping the Bronx to address the social ills of the day, he responded as an invested steward of place: “Yes. It would be criminal for us to sit by the wayside.” As the only public four-year college in the borough, Lehman is ideally situated as an anchor institution for the Bronx, the home of 60 percent of our undergraduates and 45 percent of our graduate students. Our purpose is not only to provide students with a quality liberal arts education and professionalization training, but to connect our institution with the greater Bronx community. In aligning our goals with the needs of our neighborhood, we sow the seeds of education in its residents, paving the way for Bronx students to one day attend Lehman and reap the benefits and opportunities that only a world-class liberal arts college education can provide.

The basic purpose of an anchor institution is to use its unique educational and financial resources to “better the welfare of the community in which it resides” (1). On its 50th anniversary, Lehman College continues to use this statement as a litmus test as it builds upon its foundation and creates a vision for the future. With each new initiative we create, we see our effect on the students who come to our campus every day. Yet, with each step an anchor institution takes, it casts a longer shadow upon its community. Every decision that Lehman College makes — as is true for all anchor institutions — has the potential to ripple through the community and better the lives of its residents. As we craft the narrative that will come to define Lehman College over the next fifty years, we must ask ourselves how our plans can radiate outwards and benefit the Bronx at large.

Such a goal requires diligence and a deliberateness on the part of the institution. Every anchor institution occupies a unique niche within its community. A hospital, for example, will focus on meeting the health and medical needs of the community. Lehman College, in turn, best serves the needs of the borough by focusing its efforts on educational attainment. While according to U.S Census data, more than half of Bronxites 25 and older have at least a high school diploma or equivalency, these 462,000 residents have not earned a bachelor’s degree. In addition, of New York State’s 62 counties, the Bronx is next to last in that category, with only 27.7 percent of residents attaining an associate’s degree or higher. However, two-thirds of United States’ newly created jobs are for individuals with postsecondary education or training. Furthermore, over eight million of the positions created by the U.S. since the Great Recession, require a bachelor’s degree. (4)

José Luis Cruz is the President of Lehman College, The City University of New York
To accomplish this task of increasing educational opportunity, and to be the best possible version of an anchor institution, Lehman College has sharpened its strategic vision in order to best serve the educational, vocational, and cultural needs of the community. We have augmented our infrastructure to meet the needs of our current students, the majority of whom are Bronx residents. We have also created several new programs to help our students excel in the STEM, business and education fields. With every initiative we have created for our students, we have found a way to reach out to the Bronx that exists outside of Lehman College.

This paper will focus on the specific benefits that a higher education institution offers to its home community. First, I will provide a detailed examination of the Bronx itself—its demographics, its inherent challenges, and its present circumstances. Next, I will give an overview of the imprint Lehman College has already made on the community and its plans going forward. I will then explore how Lehman College fulfills its duty as an anchor institution through several parallel paths: education, business and economic development, and vigorous support of the STEM fields. Finally, I will offer a vision for how the Bronx will continue to grow in tandem with Lehman. Ultimately, I hope to provide a detailed framework not only for how we will not only achieve our vision for Lehman College, but perhaps more importantly, how we will aid the historically underprivileged members of our community in the fulfillment of their own dreams.

A Bronx Tale

Before we can begin to address our role as an anchor institution, it is necessary to understand the unique needs of the Bronx community that we serve. Ours is a community with great challenges but even greater potential.

Lehman College maintains a crucial role in the resurgence of the Bronx, a proud and resilient borough that, unfortunately, continues to suffer from the malignant stereotyping and unfair characterizations that echo from the social turbulence and political neglect of the 1970s. Instead of saying “The Bronx is burning,” we can say that the borough is New York City’s fastest-growing, as entrepreneurs, industry leaders and elected officials focus their attention on the public institutions that have persisted in their missions and retained an important and historical presence in their communities.

But in spite of the progress being made, U.S. Census statistics show that the Bronx is still the poorest county in all of New York State, with 28.6 percent of its residents living in poverty, a per capita annual income of only $18,896, and a median household annual income of $35,302. (5). It ranks near the bottom five percent of counties in the nation for economic mobility for children in poor families. In fact, the Equality of Opportunity Project has concluded that the Bronx is “extremely bad for income mobility for children in poor families”; and that it “ranks...better than only about 5 percent of counties” in the country. Other organizations have also found that 42 percent of the population in the Bronx is living in "distress" and that the borough’s "opportunity index" merits a failing grade of D+.

Improving the quality of life in the Bronx will be challenging. The Equality of Opportunity Project has stated that the Bronx is “among the worst counties in the U.S. in helping poor children up the income ladder.” But this same
organization recently ranked Lehman College fourth overall in the nation for its role in moving large numbers of low-income students into the middle class. More importantly, we are the highest ranking Hispanic serving institution on the list.

90x30: Anchoring Our Role in the Community

The important part that Lehman College has already played in expanding educational opportunity is reflected in the number of degrees awarded, which has seen an annual increase of 7.5% over the past two years. We plan to build upon this achievement and cement our role as the Bronx’s most valuable anchor institution by embarking on a bold plan to double the number of degrees and professional credentials Lehman College students will earn by the year 2030, from 45,000 to 90,000. We have named it “90x30.”

If successful, 90x30 will make a significant impact on the economic and social mobility of Lehman’s students by propelling them into the ranks of well-qualified, job market-ready wage earners and positioning them well for further education. By extension, it has the potential to turn the tide for thousands of families throughout the borough.

90x30 has become an organizing principle to help Lehman College privilege scale, quality, and impact as we fulfill our responsibilities as an anchor institute in the Bronx. Additionally, 90x30 is a value proposition to compel change agents in the public and private sectors (who likewise aim to better serve those who need help the most) to invest in our venture to become the borough’s top contributor to educational attainment. In the end, it is hoped that not only will 90x30 bring the promise of educational opportunity to even more Bronxites, but it will be a catalyst for the urgent action required to create the conditions whereby the promised prosperity of a resurgent Bronx is within the reach of all who seek to meet their full potential.

Institutional Change at Lehman

To that end, Lehman College must accelerate progress in student outcomes for the nearly 14,000 students in our undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as the 13,000 students in our certificate and workforce development program. There are 50% of our students have a household income of $30,000 or less; 80% are students of color; 41% speak a language other than English at home; and the median age is 27. Our students represent the hopes and aspirations of over 140 different ancestral groups.

We not only want to augment the number of students enrolled at Lehman—we want to augment the number of students graduating from Lehman. To that end we have implemented new software programs and expanded hours in support services such as those provided by the Counseling, Advising, and Career Development Centers as well as the library. The determined collaboration of academic departments—which has resulted in opening new sections for high enrollment and high waitlist courses--has positively influenced student retention and progression rates.
First and foremost, we are continuing to build our institutional capacity in order to expand access, increase completion rates, and reduce time to degree. We are also establishing a robust data analytics operation to accelerate the graduation rate gains that in the past five years have established Lehman as the University’s fastest improving senior college. We have deployed Lehman 360 and other best-of-class information intelligence tools that will provide us the actionable data we need to improve the effectiveness of our educational pipelines; enhance the impact of our pedagogy; and streamline our academic and administrative policies and procedures.

We are also working to expand our virtual and physical infrastructure. Next year, we are breaking ground on our new 50,000 square-foot Nursing Teaching and Research Center and advocating on behalf of the 160,000 square-foot Phase II Science Hall project currently contemplated in our five-year capital improvement plan. When completed, these two buildings will increase our College’s instructional capacity by 22%. We have also completed a $41 million central heating and cooling plant upgrade project, begun upgrading faculty office space, and remodeled the Student Health Center. We have created four new multi-modal computer classrooms, and our recent technological upgrades have helped Lehman to earn top honors among CUNY’s senior colleges with regards to wireless access, help desk availability, and satisfaction with computer labs.

Lehman also works to serve its nontraditional age students through its Adult Degree Program. The 1,000 students enrolled in ADP have an average age of 40 and have different needs than traditional age Lehman students, yet their outcomes typically exceed those of general undergraduate populations. ADP is also the main conduit for building relationships with industries and employers, allowing Lehman to create numerous innovative workforce development partnerships. Most recently, Lehman College joined the Bronx Education – Health Industry Partnership in conjunction with the healthcare union 1199SEIU and Hostos and Bronx Community Colleges. The partnership is focused on strengthening the existing healthcare workforce by developing initiatives to facilitate access and reduce time-to-degree completion for working adult learners. These include alternative college admission pathways and math gateway courses; stackable credentials; and reverse transfer agreements. Our goal is to facilitate our students’ transition from the classroom to the workforce.

We are especially focused on serving the needs of our underprivileged and immigrant students. Lehman College has recently opened a food pantry. The newly established CUNY Edge program will provide focused counseling and advising support to students receiving public assistance. Immigration legal services for students and members of the surrounding community were launched in support of the Jaime Lucero Mexican Studies Institute.

Finally, in order to reward excellence and spur innovation, we have established an Equity Innovation Fund to encourage all members of Lehman College to continue to find new ways to serve the Bronx community and help our students to complete their undergraduate education so that we can achieve our goal of 90,000 graduates by 2030.
Educating Lehman Students, Educating the Bronx

In order to speed time-to-degree and further vocational training, Lehman launched the Moving Forward in Reverse Program. The first of its kind in New York State, this initiative allows students at the Bronx-based community colleges, Hostos and Bronx Community College, to “transfer back” credits earned at Lehman and apply them toward an associate’s degree at their home school. Lehman works directly with the two community colleges to identify, notify, and clearly communicate the necessary steps for graduation to any eligible students. This “reverse transfer” agreement between Lehman College and Hostos Community College and Bronx Community College stands as a superb example of cooperation and shared intention toward helping students to complete first their associate degrees and then their bachelor’s degrees. The statistics show that having such a transitional program in place gives students a substantial boost and increases by impressive margins the likelihood that they will complete a bachelor’s degree. A testament to its success, this program is now being replicated across the CUNY system.

Lehman also participates in CUNY’s Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge initiative (SEEK), a state-funded educational opportunity program that uses non-traditional admissions criteria to admit talented and motivated high school graduates in need of financial support to the University's senior colleges. Beginning as a pre-baccalaureate program at The City College of New York in 1965 and signed into law by the New York State legislature in 1966, the program resulted from the successful efforts of social activists and progressive politicians whose vision was to provide access to CUNY for poor students, then largely African-American and Puerto Rican, who graduated from high schools but had not been adequately prepared for the rigors of college. Today there are eleven SEEK Programs across the University, including the one at Lehman College, and SEEK has enrolled approximately 230,000 low-income students since inception. Graduation rates for SEEK students at Lehman have increased by 13 percent.

Our SEEK students have been aided by Lehman’s Pathways to Success (PTS) Initiative. Funded by a TRIO Student Success Services grant, PTS aims to increase the number of first-generation students, low-income students, and disabled students who successfully complete a program of study at the postsecondary level. PTS provides opportunities for academic, personal, and professional development in group and one-on-one settings; assists students with basic college requirements; motivates students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education; helps them to develop financial and economic literacy; assists them in meeting the requirements for graduate school applications; and guides them toward fulfilling careers.

STEM at Lehman and the Bronx

Lehman’s educational portfolio has also established a wide range of initiatives geared toward advancing student achievement in the marketable STEM fields. Of particular interest is closing the opportunity gap affecting the underserved students in the Bronx. MATH UP, a teacher preparation program with $7.6 million in funding from public and private sources, provided 79 teachers with one-year internships in Bronx elementary schools. They joined 80 math teachers who benefited from the National Science Foundation’s Math Teacher Transformation Institute. Our efforts here not only aided our own students in gaining the valuable experience needed to further
their own professional endeavors, but have allowed Lehman College to engage with and encourage the Bronx’s youngest residents. In addition, the Bronx Institute housed at Lehman has served over 3,000 K-12 students and their families with workshops to prepare them for the challenges of navigating the public school system. Lehman’s Center for School and College Collaboratives reaches over 1,000 students through STEM courses and weekly college career workshops. Along with other CUNY colleges, we are creating a K-12 computer science teacher education course of study and developing a coding academy to prepare students for careers in the tech sector.

We have also created new STEM programs at Lehman College to ensure that we not only give our students the benefit of a liberal arts education but also put them on the path to finding employment upon graduation. We were awarded a $5.7 million grant for our “Pathways to STEM Success” project to increase the number of Hispanic and lower-income students who graduate with STEM degrees. In the field of technology, we have begun a public-private partnership with EON Reality, Inc in order to launch an 11-month training program in animation, 3D graphics, and web design as part of CUNY’s new Virtual/Augmented Reality Training Academy. The Academy will provide students with invaluable, state-of-the-art experiential training and position them for career opportunities in the fast-growing VR/AR industry. The program starts with three months of classes in which students will be immersed in VR and AR content creation and theory. The following eight months will be devoted to real-life lab projects that students can use to develop their entrepreneurial skills. Additionally, the facility includes an Icube Mobile, a four-wall immersive VR room that will enable students to experience and test their creations. To maximize participation and ease student access, classes are held on nights and weekends. To ensure that the Virtual Reality Training Academy reaches its goal of helping to train students to join the borough’s growing sector of technology professionals, our recruitment efforts are focused on those who live or work in the region.

Investing in Our Community: Business at Lehman

Lehman College is also working to expand its Business offerings to prepare our students for their future career endeavors and to stimulate economic development in the Bronx. At Lehman College, we have also developed a new Master’s degree in Organizational Management and an online certification program for teaching gifted and talented students. Lehman College is also working to forge relationships with the greater NYC community so that our students become acquainted with the very people and institutions who will hire them upon graduation. A grant from the NYC Small Business Services allows us to participate in the Tech Talent Pipeline Residency Program, which connects qualified undergraduate CUNY computer science majors to short-term paid residencies at NYC tech companies and gives our students the opportunity to gain valuable real-world experience in their field. Program-generated feedback will help us to continue providing career development support specific to the tech sector, including offering project-based software engineering courses and involving experts in teaching and career coaching. Lehman also maximizes its relationship with institutions like the New York Botanical Garden, the American Museum of Natural History, the Bronx Zoo, and the Lincoln Center Education to benefit our students and community.
Lehman also operates a unique outreach unit, CUNY on the Concourse (COTC). COTC houses a “Small Business Incubator” in the Bronx that the NY City Economic Development Corporation recently awarded to Lehman via its School of Continuing and Professional Studies. This initiative will expand the reach of Lehman’s School of Continuing and Professional Studies, which currently serves 13,000 community residents, offering them opportunities for professional development, customized training, industry certification, and academic degrees.

But truly fulfilling our mission as an anchor institution cannot be accomplished without significant investment in the community. In order to increase the number of Bachelor’s degrees earned by Bronx residents, we must be determined and deliberate in our efforts to give potential students the necessary tools and skill set to succeed in their college education. To that end, Lehman College has created several outreach initiatives that allow the institution to reach out to the greater Bronx Community. This impact is best discerned by examining the impact of the Bronx Small Business Development Center. Housed at Lehman since 2000, the Center has helped nearly 7,000 businesses create or save over 3,300 job. Combined, these businesses have invested more than $114 million in our local economy.

Cultural and Social Endeavors: Enriching Community Engagement

Beyond the STEM and business fields, Lehman is invested in providing all of its students, regardless of their program of study, with a Liberal Arts education. We have therefore focused on ways to incorporate to integrate Lehman’s thriving Humanities and Social Sciences programs into our mission as an anchor institution, using our higher education resources to create a richer and more vibrant Bronx community.

One such example is the independent non-profit organization BronxNet, which provides local cable television programming to the Bronx, has its studios and offices on the Lehman College campus. Its strong, community-based commitment includes a number of initiatives that benefit local residents, including television production training, hands-on internships, career preparation for students, and opportunities for programming collaborations including several programs featuring Lehman College professors, administrators and students as hosts and commentators.

Lehman College is also home to the Jaime Lucero Mexican Studies Institute and the CUNY Institute for Health Equity. Although vastly different in scope, each of these initiatives supports Lehman faculty and students in their efforts, and each of these has made direct community engagement and intervention a priority. The Mexican Studies Institute is comprised of any faculty, students, staff, and affiliated community-based organizations working on research, advocacy, and services related to Mexico and Mexicans in the United States. The Institute for Health Equity provides a home for interdisciplinary population-based research, with faculty affiliates and student interns actively engaged in applied research and programs that address the social determinants of health, and health equity in underserved communities of color. Collaboration with CUNY public health programs and community organizations in the Bronx, Manhattan and Brooklyn support the Institute’s goal of achieving health equity and social justice within neighborhoods where CUNY campuses are located.
Because a society is defined not only by its social policies but by its cultural achievements, it befits our role as an anchor institution that the arts at Lehman play such a significant role in college life and community engagement. With support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York State Council on the Arts, as well as corporations, foundations and private donations, the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts continues to present performances from around the world in its 2,300 seat theater. Created in 1980, the Center is recognized not only as the borough’s premier concert hall, but one of New York’s finest and most exciting not-for-profit performing arts centers. In addition, the Lehman College Art Gallery, now in its 25th year, brings contemporary art to our Bronx audience through free exhibitions and special programs. Finally, Lehman Stages serves the borough by making performing arts facilities accessible to local arts and civic organizations, while creating original performances and events that improve the quality of life in the community.

Not a Conclusion, but a Dream for the Future

The crisis of educational inequality is not a local issue unique to the Bronx. There are millions of talented students beyond our borough who are coming of age in America today, but who have not yet been afforded the opportunity to meet their full potential. Surely, the most important takeaway is that for our nation to once again lead the world in educational attainment, policymakers, higher-education leaders and campus communities must work together in a thoughtful, yet purposeful, manner and must remember that transformational change need not be slow to be steady, nor disruptive to be transformative. Indeed, we will only succeed if the intensity and coherence of our actions matches the magnitude of the challenge we face.

Recognizing the severity of this situation serves as a touchstone as we decide how to best honor and expand the mission of Lehman College. Understanding our vital place in the Bronx community shapes our curriculum development, teaching modalities, student services, faculty recruitment, public engagement, and professionalization initiatives.

By fulfilling its role as an anchor institution, Lehman College can help these 462,000 Bronxites to attain a bachelor’s degree. This would allow them to generate an additional $6 billion in annual income. Our city, state and country would gain $2.8 billion in tax revenue. Furthermore, more than 57,000 residents would be lifted out of poverty and 43,000 would qualify for employer-provided health insurance. And there’s more: nearly 66,000 fewer Bronxites would require Medicaid, more than 41,000 fewer would require Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and 12,000 fewer would require housing assistance.

The magnitude of the challenge may seem daunting. But imagining what a better educated Bronx would look like provides a powerful impetus for us to forge ahead. So forge ahead we must.

As an anchor institution and a nationally recognized vehicle of upward mobility, Lehman College must assume a lead role in the story that is taking shape as we speak — the story that one day will recount the Renaissance of the Bronx.
Aligning Anchor Strategies Within A Catholic Mission

James T Harris III

The University of San Diego

The University of San Diego is a Roman Catholic University founded in 1949 as a collaboration between the Society of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) and the Diocese of San Diego. Since its founding, the university has had a commitment to educating students to “a social awareness which impels to action.” At its core has been the belief that as a Catholic institution, the university must be committed equally to the Catholic intellectual tradition and Catholic social teachings while also striving to rank among the great institutions of higher learning in the United States. This has compelled the university to be more than just an institution that prepares students for a personally fulfilling and meaningful life but also requires it to be committed to advancing academic excellence, expanding liberal and professional knowledge and creating a diverse and inclusive academic community.

When the San Diego College for Women, San Diego College for Men and San Diego School of Law merged in 1972 to create the University of San Diego, a modern Catholic university was born. This new university was founded as an independent, Catholic university and today has grown to more than 8,600 students from more than 75 different countries. Today, USD is the youngest private university included in the U.S. News & World Report’s list of the top 100 national universities. The Sierra Club ranks USD as one of the 10 top universities committed to environmental sustainability, and USD ranks second in the country for the percentage of its students that study abroad. In 2017, the Princeton Review named the University of San Diego as the “Most Beautiful Campus in America.” The university possesses a strong financial balance sheet, is selective in its admissions, welcoming of all faith traditions, and—in spite of being a relatively young university—has an endowment ranked in the top 200 in American higher education. The university’s commitment to community engagement led to it being recognized by the Carnegie Foundation as a “Community Engagement Institution,” and its dedication to social innovation and entrepreneurship led to its designation as one of only 44 Ashoka Changemaker campuses in the world and the first on the West Coast.

Over the years, the university developed a strong reputation for supporting service-learning and built a foundation for community-based learning. The first president of USD, Dr. Author Hughes, was a founding member of California Campus Compact. Many faculty members on campus embraced the principles of civic engagement and the idea that students had a responsibility to participate in our democracy as well as a responsibility to serve their local community, including the neighborhood in which the university resides, Linda Vista. Given USD’s location as an international gateway city near the U.S./Mexican border, many community outreach and service-learning projects engaged populations across the border or in neighborhoods with large immigrant populations.

As the university continued to expand its academic reputation and global presence, there was a growing concern that USD as an institution was more focused on its rankings and global recognition than it was about serving local

---

1 James T Harris III is the President of the University of San Diego.
communities and embracing best practices with regard to developing reciprocal, democratic partnerships with other organizations. As one community leader stated during the strategic planning process, “It seems that USD is better known for its work outside of the City of San Diego than it is locally.” In many ways, these words captured what people were thinking. USD was committed to preparing its students to be good citizens, but the institution itself was viewed as lacking in its commitment to the greater San Diego community. Several people recalled when the San Diego College for Women was founded that local parishes were asked by the Bishop to contribute a portion of the weekly collections to help fund the college. Since the parishes contributed to the College in its infancy, there remains a feeling that the university should make it a point to serve local students. There were also concerns expressed by people both on and off campus that the university had lost part of its Catholic identity because a smaller portion of the students it served were from low income families living in distressed local communities than in the early years of the College. This led people to question USD’s commitment to the poor and the vulnerable in society, and many worried that access and inclusion were no longer emphasized as part of the university’s mission as a Catholic university. Finally, there were concerns expressed about why USD did not embrace its position as one of a handful of universities in the country located near an international border.

The Emergence of American Catholic Colleges and Universities as Anchor Institutions

Catholic colleges and universities were relative late comers to the American higher education scene. Unlike many of the colonial colleges that were founded prior to the American Revolution, the first Catholic institution, Georgetown, was founded in 1789. It wasn’t until the middle of the next century that the majority of Catholic institutions started to emerge. Part of this growth was a response by the Catholic Church to meet the need of the increasing number of Catholic immigrants to the United States, many of whom migrated to urban environments. As Fredrick Rudolph observed in his book *The American College and University*, “The Roman Catholic Church needed no prodding to follow the counsel of St. Ignatius to place colleges in cities.”2 It was during the nineteenth century that many of today’s most prominent Catholic universities were founded: Xavier (1831), Notre Dame (1842), Villanova (1842), Holy Cross (1843), Fordham (1847), Boston College (1863). It is not surprising that most of them were placed in or near urban communities.

The design and purpose of these early Catholic colleges and universities was explicitly to educate local young people in the Catholic intellectual tradition and prepare them for life. This tradition emphasized the understanding that faith and reason were compatible and the development of the whole person was the ultimate goal of any Catholic education. It is also important to remember that most Catholic colleges were originally designed to educate poor, first-generation students. For example, Boston College’s original charter was to educate Boston’s predominately poor, Irish Catholic immigrant community. In many ways, the focus on educating immigrants, first-generation and poor students was one of the first demonstrations of colleges and universities serving as anchor institutions for local communities in American history. It is important to remember that most of these early

---

Catholic colleges and universities were focused on serving the needs of the local community and to prepare young men (and later women) for lives as responsible citizens in their own communities.

While Catholic colleges and universities were models for educating underserved populations in urban environments during the 19th and early 20th century, in the second half of the 20th century, some of the leading Catholic universities gained national prominence. The commitment to serving poor, first-generation students was replaced with a desire to grow academic reputation and attract students with greater capacity to pay for the rising cost of tuition. By the turn of the 21st century, a number of the top universities in the United States were Catholic institutions. However, questions started to emerge about their commitment to serving students from low-income families as well as their desire to create democratic, reciprocal partnerships with community partners located in distressed neighborhoods near the campus. While the vast majority of Catholic universities could demonstrate how they were preparing their students to be good citizens, evidence regarding an institutional commitment to serving as an anchor for their local communities was not always evident.

A New Model for Viewing Catholic Higher Education and Rethinking the Anchor Mission

The ongoing dialogue about the purpose and mission of Catholic colleges and universities and their responsibilities to their local communities received new life in the 21st century, thanks to the vision of Pope Francis. During his papacy, Pope Francis has placed a great amount of emphasis on how the Church (and therefore Catholic colleges and universities) needs to engage directly the contemporary issues of our times. In an address to an Italian Church conference delivered in 2015, Francis indicated that “We are not living an era of change, but a change of era.” In this emerging context, he called for a “free church….open to the challenges of the present, never in defense for fear of losing something.” The Church’s role in today’s world plays a significant role in Francis’ writings including his two most significant writings to date, Evangelii Gaudium and Laudato si’.

In Evangelii Gaudium, Francis writes that it is important to “encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church’s journey in years to come.” Later, he spells out what he believes are key characteristics of the Catholic faith in the 21st century: mercy, the primacy of the poor, the imperative to go to the peripheries, and the church as a field hospital.

It can be argued that these values have always been important to the Catholic Church, but it was the Pope’s prioritization of them that has made Catholic colleges and universities rethink their roles in society and has helped shape a contemporary understanding of what it means to be a Catholic institution of higher learning.

In Laudato si’, “On Care for Our Common Home,” Pope Francis asks for “a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet” and suggests that “We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the

---

3 Pope Francis, “Address to the Fifth Convention of the Italian Church, Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore”, Florence, 2015.
4 ibid
environmental challenge we are facing, and its human origins, concern and affect us all.”⁷ The Pope asks us all to “go forth,” to confront societal challenges. By doing so, he is calling upon the Church to reflect and reconsider its mission while simultaneously asking Catholic colleges and universities to do the same. He has also asked all Catholic institutions to consider some elements of an “integral ecology,”⁸ one which clearly respects its human and social dimensions. Like Evangelii gaudium, Laudato si’ provides a unique lens from which to consider Catholic identity for colleges and universities and opens the opportunity for deeper dialogue about the role of these institutions in their local communities.

Integrating USD’s Catholic Mission by Identifying as an Anchor Institution

The University of San Diego has had a history of successful strategic planning initiatives that helped shaped what it has become today. In the early years of the institution, the founders Bishop Charles Buddy and Mother Rosalie Hill, made a commitment to create a great Catholic institution of higher learning in San Diego based on the principles of beauty, goodness and truth. After the turn of the century in 2004, the university created a new mission statement and developed a 10-year plan to expand its global reach and internationalize its approach to education. By 2015, USD had reached that goal by doubling the number of international students enrolled on campus and was recognized as having the second highest percentage of students studying abroad among all national universities.

When I accepted the role as the fourth president of USD in 2015, we immediately inaugurated a new strategic planning process that would focus on the development of a vision for the university as it approached its 75th anniversary in 2024. While a vision statement and a set of strategic goals was the planned outcome of this process, it was equally important to engage a broad range of constituents in a dialogue about what it meant to be a contemporary, Catholic university in the 21st century. As in past planning efforts, the university engaged in a thoughtful conversation about the future with key constituents including trustees, alumni, faculty, staff and students. This time, however, a greater emphasis was placed on making sure local community leaders, especially those from Linda Vista, were fully involved and invested in the outcome.

As the planning process progressed, we received feedback from more than 1,200 university stakeholders through a mix of one-on-one interviews, surveys and small group meetings conducted both on campus and across the country. A number of common themes started to emerge, but what struck the planning committee was the high percentage of people who were questioning the university’s long-term commitment to Linda Vista and the greater San Diego community, including Tijuana. Two other concerns emerged, focusing on the university’s commitment to the environment as well as its interest in increasing access for students from first-generation and low-income families. The findings were somewhat surprising given the university’s recent investments, particularly in environmental sustainability and community outreach. For example, the university had demonstrated considerable progress in recent years toward reducing its carbon footprint and water usage. It also had a commitment to

⁷ ibid., 14
⁸ ibid., 10
Partnerships for Education —— Aligning Anchor Strategies Within A Catholic Mission

community outreach dating back more than 25 years through the remarkable work of the Karen and Tom Mulvaney Center for Community, Awareness and Social Action as well as the more recent establishment of the Ashoka Changemaker Hub on campus. Yet, in spite of all these efforts, the people interviewed consistently commented that the university’s efforts in these areas were lacking, beyond the work of individual faculty and students. What was essentially being questioned was the institutional will and commitment to serving as an anchor locally.

Given this feedback, during the early days of my administration, I proposed in my inaugural address and in other public addresses the idea of USD serving as an anchor institution and introduced the university community to some of the best practices across the country. I felt it was also important during the planning process to expose people to the anchor work being conducted at places such as the University of Pennsylvania in West Philadelphia and Xavier University in New Orleans as well as other national universities who had embraced this identity. Likewise, we introduced participants in the planning process to the writings and scholarly work of many authors in the field such as David Maurasse, Ira Harkavy, Lee Benson, Nancy Cantor and even earlier scholars such as John Henry Newman and John Dewey. We also were inspired by the work of Pope Francis and used Laudato si’ as a guiding reference throughout the process. This helped ground our strategic planning in some research and best practices that informed our decisions.

At the end of my first year at a critical point in the planning process, the university hosted a visioning conference on campus. At this day-long workshop, we brought together for the first time, university trustees, students, alumni, elected officials, administrators, and local civic leaders to engage in a conversation about the university’s future. By the end of the day, we agreed upon a few key principles to help guide the development of a new vision statement and six critical pathways that were viewed as essential if the university was to fulfill its promise. When we inquired as to the best way to recommit to the institution’s founding aspirations while promoting our Catholic mission, most people believed USD had a unique opportunity to play a leadership role in American higher education. Ultimately, we believe we can become the living embodiment of the Pope’s Encyclical, Laudato si’, while simultaneously focusing our energy on anchor strategies associated with our identity as a “Changemaker” campus.

Identifying a New Vision and Six Pathways Forward

After many months of deliberation, dialogue and feedback, the planning committee proposed, and the USD Board of Trustees unanimously approved, a new vision statement and six interconnected pathways designed to realize that vision. It is important to note that the six pathways were not identified as individual goals. Rather, they reflected the ideas found in Laudato si as well as the writings of scholars in the field that emphasized that most of the issues facing USD and the communities it serves are deeply complex, interconnected, and require a cross disciplinary approach to find solutions. It was also important that any vision statement continually challenge the university to reflect upon and discuss what it means to be both an anchor institution and a contemporary, Catholic university.

To that end, the Envisioning 2024 USD vision statement reads: “The University of San Diego sets the standard for an engaged, contemporary Catholic university where innovative changemakers confront humanity’s urgent challenges.” The six pathways were also carefully crafted to be interconnected and include the following: 1. Access
Partnerships for Education —— Aligning Anchor Strategies Within A Catholic Mission


The anchor pathway is especially exciting because it emphasizes that true engagement with our local communities can only occur if the partnerships we develop are deep, democratic and meaningful to all involved. To accomplish that goal, the university immediately began reviewing all of its community partnerships and developed memorandums of understanding with key anchors identifying the roles and responsibilities of each. This process has been illuminating and has helped us develop some new partnerships while also reconsidering a few long-standing relationships where expectations may have not been met either by the university or the community partner in recent years.

We also made the important strategic decision that we would not limit our view of our local community to only Linda Vista, or San Diego, but also include communities south of the international border with Mexico. This is a reflection of the idea that too many of the issues facing our local communities are not contained within the U.S. border, and that we must view San Diego as the international gateway city that it has become in the 21st century.

Furthermore, this places USD in a unique leadership position among other anchor or Catholic institutions in the United States to address issues associated with being on a border such as U.S. immigration policies, human trafficking, border security and concerns associated with refugee populations seeking asylum in the United States.

While issues associated with being on an international border have become a greater priority, the issues associated with being a good neighbor and adopting best practices with regard to procurement of goods and services from local vendors, developing more inclusive hiring practices and addressing other key community challenges are equally important. To address these issues, the university reorganized its outreach efforts to place a specific emphasis on anchor strategies including the creation a new position, the director of neighborhood and community engaged partnerships and the development of a local Linda Vista advisory board to help us identify and address local issues. We also recently formed an internal anchor advisory board to seek the counsel and advice from key faculty and other university leaders to coordinate our efforts. Out of the discussions with the two advisory boards, we recognized early on that we must redouble our efforts with the local schools, both Catholic and public, and also decided to focus our energy on one of San Diego’s most pressing challenges, the growing homeless population.

A recent example of living out our vision as an anchor institution has been our work on the issues associated with homelessness in San Diego. As an anchor institution, the university has partnered with local civic and business leaders to convene quarterly symposia for the past year on campus with key city and county officials, service providers and philanthropists to address this community challenge. We have also brought the local higher education community together to discover work being conducted by each campus and coordinating these efforts with other city-wide initiatives. In the first year, we have witnessed an improvement in the service to the homeless populations and a greater willingness of key community partners to work together to resolve issues.

**Aligning Anchor Strategies with a Catholic Mission**

Aspiring to be a great global university starts with recognizing and adopting best anchor strategies. The University of San Diego has identified a clear connection between its vision to set the standard for an engaged, contemporary
Catholic university and its historical commitment to community outreach and comprehensive and inclusive planning. Guided by the vision of Pope Francis and supported by distinguished faculty, staff, administrators and students, we believe USD is well positioned to assume a leadership role locally, nationally and globally in caring for our common home and confronting humanity’s urgent challenges.

**Bibliography**


Pope Francis, “Address to the Fifth Convention of the Italian Church, Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore”, Florence, 2015.


Opportunity and Access: Democratizing Higher Education

Phoebe A. Haddon and Nyeema C. Watson

Current conversations about higher education often center on affordability, access, and the overall worth of a four-year college degree in today's labor market. A 2017 report by the Institute for Higher Education Policy, “Limited Means, Limited Options: College Remains Unaffordable for Many Americans,” illustrates how increases in college costs are hurting less-affluent Americans. In the words of the report, this undercuts "our basic ideas of opportunity and fairness." While students in the highest income quintile could pay for admission at 90 percent of the institutions surveyed, lower and even moderate-income students could afford less than five percent of these schools.

Through our access-focused Bridging the Gap program, Rutgers University–Camden is now confronting and addressing this sobering statistic about affordability.

Belief in the democratization of higher education is a cornerstone that has guided Rutgers University. Founded in 1766 as the all-male Queen's College, Rutgers evolved into New Jersey's land-grant institution after Congress passed the Morrill Act in 1862. This belief continues to guide us and supports our commitment to civic engagement. In Camden, the green loveliness of our campus stretches out into the surrounding city. No walls divide the campus from the city.

Ever evolving since its founding in 1926 as an independent law school, Rutgers University–Camden has transformed into a research center known internationally for innovative scholarship. It became a more comprehensive junior college for local residents before merging with Rutgers in 1950. Today it is a vibrant, growing campus where we ensure that our world-class education is accessible to people of our region and beyond.

Like many other research universities of our size, our commitment is to be responsive to the increasing diversity and social mobility of our location and to create a publicly engaged citizenry. We know that given the realities of our current social, economic, and political climate, universities must redouble their commitment to serving the public good. Higher education must prepare students for careers after graduation; however, considering the multitude of challenges facing society, both in our neighborhoods and across the globe, we also must create leaders who will confront and help remedy the ills of our world. We need to create engaged citizens who understand and believe in the democratic principles on which this country was founded. And, with changing demographics in the United States including an increasing number of students of color, higher education must be prepared to serve a student body with diverse needs and outlooks.

In “Shaping Our Future, Strategic Directions for the Campus, 2014-19,” we outlined our vision for the future of Rutgers University–Camden. This vision reflected upon our strengths and acknowledged the need to safeguard vigilantly those attributes that make Rutgers–Camden distinctive as a campus within the Rutgers system and a

---

1 Phoebe A. Haddon, J.D., LL.M., is chancellor of Rutgers University–Camden. Nyeema C. Watson, Ph.D., is associate chancellor for civic engagement at Rutgers University–Camden.
destination of choice for students, faculty and staff. As a national leader among urban public research universities in teaching and research, and an institution committed to civic engagement both local and global in scope, we aspire to have a transformative impact on our student body and on the communities we serve.

Our mission, rooted in southern New Jersey and the Delaware Valley, is to prepare the next generations of leaders by delivering interdisciplinary and innovative research, rigorous academic programs, engaged experiential learning opportunities, and solution-oriented services that change communities. As one of the nation's highly regarded public regional universities, Rutgers University–Camden offers access to a top-quality, world-class Rutgers educational experience. Rutgers–Camden continues to build on its core strengths by creating distinct areas of research excellence. We are committed to strengthening interdisciplinary graduate and professional programs, and improving student success through a wide range of supportive programming.

Our strategic goals provide a straightforward framework for our initiatives which include as priorities: (1) Providing a first-rate undergraduate education that is grounded in research and offering experiential learning; (2) Enhancing high-quality and interdisciplinary graduate and professional programs; (3) Advancing faculty research excellence; (4) Playing a leadership role in revitalizing Camden and in the greater Delaware Valley; and (5) Increasing enrollment to support strategic goals.

How does Rutgers–Camden realize its guiding mission as a land grant institution while also making a positive impact on its host city and the overall Delaware Valley region? We do so with a commitment to ensure that those who seek access to higher education have a pathway for success. We also work with partners to offer K12 students in our community have opportunities to attend Rutgers–Camden or to seek admission to other institutions of learning.

Rutgers University–Camden provides K-12 support as well as other community service opportunities, but its commitment goes further. Faculty and administrators have built engaged civic learning into the very fabric of the campus, with courses focused on community engagement as the cornerstone of the undergraduate curriculum. We are dedicated to helping transform the lives of our students through personalized academic and educational attention, as well as research opportunities and problem-solving experiences that help them to hone their critical-thinking and problem-solving skills as civically engaged participants. We offer faculty-led research and campus experiential learning that illuminates a wider understanding of the urban experience in America and exhibits excellence both in and across disciplines, with special attention to emerging fields.

Over the last 20 years, the landscape of higher education in this country has changed dramatically. As institutions struggle to reinvent themselves and find new ways to keep rising tuition costs down, many recent and prospective graduates question the value of any college education. Burgeoning college debt that is associated with increasing tuition costs has captured the attention of the media. They report about college graduates today struggling to begin their careers and reach their goals while paying off oppressive student loans. Undergraduate and graduate students alike have the right to earn an education that prepares them for meaningful careers. We know that earning a college degree leads to greater lifetime earnings, as well as lower levels of unemployment and poverty.

We also know that reaching college is challenging, especially for people of color. While the numbers of Hispanic, black, white, and Asian adult U.S. residents with a high school degree has grown, the gap in those attaining
bachelor's degrees has increased for both black and Hispanic adults, when compared with white adults. According to the Institute for Higher Education report, the gap in undergraduate degree attainment has doubled, from 9 to 20 percent for Hispanic adults since 1974 and from 6 to 13 percent for black adults since 1964. Rutgers–Camden has addressed this problem by making college affordable through Bridging the Gap, our tuition reduction program.

But there are other challenges. Historically a small city of only eight square miles and 77,000 residents, poverty, crime, and economic disinvestment have plagued Camden since the 1960s. In a city with just one percent of the state's population, 18 of the 75 most distressed public schools in New Jersey are located within the city. This is an educational challenge so severe that the state Department of Education took control of the city's school district in 2013. With the help of other community partners and leadership in the School District as well as our alumna, Camden Mayor Dana Redd, Rutgers–Camden began to transform its culture to one of not simply being located in the city, but being of the city. We explored how to leverage the resources of the university to address complex societal problems like those that exist in the city of Camden, especially those affecting youth and education.

In 2009 we solidified our commitment to being a civically engaged institution with the creation of an Office of Civic Engagement, the appointment of an executive-level leadership position, and the articulation of a mission to support efforts to meet the challenges facing our host city, county, and region through engaged civic learning, volunteerism and service, community-based research, and mutually beneficial, integrated partnerships with corporate and higher education leaders.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, approximately 75 percent of all Rutgers–Camden students engaged in civic engagement projects. They contributed a total of more than 436,000 hours. During that same period, 3,324 students delivered service as part of a credit-bearing academic experience, which included 216 academic courses developed with specific civic engagement components.

By making available the critical resources of the university to create academically enriching and rigorous programming for students in grades K-12, we have focused on achieving better outcomes for youth and families in the city of Camden and creating pathways for higher education for the young people of Camden. Each initiative builds and expands on another, connecting Camden youth to Rutgers programs from elementary to high school and supporting them while they attend Rutgers or other institutions of higher education and graduate. In recognition of our commitment to civic engagement, Rutgers–Camden was proud to receive a 2015 Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, marking the first time that the campus has received this highly selected designation. This classification signals to the world our leadership efforts in civically engaged learning.

Civic engagement provides extraordinary learning opportunities for our students while also allowing us to help to address the challenges facing Camden and our region. Our commitment to supporting K-12 institutions in the city of Camden is carried out through a variety of civic engagement efforts.
LEAP Academy University School

Rutgers University–Camden has collaborated with LEAP Academy, one of the 13 inaugural public charter schools in New Jersey, since its founding in 1997. LEAP began with 324 students in grades K-5 and today serves 1,560 students in grades K-12. LEAP has established a successful high school graduation and college placement track record, achieving a remarkable 100 percent graduation and college placement rate since its first class graduated in 2005. The school also houses a thriving preschool program.

Office of Civic Engagement K-12 Education Outreach Initiatives

This office offers a variety of services and programs including Camden Ignite, an offering of the North Camden Schools Partnership; the Hill Family Center for College Access; and Rutgers Future Scholars.

Camden Ignite is a collaborative education program of the North Camden Schools Partnership, driven by and concentrated in the North Camden neighborhood of the city. Through after-school and extracurricular learning, the goal of Ignite is to spark student discovery through STEM, art, athletics and more for students in grades four through eight. Ignite serves approximately 250 students in extended-day programming at a variety of schools in North Camden during the academic year. During the summer, 100 students take part in Ignite on the Rutgers–Camden campus. Certified teachers implement lessons and a variety of partners, students and teachers connect students with project-based learning. Rutgers–Camden undergraduate students service as education ambassadors or assistant teachers.

The Hill Family Center for College Access at Rutgers-Camden offers college preparation workshops in high schools and on campus for students, known as Strivers, in 11th and 12th grade. Trained undergraduate and graduate students serve as ambassadors, assisting the Strivers and their families in helping understand higher education options, exploring career and academic interests, and securing financial aid through scholarships and FAFSA completion. Strivers receive one-on-one support and mentoring to assist with the college application process, including completing personal statements and building resumes. Strivers can participate in college visits, SAT preparation courses and tutoring. During 2016-2017, the Hill Center served 1,800 young people in and around the city of Camden.

Rutgers Future Scholars introduces economically disadvantaged, academically promising middle school students from Rutgers' four host communities -- New Brunswick, Piscataway, Newark, and Camden -- to the promise and opportunities of a college education. Each year, up to 200 students, who are completing seventh grade, are accepted into the program. These young people may become the first in their families to earn a four-year college degree. From eighth grade through high school, Future Scholars receive ongoing academic support, enrichment, personal guidance and mentoring. The goal of the program is to help these students stay in school, graduate from high school, and gain admission to Rutgers or another college of their choice. The students participate in residential experiences on campus in the summer, weekend seminars throughout the school year, and college admissions test preparation.
Since 2008, 1,044 Camden high school students applied to Rutgers University–Camden, with 404 being admitted (38%). Of the 404 admitted students, 196 came to Rutgers–Camden. Within that same timeframe, 513 students from Camden attending other colleges applied to Rutgers–Camden to transfer, and 248 were admitted (48%). Out of that group, 162 students transferred to Rutgers–Camden. The collective results of these initiatives, including early indicators of student academic growth evidenced in programs like Ignite and the number of Camden students who have successfully transitioned into college, give us hope that civic engagement efforts like these can create a pathway out of poverty and educational inequity and a more positive outcome for Camden youth.

Although the core of this work is focused on strengthening the educational experiences of youth in the city and providing them access to opportunities that we hope one day will allow them to realize their own dreams, these initiatives have done more than that. These K–12 programs have not only allowed us to mobilize the vast resources of the university in service to the students and families of Camden, but also helped advance Rutgers' teaching, research, and service mission and the civic development of its undergraduate and graduate students through their deep engagement with this work.

Funding Accessible Education – Bridging the Gap

Bold moves are necessary to counter the real debt challenges that face college graduates across the nation. We are proud to fulfill our commitment to make certain we prepare New Jersey residents for success through a new financial support program that helps New Jersey families dramatically reduce the cost of college by eliminating tuition costs entirely in some circumstances, and in others, up to a half. Bridging the Gap was the first program of its kind for New Jersey's public four-year colleges and universities. First-year students, who are U.S. citizens (or legal permanent U.S. residents) and New Jersey residents, seeking to enroll apply for this program by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Families with an adjusted gross income of $60,000 or less will receive a grant covering all of their tuition and the general campus fee not already covered by federal and/or state grants. Families with an adjusted gross income of $60,001 to $80,000 will receive a grant covering 50 percent of their remaining tuition and the general campus fee after any other need-based federal and/or state grants are applied, while families with an AGI of $80,001 to $100,000 receive coverage of 50% of their remaining tuition and the general campus fee. Students can renew their Bridging the Gap grant annually, provided that they successfully complete 30 credit hours in an academic year and remain in good academic standing.

In implementing this program, we realized that offering affordable tuition alone is not always sufficient support, particularly for first-generation and economically disadvantaged students. At Rutgers–Camden, we are committed to making certain that our students also have the support services they need to graduate and to maximize their university experience. Among our offerings to support students is the Rutgers–Camden Educational Opportunity Fund. Thanks to EOF, a state-funded program for New Jersey, incoming first-year students that meet the economic and first-generation qualification get a jump on their college careers. For five weeks in the summer, students live on campus and take classes, getting a preview of college before the fall semester begins. EOF today covers these costs.
Another program designed to support first-generation students and those who come from disadvantaged circumstances is TRiO Student Support Services. This success program also provides academic and other support services to undergraduates who are low-income, first-generation college attendees as well as students with disabilities. Beginning in 2015-2016, this program expanded its reach to give even more opportunities to the undergraduates it serves.

In 2015-2016 alone, the program also gave $36,000 in scholarships to students for our learning abroad opportunities and summer classes. We believe that studying overseas can broaden any student’s perspective on the world and can be transformative. Studies show that students who engage experience greater academic gains in their coursework after learning abroad.

We believe that this opportunity to travel with faculty and other students, typically during our spring break, should be available to all students regardless of their family economic means. Our program now provides three scholarships designed to expand access to international experiences. The scholarships are made available for first-time travelers and are made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, with matching funds from our office, as well as a commitment from the Rutgers–Camden Office of Financial Aid.

The goal of TRiO is to help the students who are in the program succeed and graduate in a timely manner, well-equipped for future opportunities. In addition to helping students study abroad, TRiO awards grants for students to take summer classes at Rutgers–Camden. Similar to the learning abroad grants, a portion of the money comes from the Department of Education, with matching institutional funds. Providing grants for summer classes is critical because we found that typically, students would take out loans to fund summer coursework. We did not want our students to assume any unnecessary student loan debt. We also believe that summer classes can help students stay on track with their education and finish their degrees faster. Whether students need to progress in required classes needed for graduation, to take a developmental class, or retake a course, these grants help the students stay educationally focused and motivated.

TRiO also offers a peer-mentoring program, started in 2014, that is student-led. In it, mentors work with new students and help them get acclimated to campus. The mentors see it as a way of giving back and helping students much like themselves make a smooth adjustment to college.

Our commitment to accessibility is not limited to undergraduate education. In 2016, a new program began at the Rutgers Law School in Camden with an accomplished alumna as the inaugural director. Rhasheda Douglas directs the Minority Student Program (MSP), providing support and opportunities to diverse law students, while more broadly fostering a campus environment that celebrates diversity and inclusion. Douglas, who helped further diversity at a major law firm and enforce civil rights for the U.S. Department of Education, now guides and mentors MSP students through law school and in their efforts to secure summer employment with law firms and other law-related opportunities. Founded at the Rutgers Law School in Newark in 1968, the program sought to increase opportunity for historically underrepresented groups with the expectation that these students would become lawyers, helping provide legal representation and leadership in their communities. For the Rutgers Law School as a whole this commitment to equal opportunity has resulted in nearly 3,000 students of color and students from disadvantaged backgrounds graduating from law school over the last five decades.
The MSP provides academic support, mentoring and internships to students of all races and ethnic origin who can demonstrate that they have been disadvantaged through a history of socioeconomic or educational experiences. Students apply for the MSP after they have been admitted to law school. The goal for the program is to help diverse law students feel supported and succeed, by interacting with members of the legal community and others. These students often become leaders in the law school and in the community once they graduate. Our business school is developing a similar program to help recruit students of color and ensure their success.

Rutgers–Camden continues to explore collaborations with community partners in order to increase accessibility. For example, a recent pipeline program, the Rutgers–Camden/Cooper Collaborative for Upward Mobility in Nursing, is growing a diverse workforce of baccalaureate prepared nurses from historically underrepresented populations. The program allows assistive healthcare personnel working full time at Cooper University Health Care to earn a bachelor’s degree in nursing from the Rutgers School of Nursing–Camden. The collaborative has made it possible for a cohort of Cooper employees to earn their bachelor's degrees from Rutgers-Camden while working full time. This program is funded by a $250,000 grant awarded in 2014 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) through its New Jersey Health Initiatives: New Paths to Professional Nursing program. Students receive tuition support and a stipend to cover personal expenses that can often be a barrier to seeking advanced education.

Additionally, our partnerships involve other regional institutions of higher education. Beginning in fall 2017, an expanding collaboration between Rutgers–Camden and Camden County College (CCC) enables students to earn a bachelor of arts degree in political science seamlessly from Rutgers-Camden upon completion of their CCC associate's degree. Political science is the latest bachelor's degree to be offered in partnership with CCC, joining business administration, criminal justice, liberal studies, and psychology at CCC’s Blackwood campus. Students admitted to CCC who plan to pursue an associate of arts, an associate of fine arts, or an associate of science degree are conditionally admitted to Rutgers–Camden under a transfer agreement.

Rutgers–Camden’s K-12 and higher education efforts not only provide opportunities for our faculty and students to serve and develop civic-mindedness. Through our numerous partnerships with non-profit and corporations, we collaboratively address critical problems in the community and region. It is our responsibility as an anchor institution in this city to use our intellectual and financial resources and human capital to ensure that we not only provide the best education and research opportunities for our families and students, but also use our talents and energies to serve the public good.
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities
Tackling “The Two Americas” with City-Wide Collaboration in Newark

Nancy Cantor, Tai Cooper, Marcia Brown, and Peter Englot

It has been just over 50 years since rebellions in Newark, Detroit, and more than 160 other cities became ingrained in the American psyche, framing clearly for all to see the urban inequality built on systematic, de facto and de jure discrimination that marginalized populations of color, and further solidified the “Two Americas” that Martin Luther King, Jr. proclaimed then as demanding immediate attention (King 1968). Whereas much activism and some real progress have filled those intervening years since 1967, the relevance and reality of this narrative remains eerily present, as Newark’s Mayor Ras J. Baraka and legal advocate Ryan Haygood marked in describing our city today (Baraka and Haygood, Cities Have the Power to Finally Bridge MLK’s "Two Americas" 2017).

As a recent report from Haygood’s New Jersey Institute for Social Justice declares: “Despite a period of substantial economic growth in its downtown, Newark also embodies the persistent race and class divisions of the Two Americas, as local residents—predominantly people of color—are largely excluded from the burgeoning economic opportunity in their own city. Incredibly, Newark residents hold only 18 percent of all jobs in the city” (The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice 2017). The report goes on to document a landscape of racialized inequality, in a city with Fortune 500 companies, major transportation hubs, performing arts center and museums, higher education institutions, hospitals, and substantial real estate development, the poverty rate (33%) is twice the national average, and 42% of Newark children live below the poverty line. The employment landscape is highly racialized, such that while the clear majority of Newark residents are people of color, 60% of the people employed in Newark are white.

The educational landscape is equally problematic. Segregation in New Jersey’s schools, reflecting segregation of the state’s municipalities and neighborhoods, is among the worst in the United States—worse than any state in the American South, according to former New Jersey Supreme Court Justice Gary Stein (O’Dea 2018). For example, Asian and white students make up only 55.2% of all students in the state, but 87.3% of students in low poverty schools; conversely, 40% of students across the state are black or Hispanic, but make up 80% of students in high poverty schools, where proficiency and graduation rates are low and dropout rates are high (Tractenberg and Coughlan 2018, IX, 29).

In Newark, New Jersey’s largest school district, these patterns are among their most intense, where we find 7,000 youth disconnected from progress in high school (Newark Public Schools 2016). Ripple effects of these mutually

---

1 This article is based on the panel presentation by Nancy Cantor and Tai Cooper at the Anchor Institutions Task Force Annual Conference, October 27, 2017 in New York City. Nancy Cantor is Chancellor of Rutgers University – Newark; Tai Cooper, Former Chief Policy Advisor, City of Newark, NJ, is now Deputy Chief Policy Advisor, State of New Jersey; Marcia Brown is Vice Chancellor for External and Governmental Relations, and adjunct professor, School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University – Newark; Peter Englot is Senior Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs and Chief of Staff, Rutgers University – Newark.
reinforcing trends carry into higher education, with only 18.1% of Newark residents age 24 and older holding an associate’s degree or higher in a state where 43% of residents do (U.S. Census Bureau 2018). While crime in Newark is highly concentrated to 20% of the streets, within those neighborhoods the homicide and robbery rates are much higher than either the state or national averages (Safer Newark Council 2018). Not surprisingly, health and nutrition statistics also follow this distressing pattern.

While this narrative of Two Americas serves as a critical and ever-present reality check and overarching framework for leadership and anchor institution work in Newark—and in cities across the country—it implores us to look more deeply at the complexity of the landscape on the ground that also tells a different and equally compelling story of talent and resilience and opportunity-seeking, even as that tale is yet to be fully realized. There is, for example, the narrative of this city in which a very well-organized network of community development corporations has been actively pushing for social justice since the 1967 Newark rebellion (La Casa de Don Pedro 2016), alongside well-voiced faith leaders, and universities with long-standing roots in the struggle for opportunity, including but not limited to the Rutgers-Newark Minority Student Program at the law school, with 50 years of commitment to and success in changing the color of the bar in New Jersey and beyond (Carter 2018).

There is the narrative of the city’s public schools, which were returned to local control in 2018, more than 20 years after the State of New Jersey took them over ostensibly because of historical mismanagement and lack of contemporary managerial capacity, but suspiciously on the heels of New Jersey State Supreme Court decisions demanding that the state increase funding to underfunded, poor, and predominantly black and brown districts like Newark (Morel 2017). Yet, now, they are back under local control, having passed many state-mandated criteria of progress, and a new, home-grown superintendent is taking over the Newark Public Schools.

There is the narrative of youth “disconnected” from the educational system and attendant employment opportunities, but who nonprofits such as the Opportunity Youth Network are showing to be brimming with talent and drive, young people who have not so much failed out of the system as have been failed by it (Youthbuild Newark 2016). There is the finely-tuned voice of activism, expressed in cultural traditions birthed here—think jazz and Sarah Vaughn and James Moody (Kukla 2014)—and in generations of poets and educators turned community leaders, epitomized by the Baraka family (Curvin 2014), and in the leadership now of a son of Newark, who told the people when first elected, “when I’m the Mayor, you’re the mayor.” This legacy of home-grown talent, resilience, and activism combined with a renewal of investment in the city—both by long-standing corporations and new business development—and the mobilization of cross-sector, public-private collaboration, gives a realistic push to the Mayor’s second term motto of “Newark Forward,” and convinces all of us that it is our responsibility collectively and collaboratively to articulate the counter-narrative to the “bleak urban narrative” too often rather automatically attached to cities like Newark (Baraka 2018).

In Newark, as in many cities, there is this paradox of home-grown resilience and talent alongside the sequelae of decades of an “architecture of segregation” and marginalization—of the Two Americas—that is, poverty side-by-side with considerable prosperity and investment locally (Jargowsky 2015). Here, as elsewhere, then, the challenge is how to create in its place an architecture of participation and inclusion that lays the groundwork for inequality to be supplanted by equitable prosperity and growth, rather than the counter-narrative we see so
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

—— Tackling “The Two Americas” with City-Wide Collaboration in Newark

frequently of gentrification and displacement (Troutt 2018). How can the many billions of current dollars being invested in Newark—in real estate development, in new business development, in cultural and educational and health care institutions, in its already superb technology infrastructure—translate to new opportunities—education, jobs, capitalization of local businesses, affordable housing equity, improved health, citizen engagement through the arts and public dialogue—for the residents of Newark?

While no one, including the city administration and the many local community development organizations, wants to stop what Mayor Baraka calls the “avalanche of investment” in Newark, everyone, at the same time, wants to work together in collective solidarity across sectors to ensure many “safe havens”—landing places of prosperity and opportunity—for the current residents of Newark, for the future generations of citizens, professionals, and leaders being educated now in Newark, as well as for those who increasingly are moving to Newark as it moves forward. That is why Newarkers who hear outside observers ask, “Is Newark the next Brooklyn?” are liable to hear it not as a compliment, but as a cautionary tale of another predominantly black and brown community that has proven unable to leverage enough of its own investment avalanche to propel its residents forward and upward. That is why Newarkers are not likely to respond to that question with an enthusiastic, “Yes, please!” and more so take a cue from our Mayor’s now standard retort: “Newark is the next Newark!”

**Mobilizing Anchor Institutions for Equitable Growth and Opportunity**

What may make Newark’s quest more credible than quixotic is its intricately woven fabric of public, private, and nonprofit anchor institutions, which proved to be a durable and enduring safety net through the city’s indisputably challenging past half-century. Among the sturdiest threads in that fabric are the Newark Public Library system, which has been an escalator of aspirations for generations of Newarkers from that of novelist Philip Roth to today’s undocumented immigrant families from six continents. For the last twenty years, cultural anchor institutions like NJPAC have made consistent commitments to arts education and to celebrating diverse creative production.

In the nonprofit sector, a resilient network of community development corporations has gained deep trust, and consequently become deeply embedded, in Newark’s neighborhoods for the expertise that they have honed through unrelenting advocacy for residents when it seemed that institutions of virtually every other kind failed to do so, whether to secure safe and affordable housing, gain job training and placement, learn basic language or numeracy skills, or obtain access to affordable family supports such as child and elder care. They are complemented by religious organizations that are neighborhood hubs of such services, as well, and by a small set of local foundations that have consistently funded initiatives over decades to mend gaps in city, state, and federal social safety nets.

As a health-care hub in the region, Newark also long has been served well by hospitals such as Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, part of the RWJ/Barnabas system, St. Michael’s Hospital, and University Hospital, which have come to take an expansive view of what their missions to promote community health mean. Newark is also a hub for higher education institutions, from community colleges to research universities to medical and health professional schools, educating upwards of 40,000 students every year, in what constitutes a “college town.” Private corporations in Newark have earned the badge of “anchor institution” as exemplified by Prudential
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

—— Tackling “The Two Americas” with City-Wide Collaboration in Newark

Financial, which has invested in the city not only through its social foundation arm, but its core business divisions, doubling down at critical moments over its 140-year history in Newark when less-principled companies might well have pulled up stakes. They are joined by long-time stalwarts such as the energy company PSEG, founded as a “public service” corporation, and a newer generation of private-sector leaders such as Audible.com, which encourage their employees not just to work, but to shop and live in Newark. And, fortunately, many of the developers investing in Newark, like the RBH Group building Teachers Village and the L+M Development Partners renovating the historic Hahne & Co Building downtown, are genuinely and creatively committed to Newark’s future and to the future of Newarkers.

Cities of all sizes likely can point to examples of organizations from the various sectors similar to these that have demonstrated a commitment to place-based, local action and investment. In our experience in a number of different cities, however, the number, size, and combination of such committed anchor institutions that one finds in Newark today is unusual. Perhaps even more unusual is that combination plus the public sector leadership of a mayor who also is not just “in” the city, but “of” the city. Newark’s mayor, the honorable Ras J. Baraka, is a third generation Newarker, born to two of the city’s—indeed, the nation’s—most prominent advocates and activists for social justice, Amiri and Amina Baraka. By virtually all accounts, as Baraka’s second four-year term in office begins, this public school teacher, who turned politician somewhat reluctantly, has demonstrated an unusual ability to combine an activist’s pedigree with a pragmatist’s determination to get things done (Moran 2018, Corasaniti 2018). He has shown this adeptness nowhere more clearly than in his ability to mobilize his agency leaders to collaborate with “experts” from across the sectors within an equitable growth framework.

Mayor Baraka has not been shy about taking on sensitive turf and insisting on cross-sector, public-private collaboration to build these “communities of experts” within his agencies and across the anchor institution landscape in Newark. Consider, for example, the Safer Newark Council—a collaboration between law enforcement, community street teams, Rutgers-Newark faculty in criminal justice and social work, neighborhood community development corps, public health experts, environmental justice groups, faith communities, local philanthropists and business leaders, all committed to reducing crime in Newark by 20% by 2020, especially on the 20% of the streets where it is most concentrated. Crime in neighborhoods is a public health issue, as Mayor Baraka articulates it, and it must be taken on collectively, the way in which we tackle diseases that undermine the ability of children and families to thrive.

The Safer Newark Council takes a systemic approach to neighborhood safety, from mobilizing street teams to walk children to school to intervening using evidence-based practices in the re-entry process to prevent recidivism to rehabilitating vacant lots into community farms with safe soil testing, and much more, and combining it with a strong data-gathering focus to concentrate law enforcement where it is most needed and to share data with residents in the Mayor’s regular ward meetings. This comprehensive approach with four focal areas of intervention (victims’ rights, juvenile justice, re-entry, and violent crime reduction) is beginning to really pay off, even as it will certainly be a long-term project. Nevertheless, it lays the groundwork for strong, healthy, safe neighborhoods to support equitable growth for the citizens of Newark.
Holding Anchor Institutions Accountable for Equitable Growth

In so many similar areas of critical importance to the city, Mayor Baraka has introduced a crystal-clear agenda to hold the anchors and their city partners accountable for transforming their own institutional practices in order to work toward specific goals that are indicators of inclusive, equitable growth. For example, research done for a 2014 Brookings Institution study showed that while the largest anchor institutions across sectors in Newark were only spending 3% of their combined procurement budgets on goods and services sourced from Newark, Newark businesses could potentially provide goods and services that would constitute up to 40% of the anchors’ procurement needs. Awareness of this local under-sourcing, and its relationship also to job growth for Newark residents, became the impetus for the mayor to bring the anchor institutions to the table and commit to increasing local procurement to 20% by 2020. The underlying notion is that the anchors can spur local business growth by forging long-term contracts with local entrepreneurs and resident businesses, who in turn, are very likely to hire locally as well, complimenting the local hiring by the larger anchors themselves.

Now, with 17 major anchor institutions—from Prudential to Audible, Inc. to United Airlines to Rutgers and NJIT to Panasonic, PSEG, and Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield, and more—joining City Hall in Newark 2020, with a goal of local anchors hiring 2,020 Newarkers and increasing annual local sourcing to $200M by 2020, the collective will to “Hire-Buy-Live” local has truly been mobilized. With the on-the-ground expertise of Rutgers Business School faculty, the economic development and workforce programs of the Newark Community Economic Development Corporation and the Newark Alliance and the Newark Community Development Network, and the legal advocacy and social justice voice of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, all the anchors are moving forward, setting goals for hiring and procurement, collaborating with a workforce training and placement hub, and already moving the dial.

An early indicator is that local sourcing has moved from an average of 3% to 9% in just the first year of the initiative. There is much work left to do, but the will seems strong to organize the anchors for sustainable commitments, even beyond 2020, and a Newark Anchors Collaborative has formed amongst a subset of the broader group to constitute a learning community around the transformation of institutional practices and policies so as to undergird sustained progress on an equitable hire-buy-live local city-wide landscape to bridge the Two Americas in Newark.

Additionally, and complementing the commitments of these anchor institutions to encourage and incentivize their employees to live locally, Mayor Baraka also commissioned a study by a Rutgers Law faculty member with expertise in metropolitan equity issues examining what equitable housing policies could look like in the midst of all the downtown development in Newark (Troutt 2018). Meanwhile, the Newark Community Development Network, working with the City Council and the Mayor, advocated successfully for a new inclusionary zoning regulation to drive affordable housing in downtown development (Yi 2018). Further, a group of city agency directors and university and community leaders now are working to implement the recommendations of the equitable housing report, including enforcement of rent regulations, opportunities for local residents to gain housing equity, and anti-foreclosure and eviction protection in all of the city’s five wards. This collective is also
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities
—— Tackling “The Two Americas” with City-Wide Collaboration in Newark

looking to be institutionalized for long-term sustainable oversight in a public-private, cross-sector advisory council on equitable growth.

Moreover, all of this collective work occurs within a context of considerable commitment to business development, both in terms of established corporations moving to Newark and in terms of the development of new ventures here. For example, Broadridge Financial moved 1,000 employees to a new headquarters in Newark in 2017, the global candy company, Mars, Inc., is opening a new headquarters in Newark to be up and running by July 2020 with 500 new jobs, and Newark Ventures Partners, organized by Audible.com, has opened an accelerator and angel fund on a floor in Rutgers Business School (Strunsky 2017, Ivers 2015). As importantly, if not more significant for our equitable development goals, there is robust support for local women- and minority-owned businesses and entrepreneurs (WMBEs) across the city.

With public-private cooperation across sectors, such as from the Newark Community Economic Development Corporation, Rutgers-Newark’s Center for Urban Entrepreneurship and Economic Development, and NJIT’s New Jersey Innovation Institute, substantial attention is being paid to technical assistance to solidify the base and capitalize the growth of local entrepreneurs across a variety of types of enterprises. For example, a business hub for arts and cultural entrepreneurs now operates out of Express Newark, the 50,000 square foot University-Community Arts Collaboratory which Rutgers-Newark opened in 2017 in the newly renovated Hahne’s Building downtown (Forman 2015). These “third spaces” of collaboration and investment, public-private, across sectors, take considerable effort to initiate, maintain and sustain, but ultimately, they will likely be the real source of equitable growth and community development in Newark.

Building Collaborative Tables for Comprehensive Community Development

A key to achieving comprehensive equitable growth and opportunity in Newark, as presumably in most cities with the paradox of substantial capital investment side-by-side with persistent inequality and segregated opportunity, is the recognition by anchor institutions and community organizations and local government alike that vigilantly sustaining collaborative infrastructure is as important as setting short-term goals such as hiring 2,020 Newarkers by 2020 in Hire-Buy-Live Newark, increasing post-secondary attainment of residents to 25% by 2025 through the Newark City of Learning Collaborative, or reducing major crime by 20% by 2020 with the Safer Newark Council. To be sure, the short-term goals both rally cross-sector collaboration and hold anchors accountable to common purposes, but they are likely to be insufficient to perpetuate commitment and engagement for the long-term, including the transformation in institutional practices and strategic missions that then translate to continued community change.

With an eye especially on sustainability as well as accountability, the city-wide equitable opportunity efforts in Newark have been methodically established according to a shared set of principles. They include a set of anchor institutions (not just one) partnering with CBOs and the City. They engage directly both high-impact, evidence-based practices and policies and on-the-ground insights (often enunciated in discussion with a broad community of experts, with and without pedigree) to inform the implementation of specific projects. They work on many
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

—— Tackling “The Two Americas” with City-Wide Collaboration in Newark

fronts toward a common city-wide goal within a broader framework of equitable opportunity for Newarkers. They are open to a notion of improvement science or implementation research, wherein one learns from doing and shifts priorities, practices, policies accordingly. Following are some examples in the educational arena broadly defined of these collaborative tables filled by a community of experts in common cause.

Newark City of Learning Collaborative: Connecting for Educational Attainment pre-K-20

The Newark City of Learning Collaborative (NCLC) focuses on the full K-20 continuum, engaging the corporate, government, and non-profit sectors around a shared commitment to increase the post-secondary attainment rate of residents of Newark to 25% by 2025. When the initiative was launched in 2015, that rate was 17%; in spring 2018 it has reached nearly 19%. Rutgers-Newark’s Joseph C. Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies serves as the backbone organization for NCLC, convening study groups to identify obstacles and interventions, evaluate programs, and collect data to assess progress in city-wide high school graduation, college access, retention, and degree completion. It organizes CBO and educational anchor partners to staff “college knowledge” centers, college fairs, and workshops throughout the district where college and high school counselors work with families and students on FAFSA completion, SAT prep, and college applications, offering workshops on these and related topics in partnership with the Newark Public Libraries in each of the city’s wards.

NCLC and the Newark Public Schools work closely together, sharing a staff liaison, providing monthly professional development sessions for high school counselors throughout the district, and articulating educational pathways for Newark students across the divides between high school and two-/four-year colleges, employing cohort programs, for example, for students in grades 10 through 12, following them through to community college and/or four-year colleges and universities. NCLC also works closely with the City of Newark, since 2015 providing more than 1,000 students in the city’s Summer Youth Employment Program with college readiness workshops and carrying over those workshops during the school year. It also works with local corporate partners in a College Freshman Institute to provide incoming first-year college students from Newark with internships and a social capital network for career development advice. NCLC will be producing a regular scorecard report with data on a variety of metrics across the traditional publics, parochial, and charter sectors.

Understanding, however, that sometimes progress in high-poverty school districts must be made school by school, the Mayor has organized a community schools collaborative effort with the Newark Trust for Education serving as a backbone organization and connecting non-profits with public schools in Newark’s South Ward. Rutgers-Newark, for example, has become the lead partner institution in a university-assisted community schools partnership (UAP) at Malcolm X. Shabazz High School, a chronically underperforming school in an area of the city’s South Ward with a history of underinvestment in public infrastructure combined with a history of street violence. Rutgers-Newark faculty and staff have joined together with the faculty and staff of the school and the leadership of the District to expand Shabazz’s college-going culture, as well as to support the effective integration of programs and services in ways that tailor interventions for Shabazz students facing academic and socio-emotional challenges that often impede the successful completion of high school and the transition to the post-secondary level.
Yet the pathways from school to college remain unfamiliar to a startlingly high number of youth in Newark who are disconnected from school or work, estimated by the Opportunity Youth Network (OYN) to be as high as 7,000. Employing innovative interventions to re-engage them is a high priority for OYN, a city-wide, cross-sector network, initiated by leaders from Newark YouthBuild, in cooperation with the Mayor, Rutgers-Newark, Newark Community Development Network, Newark Public Schools, and NCLC, among others. Again, it takes a fulsome collaboration to support the development of youth voice and empowerment, enabling young people to develop a global perspective on justice and citizenship. One key innovation is OYN’s LEAD Charter School, a unique presence in Newark’s network of partners, opened in 2017 as the first alternative charter school in New Jersey, which builds its educational and support programs for opportunity youth with a foundational focus on the assets, not the deficits, that its students bring with them every day. Among LEAD Charter’s feeders is the Newark Street Academy, a front-line intervention created by Mayor Baraka that also takes an asset-based, case management approach to re-engaging youth through classroom and community service components. And LEAD, in turn, plugs opportunity youth into other innovative initiatives in Newark, like the Newark City of Coding, in which Rutgers-Newark, Apple, Inc., the city, and others are setting up “coding labs” throughout the city, including in LEAD and Shabazz High Schools.

Without such interventions, school-to-college pathways may very well turn into school-to-prison pathways, throwing up barriers to making a living—or even just living—that may be insurmountable. In Newark alone, about 1,000 people re-enter the community from New Jersey state prisons annually; 80% of homicide victims and 90% of suspects have criminal records; and 31% of homicide victims are killed within 12 months of release from state or county prisons (Delmore 2016). Beyond the inconceivable cost in human lives, the cost of incarceration outstrips the cost of sound intervention by about seven to one, according to a study by the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice (The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice 2016).

These are among the tragic statistics that drove the creation of the New Jersey Scholarship and Transformative Education in Prisons Consortium (NJ-STEP) at Rutgers-Newark, a consortium of eight higher education institutions across New Jersey that works in partnership with the State of New Jersey Department of Corrections and the New Jersey State Parole Board. NJ-STEP aims to provide higher education courses for students under the custody of the State of New Jersey and to assist in the transition to college life upon their release into the community. NJ-STEP’s vision is that every person in prison who qualifies for college have the opportunity to take college classes while incarcerated and continue that education upon release; each consortium member has a working partnership with one or more of the correctional facilities in New Jersey. Students receive regular advisement about what courses to take in order to maintain progress toward an A.A. degree in liberal studies en route to a B.A. degree. Affordability for NJ-STEP students is aided by its participation in the national Second-Chance Pell Pilot Program of the U.S. Department of Education, through which they may qualify for federal need-based grants to help cover costs.

Mindful that access to college without affordability for any and all students is not really access at all, anchor educational institutions in Newark are working to complement this work with financial aid planning for Newark residents and community college transfers. For example, Rutgers-Newark has the Talent and Opportunity Pathways (RU-N to the TOP) “last-dollar” financial aid program which guarantees aid to completely cover full-
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

—— Tackling “The Two Americas” with City-Wide Collaboration in Newark

time, in-state tuition and fees for admitted students whose adjusted gross family income is $60,000 or less and
who are either a resident of Newark or a New Jersey resident transferring in with an associate’s degree from a
New Jersey county college. Since RU-N to the TOP’s founding in fall 2016, 1,762 students have benefited from
this scholarship, and it has played a major role in helping increase enrollment of Newark residents at Rutgers-
Newark by 59% since 2013.

The Rutgers-Newark residential Honors Living-Learning Community, dedicated to an interdisciplinary social
justice curriculum on local citizenship in a global world, has enrolled more than half of its students every year
from Newark, including those who have come through programs like NJ-STEP, are undocumented Dreamers
(some recruited through the UndocuRutgers College Fair), those who have transferred from New Jersey’s county
colleges (where so many first generation students get their first taste of higher education), and those who are part
of the growing cadre of Newark Public Schools students heading now to college on their way to fulfilling NCLC’s
goals of 25% Newark residents with post-secondary credentials by 2025 (Kirp 2018, Backstrand and Donaldson
2018).

Recognizing the Challenges to Make Progress

There is no doubt that Newark, though in the early stages of transformative change, has moved beyond the stage
of mere ideas and conversations. This is precisely why at this time, when the city is rife with social and economic
innovation and change, it is correspondingly necessary to be mindful of the obstacles and difficulties inherent in
this kind of city-anchor collaborative work. There is an extraordinary level of good will and eagerness to problem
solve from a wide swath of stakeholders who believe in the City’s leadership and more importantly, in its capacity
to move beyond its historical archipelago of poverty and racial division. They have brought their ideas, their
resources and their wisdom to these various tables of anchor work. This mayor and the city's allies are quite
determined that to the degree that success eludes us it will not be because all of us have failed to provide adequate
support or effectively implement or execute good ideas. Conversations about issues and barriers are evident in the
mayor's most recent post-election initiative, the formation of a Newark Forward Committee that will look at what
the first four year’s accomplishments have been, identify the gaps and make recommendations to move the change
trajectory forward over the next four years. Several key issues are emerging as critical to tackle.

Breaking silos across the public-private divides. We need to break silos and build stronger relationships among
anchors across sectors, so that city employees and corporate and non-profit representatives can talk to each other
with understanding about how their separate environments can best ramp up to more effectively meet goals
(matching Newark 2020 applicants with prospective jobs, for example). We all must acknowledge that, at heart,
authentic public engagement is about culture change and an end of the "business as usual" template. Not
surprisingly, this can be very difficult not only for city employees who have typically been segmented from social
innovation and entrepreneurship, but also for corporate leaders and the community development sector who are
also key to success in Newark. Similarly, if universities are to fulfill the mandate of the mayor to not only be
engaged anchor institutions but to serve as “neutral” conveners and gatherers of evidence-based best practices,
then they must transform as well. Publicly engaged faculty and university leaders need to learn how to collaborate
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

—- Tackling “The Two Americas” with City-Wide Collaboration in Newark rather than to instruct or “take charge,” so that cross-sector and cross-community trust is enhanced in ways that will sustain the transformative anchor work.

Communicating effectively about the work. We also are challenged to effectively communicate with a public that is tired and beleaguered from so many attempts at revitalization and unfulfilled promises over the years. We need to develop a credible narrative about the value of the anchor collaborations and the approaches underway to tackle social problems that confront the community. The Mayor has held public meetings in every ward of the city, providing forthright discussion and transparency about what is happening and what is on the horizon. His two state of the city addresses have been highly effective encapsulations of concrete changes that have been made or are on the runway and his "When I'm the Mayor You're the Mayor" mantra has become an iconic invitation to offer citizens more concrete and direct ways to actively engage with these changes and with the city. Indeed, there is so much going on that many stakeholders are beginning to think that a communications roundtable with professionals from a broader swath of the community, not just city hall, will need to be deployed in order to not only look at how data and information are shared, but how to brand the collaborations as an inspired enterprise that creates tangible results.

Engaging the youth leadership. Finally, but not least of all, the city has demonstrated a deep and abiding interest in how to effectively engage our youth in Newark in an enterprise of innovation and change. How do we, as the Mayor asks, best get their feedback on all the ways that living in this city affects them—from education to public safety—and create opportunities for their feedback? Given the goal of Newark 2020 to keep our youth from leaving the city after college graduation, they too are part of the audience that must view living, working, and playing in Newark as an inspired welcoming choice.

Bridging Two Americas in Newark for the Next Generation to Thrive

In many respects, thinking about the progress—however non-linear and slow it may be in changing the landscape of opportunity for the next generation of Newarkers—brings us squarely back to the inter-generational resilience of this city. As the physical spaces and places change, there is an accompanying analysis from across anchors to look at both the catalysts and the barriers and use their inherent powers to build a road map of a new Newark. While there are no easy ways to overcome these barriers, what is exciting and incredibly motivational is that the new wave of collaborations is advancing a new wave of committed leaders and stakeholders aiming for a culture of sustainability and transformation. The avalanche of new investment in Newark is happening side-by-side with firm commitment to creating safe havens of opportunity for those who have stuck it out and for those newest Americans who continue to come to this city of migrants and immigrants (Newest Americans 2015). No one thinks this will be easy, as the durable inequalities of the Two Americas have endured even with past efforts at a “renaissance.” Yet the promise of genuinely democratic third spaces of collaboration, like the newly formed Center for Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation (Association of American Colleges & Universities 2017), mobilized by Rutgers-Newark in partnership with the Mayor, the Newark Public Libraries, and the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, feels real, and turns even the most defensively pessimistic of us in to true believers. As Mayor Baraka says, it is our time to move Newark forward.
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities
—— Tackling “The Two Americas” with City-Wide Collaboration in Newark

Bibliography


Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

——— Tackling “The Two Americas” with City-Wide Collaboration in Newark


San Francisco exploring the promise of partnerships with Anchor Institutions

Sheryl Evans Davis¹

How do we create opportunities for authentic, genuine partnerships, not just volunteer opportunities, where the community “benefits” in some way and the Anchor institutions leave with a feeling of accomplishment? Partnership by the very definition means that a “group of people are working together,” but sometimes the “together” gets lost in this work.

Over the years, partnerships between the University of San Francisco, the community and the City “partners” has evolved and has become more aligned with the definition and has developed into mutually beneficial programming.

The strength of this partnership lies in the innovative leadership from faculty and staff. Across the nation there is still a need to align the work of individuals to the policies, practices and systems of the anchor institutions policies.

Community Partnership

Policymakers, system leaders and the anchor institution have a lot to learn about authentic community partnership. There is often a struggle to honor and recognize the expertise, lived experience and knowledge that community brings to the work. To some, it appears service means not listening and learning; instead, it looks like designing and practicing.

If we value our community partners as co-educators, then there is an abundance of opportunity for transformative learning on campus and in the community.

The foundation is simple – practice authenticity. Brené Brown defines authenticity as the daily practice of letting go of who we think we’re supposed to be and embracing who we are- this would require the anchor institution to let go of the idea of being an expert and present themselves as the student, not the savior and most importantly, not perfect or superior (Brown 2010). In building these relationships, both sides must be vulnerable and willing to admit there is more to learn.

Tenets of Partnership

Recently the Anchor Institution Task Force partnered with the National League of Cities to launch a webinar series on how cities and anchor institutions can collaborate to strengthen a culture of health. As anchor institutions partner with communities, it is important to seek clarity of purpose and alignment of mission (Scheibel and Bowley 2005). Without clear purpose that is linked with both the mission of the institution and the community partner,

¹ This article is based on a presentation by Sheryl Evans Davis and Mary Wardell Ghiraduzzi and written by Sheryl Evans Davis, who is the Executive Director of San Francisco Human Rights Commission
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

— San Francisco exploring the promise of partnerships with Anchor Institutions

partnerships can disintegrate and become a waste of time and a drain on resources with little to show for the time spent.

Core to effective collaborations are mutually beneficial projects and authentic partnerships. Anchors should come in as true collaborators working with their partners and not “fixing what’s wrong with them.”

Anchor institutions can help increase economic inclusion (Schildt and Rubin n.d.) and be powerful partners for numerous reasons:

1. They stick around
2. They are large and growing
3. They drive innovation
4. They can help revitalize neighborhoods
5. Can have a stabilizing effect on regional economies
6. They have a social mission
7. Often business and community leaders who impact policy

In this paper, the University of San Francisco (USF), represents the Anchor Institution. The University acts as an anchor institution by partnering with a city agency and a local nonprofit. This collaboration underscores several of the criteria identified in the above.

With more than a hundred years in San Francisco, USF is clearly sticking around. Over the last century the University has grown, increasing in faculty, staff, landmass, and student population. Their social mission speaks to the desire to drive innovation – encouraging their students to “Change the world from here.” Students are venturing off campus to live, eat shop and work – helping to revitalize neighborhoods. Partnering is integral to the community, working to ensure revitalization doesn’t become displacement or gentrification.

As a policy, students perform community service hours and help in community. The McCarthy Center for Public Good at USF develops opportunities for engaged learning. Students participate in intentional classes, develop projects and support activities for more than just a one-off activity.

USF has a role in advancing equity and justice, not just for their students, but also for the neighboring community. The effort to increase economic inclusion requires more than volunteer hours, it requires reflection. Anchor institutions need to spend time considering how they impact the surrounding neighborhoods.

Entering into this work of collaboration, requires certain questions to be considered (Center for Assessment and Policy Development 2013). First and foremost, as we begin partnerships and develop groups, we must take review of the group make up – are the people most impacted by your work included? Is there a plan for inclusion? Is everyone included in making decisions or given opportunities to lead?

Another consideration is what talents, experience, abilities, interests, insights exist in the partnership? In working to stay inclusive, how do you value the wealth of knowledge from those with historical or institutional memory? What weight is given to the unique qualities, strategies and systems that can be learned from community partners.
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

—— San Francisco exploring the promise of partnerships with Anchor Institutions

The University of San Francisco is adjacent to the Western Addition of San Francisco. The Western Addition was a victim of urban renewal and redevelopment. The neighborhood lost thousands of African American residents and businesses. Eminent domain forced African Americans out of their homes and numbers continue to document disparities – underemployment, living in poverty, higher incarceration rates, gaps in academic achievement and educational attainment.

The McCarthy Center developed a special program to support their neighbors in the Western Addition, from working in schools to job training centers. The McCarthy Center has intentionally added community members to their board, created jobs and partnered with local nonprofits to provide ongoing events and activities organized by community. This dedication to inclusion and true partnership illustrates a dedication to the tenets of partnership – reciprocal, joint leadership, shared power and community centered.

These partnerships are not without their challenges. Many of the challenges are rooted in “problems with the how we think” (Pomeroy 2014). Whether it’s the savior mentality or what the blog called availability heuristic – making a decision based on our most recent knowledge or experience (Pomeroy 2014), the ability to replace our thoughts with the reality the community partners face can be difficult to manage.

Pomeroy introduces the concepts of confirmation bias, the halo effect and the herd mentality (Pomeroy 2014), that as these ideas play out in collaboration, they can easily derail and destroy a partnership.

In confirmation bias, if the collaborators have existing perceptions or biases about their partners, they will give more weight to incidents and information that supports their perception.

Equally dangerous is the halo effect which uses quick snapshots of interactions to define the character of a person.

Lastly, I believe the herd mentality is most prevalent on both sides of the collaboration between community and anchor institution- that as groups they make decisions about the other side – anchor institutions believing they are doing great work and the partners are lucky to have them; community partners believing all the anchor institution wants to do is study us, get funding so they can “save us”. The herd mentality supports groups talking to each other instead of being informed by discussions with the partners.

Ultimately partnerships are successful when they are built on inclusion and authenticity. Authenticity requires, reflection, communication, shared leadership/power, reciprocity and inclusion as well as centering around the most vulnerable in the partnership.

Innovation

Partnerships to advance equity and inclusion are not new. Harriet Tubman was successful as a conductor on the Underground Railroad because of partnerships. She worked with local leaders and anchors like the Quakers. I surmise that Tubman and her partners were innovators, combining ideas that don’t seem to belong together for efficacious outcomes (Dyer, Gregersen, and Christensen 2011). The goals of many anchor institution partnerships are generally not as ambitious as the Underground Railroad, and much too often. far less successful.
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

—— San Francisco exploring the promise of partnerships with Anchor Institutions

The moderate success of the USF partnerships highlighted in this paper is due in no small part to remarkable, creative and innovative partners committed to reflection and redesign.

Tubman was creative in her strategies, using songs and her faith to help others. I believe her faith offered her moments of reflection, an opportunity to pause and build resilience (Ghaye 2010). The mission was clear to those partnering with Tubman. Anyone joining her collaborative knew the purpose, that it was to serve the greater good; she didn’t have time to publish a report and share lessons from the field.

Tubman modeled PAAR- Participatory and Appreciative Action and Reflection (Ghaye 2010), building positive and productive relationships. She was innovative and ahead of her time, using strategies of “appreciative intent” (Ghaye 2010):

1) Knowledge – concentrating on the positive, identifying and utilizing her strengths and that of others. She directed her energy to what was possible, not the impossible.

2) Relating – celebrating what others have to offer, connecting with them and encouraging them.

3) Action – caring for others, building networks of support and power to get things done.

4) Organizing – strengthening partnerships, building networks, strategizing to disrupt systems of oppression, bringing people together, developing unity, shared power and dedication to change.

Although Tubman is referred to as Moses, she was a humble woman focused on bringing people to freedom. Partners should channel Harriet Tubman and not think in terms of saviors, but allies; we must appreciate the knowledge and talents of each partner, have clarity of mission and be committed to sharing power, building community and taking care of each other.

Hereafter, I share examples of successful partnerships between USF and community. Core to these collaborations is creativity and reflection. The partnerships accentuate a shared commitment to community engagement and advocacy. Several of the projects were developed in response to the disparity of opportunity facing the community surrounding USF while others were in response to traumatic events and the need to build community in a safe space.

One of our most successful endeavors is what I refer to as partners in preparation, working together to prepare not just students for school, but preparing teachers to be aware of bias and to see youth, their families and community stakeholders as partners in the education process. This represents an effort towards systems change that included community in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the program.

Anchor institutions can be thought partners to help develop strategies and disrupt patterns of inequity, and anchor institutions can also provide physical spaces. After several officer involved homicides, USF provided a safe space for difficult conversations. The convening brought together police and frustrated community members to explore strategies that could help build trust between police and communities, many of whom believed the concept either impossible or unwelcomed.
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

San Francisco exploring the promise of partnerships with Anchor Institutions

In the next section I share examples of activities and projects that have been valuable to both community and the anchor institution, projects that are now embedded in classes and community centers, initiatives that have had positive impact on community which imitate the hope, creative and reflective spirit of Harriet Tubman. With a variety of community partners USF has helped bring attention to and advance:

- Health and wellbeing – advancing a community mental health report
- Social Justice – developing curriculum, presentations, pipelines and sharing space
- Equity – hosting forums and workshops
- Research – joint study, fellows
- Impact – reports evaluations,

Examples

I believe the following examples of partnerships between the University of San Francisco and the San Francisco Human Rights Commission exhibit a commitment to PAAR, creativity and innovation and in so doing they meet the goal of creating more inclusive communities.

Community events and activities

In the more traditional anchor institution and community partnership, USF has partnered with the Human Rights Commission to hold events and host special presentations and workshops. Here we use the “appreciative intent towards knowledge” (Ghaye 2010), directing our attention to the needs versus the wants. Community would like to have use of the space and either use a community vendor for food or have affordable options for USF caterers. Unfortunately, community events are not built in to many of the budgets of partnering departments, so the community settles for what they need – space that can accommodate community and university partners to see authors like Congressman John Lewis. Focusing on the positive – having access to a beautiful space, and reframing the we can’t conversation to one around what we can do, helps keep the partnership intact and benefits the greater good. Seeing community members, many of whom have never been on a college campus, feeling welcomed, standing in line to meet the Congressman and get their books about Selma signed – is priceless and no one missed the taco bar.

- Author Series
- Summits
- Workshops
- Presentations/Reports

Health and Wellbeing

A 2014 community commissioned mental health report made several recommendations to address the stigma around therapy and mental illness. The McCarthy Center at USF used the report to secure funding to work with community to implement the recommendations. The McCarthy Center hired community activists to lead the work
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

San Francisco exploring the promise of partnerships with Anchor Institutions and participated in existing committees and groups. This demonstrated “an appreciative intent towards relating” (Ghaye 2010). McCarthy Center didn’t commission or start a new report; they didn’t create a new committee or launch new meetings. What they did do was value the work and respect the efforts of the community.

This wasn’t a new practice for the McCarthy Center. In 2010 USF, again through the McCarthy Center, participated in a community planning and capacity building process – not as an expert but as a member of the community. USF participated as experts in the area of academia but understood that others in the community had knowledge and expertise in other areas, making space for everyone to be “important” and valued.

- Mental Health Report – USF secured funding to hire someone to advance the recommendations of the report and make sure it didn’t become another report collecting dust on the shelf.
- Western Addition Report – helped identify gaps in funding, supported with research and participated in the year long convening.
- Workforce Development – the USF Office of Diversity Engagement and Community Outreach, convened the human resources and the building and grounds departments to meet with nonprofits preparing young people for work. The gathering was meant to create pipelines for community members to work on campus. This became a pathway not just for employment, but some of the new hires became students.

Black to the Future – In an attempt to address the out-migration of African Americans and the inequities faced by those that remained, the Mayor of San Francisco authorized funding for a collaborative focused on implementing strategies. The initiative is led by a nonprofit and has over a dozen partner organizations. Funding for the initiative came from the Department of Children Youth and their Families and the Department of Public Health. The partnership on this project is indicative of “an appreciative intent towards organizing” (Ghaye 2010). The professors and graduate students who partner in this mission are dedicated to telling the story of tremendous strength, love and resilience of the nonprofits and the communities they serve.

- Evaluation – recording progress on the project, documenting effective strategies and making the case for evidence practices. Interviewing and surveying nonprofit staff members and program participants.
- Reports – co-writing reports, sharing recognition with community partners
- Capacity building – participating in and facilitating trainings and workshops.
- Joint presentations – traveling internationally and nationally to share findings, recommendations, reports and papers.

SFPD Community Meetings

As previously mentioned, USF provided safe space for difficult conversations and in addition to the space, a graduate student helped code community feedback from community discussions with the police. Faculty from USF helped facilitate the community discussions. The last series of meetings informed a report issued by the Human Rights Commission to the San Francisco Police Department on community feedback on the use of conductive energy devices, commonly known as tasers. The graduate student turned qualitative responses into quantitative data.
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

—— San Francisco exploring the promise of partnerships with Anchor Institutions

- Synthesize community input – gather notes and grouped according to comments, looked for themes, counted responses.
- Quantify comments – tallied number of comments, counted occurrences of similar themes
- Facilitate breakout sessions – prepared and met with police to prepare structure and strategy.

Everybody Reads! Summer Program

The longest running of the listed programs is Everybody Reads. This program has expanded and grown over the years. The project started as a five-week summer program. The original program centered on providing teaching hours for credential candidates. Improving the literacy skills of children or decreasing summer learning loss, became motivating factors later.

This program best exemplifies reciprocity between the partners, USF, Community and the SF Human Rights Commission that all three gain something for participation, but in the end the youth benefit. In this partnership:

- Youth gain or improve skills, increase confidence
- Nonprofits gain staff support during the summer months when they need it most
- USF has meaningful placements for its students
- Community/nonprofit partners and USF students learn from each other
  - USF students learn strategies to engage families and behavior management from community partners
  - Community partners gain strategies to support literacy/reading and additional ideas for incorporating academic activities in their community-based programs.

Over the last ten years the program has expanded. When the program first launched it served 40 students, for two weeks. The past five years the program has served 175 students 1st – 8th grade for five weeks. The last three years in addition to the five-week youth-centered program, the San Francisco Human Rights Commission (HRC) and a community partner, train 20 – 40 service providers to use curriculum developed in partnership with USF and the HRC. In addition to the service provider guide, a family guide is prepared and shared with families throughout the city.

- Professor from the Education Department creates a family reading guide
- Teacher’s earning their master’s in teaching reading, co-teach in a five-week literacy camp serving youth from communities of color.
Community Safety Initiative (CSI)

Arguably the most collaborative of the programs is the CSI program. Four summers since it’s launch and hundreds of youth served. This project focused on youth leadership. In addition to USF, Stanford’s SPARQ lab has been an integral partner in this program. Both USF and Stanford have provided evaluation for the program. USF has hosted events, provided workshops and last year launched a fellows project with the Human Rights Commission.

Since it’s inception, USF, the youth leaders and the HRC have presented their work around the country and the world. Last year in addition to presenting in New York at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) the group presented at the Hong Kong and World Education Research Association (HKERA/WERA) in Hong Kong and most recently the group presented in Africa at WERA. In the papers and presentations, community and youth serve as co-presenters, the intention is to avoid tokenizing the youth and community partners.

USF Professors have worked in partnership with youth, as well as provided opportunities for their students to be immersed in community to learn from and support community stakeholders. The ability to document the impact of the work, has moved this project from San Francisco to the region, expanding to additional cities last summer.

- Program evaluation
- Focus groups
- Data collection

Conclusion

Good intentions are not enough to make partnerships successful. There needs to be a commitment to authenticity and reflection. These practices can build strong relationships, foster trust and buy-in. Years of disappointment from a lack of reciprocity, has community feeling invisible. Anchor institutions must be creative and innovative to change community opinions. Anchors should find new ways to demonstrate they value the knowledge, experiences, talents and insights of their partners.

The partnership and projects highlighted here, are not because of systems or infrastructure, they happened because of a dedication and commitment on the part of individuals. For partnerships to be sustainable, more must be done to institutionalize the process, to define success and include the partners point of view and to provide meaning engagement for all parties involved.

The City and County of San Francisco is fortunate to have a partner like USF, not because of the access, but because the people who work in the institution are committed to community success.
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

—— San Francisco exploring the promise of partnerships with Anchor Institutions

Bibliography

Center for Assessment and Policy Development. “What Are Some Ideas for Reflecting on Composition and Processes of Our Group as Our Work Continues over Time?” 2013


Scheibel, Jim, Erin M. Bowley, and Steven Jones. The promise of partnerships: Tapping into the college as a community asset. Campus Compact, 2005.

The Port Richmond Partnership: The College Readiness Pipeline

Richard Guarasci

Introduction: Port Richmond, Staten Island

In the current severe national political atmosphere, racial disparities and income inequality is leaving universities and college neighbors abandoned by national and often local support. Too many children and their families are left in the shadows in despair. Their barriers to advancement are limited. The slightest of them are easily derailed from accomplishing personal dreams and the security of intact families.

In the last ten years, Wagner College and a nearby inner-city Staten Island community, Port Richmond, have developed and sustained a comprehensive neighborhood partnership. The demographics and economics of Port Richmond reflect urban America’s rising tide of heightened income inequality, racial injustice, ethnic discord and the growing vulnerability of hard working and undocumented immigrants. Approximately 500,000 people reside on Staten Island, the smallest of the five boroughs comprising New York City. About 15,000 people live in Port Richmond and just under 75% are persons of color. Mexican immigrants are estimated to be 50% of the neighborhood population.

The litany of urban challenges circumscribe the lives of our neighbors. Unemployment is above City and Borough rates. Many family units are at or below the poverty level. Many others are from the white and black working class, mostly with contingent jobs that are absent meaningful if any employment benefits. Housing is substandard for far too many. English is a second language for many young elementary and middle school children. Immigration police loom and create constant fear for undocumented families about who will shelter their children, leading them to forego schooling in periods of high anti-immigrant periods. In the recent past, racial violence between African American and Mexican youth resulted in serious crimes and deaths.

Over a decade ago, Wagner College became involved with El Center del Immigrante, a non-profit organization protecting exploited Mexican day workers who were often left unpaid and abandoned after a day’s labor on construction or landscaping jobs. Shortly thereafter, the College played the lead anchor role in forming a comprehensive neighborhood partnership with over 30 institutional partners. Today the Port Richmond Partnership is flourishing. It is based on the anchor institution model and framed by democratic participation of all the partners. Wagner College remains as the facilitative partner but several other institutional partners are increasing their leadership roles.

The Port Richmond Partnership

The Partnership is founded on a democratic model of community development, civic participation, and leadership. Contributing members include public schools, charter schools, hospitals, non-profits, bank foundations, the local

1 Richard Guarasci is the President of Wagner College
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

—— The Port Richmond Partnership: The College Readiness Pipeline

economic development corporation, cultural institutions, local government, Bonner student leaders, several Wagner student civic engagement organizations, and Wagner College faculty and their courses from virtually every discipline and school. This Partnership works collaboratively with the College’s diversity offices and programs.

The Center for Leadership and Community Engagement (CLCE) at Wagner College serves as a key arena for the Partnership. Initially the College played a singular host role in driving and nurturing the recruitment of fellow anchor partners. Over the first decade, other partners took on significant leadership roles. Port Richmond High School, led by a dynamic and fully committed principal, became a critical co-partner in driving the work deeper into the community. Wagner’s CLCE was directed by an equally compelling and dedicated young leader who previously helped start the Partnership when she was an undergraduate. A visionary Dean has now been added to the team. The senior College administration was instrumental in the design, support and growth of the Partnership, which now supports five major policy areas with significant organization and commitments in each. Figure one illustrates the basic organizational model.

![Port Richmond Partnership](image)

**Figure 1: Port Richmond Partnership**

The five policy areas are education and college readiness, health and wellness, economic development, immigration and advocacy, and the arts and culture. Supported and staffed fully by the CLCE, each area has three lead partners representing the community, and Wagner faculty and students. Clear objectives are established for each policy area. Full partnership meetings are held quarterly, as well as ongoing daily field work and sector deliberations. The director and associate director are engaged daily with any number of the community partner organizations.

On the ground, the Partnership delivers direct services in mentoring, tutoring, health screenings, health services, research, and community service. Program assessment and outcomes are chronicled in each of the policy arenas.
Anchor Institutions Collaborating with Their Municipalities

—— The Port Richmond Partnership: The College Readiness Pipeline

against the sector objectives. Undergraduate, graduate students, high school students, community partner staff, Wagner faculty and staff are the base activists in providing field work.

Resources for supporting the Partnership are drawn from the partner organizations, Wagner College operating budget, national, community and local foundations as well as key College donors.

College Readiness: The Port Richmond Pipeline

The centerpiece of the Partnership is a comprehensive K-16 pipeline model in which Wagner hosts a full college readiness program starting in the early primary grades and continuing into a feeder middle school and eventually to Port Richmond High School. Wagner supports offices in all three schools in conjunction with each school’s staff and faculty. Mentoring, tutoring, and leadership programs are coupled to enhanced student learning appropriate to each grade level. The elementary school, PS 21 is a feeder to the middle school, IS 51, the Markham School. The latter is a major pipeline for Port Richmond High School. Wagner also maintains vigorous tutoring and second degree language programs for immigrant elementary students and their parents in two other local schools, along with, similar commitments to two Charter Schools partnering with Wagner. The overarching goals for all of this work are college awareness, academic achievement for grade level satisfaction in reading and math, persistence and student success from K-12, the development of civic competency and practice in Port Richmond and ultimately college acceptance and completion. The emphasis is on achievement as well as civic leadership from elementary through high school.

![Wagner College Educational Pipeline](image)

**Figure 2: Wagner College Educational Pipeline**

The Port Richmond Leadership Academy (PRPLA) serves as the anchor within the entire readiness program. It is in its fifth year of operation. Predicated on identifying and accepting high school students of ability but without
impressive academic performance, the program involves students mostly from families without any familiarity with higher education. PRPLA admits a dozen sophomores each year. Each takes an enhanced five week intensive high school Math and English program during the summer. They reside on Wagner’s campus and complete a third course on the theory and practice of democracy coupled with community-based learning in Port Richmond. In their junior and senior high school years, they complete two regular Wagner College courses in the liberal arts taught by tenured Wagner faculty members, complete civic-oriented internships as part of a reflective tutorial, and live in a Wagner campus residence hall. In addition, the program stresses leadership skills, inter-group dialogue and social responsibility. Students visit a variety of colleges and universities across the northeast and receive strategic assistance in college applications. They work closely with Wagner College students and professional staff. We include their parents and family in a number of meetings and ceremonies.

During the regular school year, Wagner maintains a college readiness office at Port Richmond High School (in addition to the office in PS21 and IS 51) where the PRPLA students gather every day. Other Port Richmond students may use this office as well. The office provides ongoing college counseling and preparation. This office adds a great deal of college access resources to a high school with only two college counselors. The office was named by PRPLA students as the Raider/Wagner Center in honor of the PRHS mascot and Wagner College.

Wagner students enrolled as Bonner leaders play a major role by provided mentoring for the PRPLA students all through the three years. Bonners are students of need and merit, predominately from underserved populations themselves. The impact on the Bonners and other Wagner students working in the Partnership is quite palpable. The college records of the students participating in the Partnership are impressive. Traditional indicators such as GPA and degree completion demonstrate excellence as civic leaders. They all receive acceptances to highly selective graduate and professional programs, along with significant employment opportunities. This results from forty-eight Bonner students and thirty-six PRPLA high school students.

In the last two years IS 51 Markham middle school students were added to the program. They spent significant time this summer on campus. This complements their civic leadership and academic enhancement middle school programs. Wagner and PS 21 are now inventing the college readiness program for K-5 students utilizing a similar design implemented in IS 51.

Outcomes and Impact

The first returns on PRPLA’s success are very positive. In the first two cohorts, all twenty-seven high school students graduated and all of them were accepted into four-year baccalaureate colleges and universities. Almost all received full or partial scholarships. Wagner has thirteen on full room, board and tuition scholarships, underwritten by approximately $750,000. When student attend for all four years, Wagner will be responsible for $1.4 million in scholarships. Unfortunately, one student on complete aid needed to take a leave this fall due to an acute family illness, but her scholarship will be intact waiting for her to return. The PRPLA students active on their campuses are emerging as civic leaders.
The Wagner student body, including the Bonners, are equally successful. The Bonner program is part of a national civic leadership effort. Bonners receive an additional scholarship component at Wagner. They complete over three hundred hours of community engagement for each of their four years. They are part of national and local leadership civic and diversity trainings. The first Bonner cohort just graduated and on time. All but one achieved honors recognition and one was accepted to Harvard University School of Medicine. His civic work provided him a definite advantage in an exceptionally competitive selection process. Finally, all but one of the newly enrolled PRPLA students are now Bonner leaders at Wagner.

The Neighborhood and Pipeline Model:

An exclusive commitment to a neighborhood rather than a borough or city approach underlies the entire PRPLA partnership model. We believe that neighborhood partnerships allow for deep personal relationships to develop and flourish. We assert that trust becomes the essential ingredient in identifying, designing, implementing, and sustaining the PRPLA program resulting in a vision of intercultural social transformation. This works well in Port Richmond, a community largely outside the political interests of normal New York City governance. Pride in this neighborhood, its schools, and cultural institutions has slowly emerged. Now there is optimism where previously there was pessimism that resulted in lives lived in shadows. The impact on Wagner’s faculty, students and the institution’s civic identity has been evident in the pride displayed across the entire spectrum of stakeholders, including trustees and alumni.

Many challenges exist and more await the Partnership. Leadership changes will be one of many. Moving from founders to successors over the next period will be critical in sustaining and growing the work. Resources will be another. Continuing to attract supporting funds is essential. The operating budgets of Wagner College and the Partnership members are important but not sufficient. The stunning results in the PRPLA program should be attractive investments for philanthropic foundations and donors. The challenge will be to gain their commitments. Finally, national educational priorities and regulations affect the health of this work.

This neighborhood model can work for greater social transformation if the model is deployed in numerous urban neighborhoods. Stringing together localities in this manner may produce significant gains in individual success and opportunities for students and families too often left behind in the American economy. It may allow for the development of social engagement and local leadership in quarters traditionally silent. It offers a vision of building democratic participation and a new civic culture of intercultural democracy at a time when such prospects are dimming nationally.

The hope is to deepen these partnerships into the pipeline model and possibly into other policy areas. To do this, Wagner has sought to expand the model into other college readiness arenas. We are collaborating with our sister higher education institutions, namely, CUNY’s College of Staten Island and St. John’s University’s satellite campus. Together, we have begun neighborhood partnerships with local high schools in two economically challenged neighborhoods under the title of “30,000 degrees”. We are diligently searching for funding and support to continue this successful program in other needy areas.
Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships
Central Corridor Anchor Partnership: Securing Regional Prosperity

Paul Pribbenow and Laura Beeth

Introduction to the Partnership

The Central Corridor Anchor Partnership (CCAP) is comprised of colleges, universities, hospitals, and health care organizations located near the Metro Transit Green Line (also known as the Central Corridor) in Minneapolis – Saint Paul, Minnesota. The Partnership grew out of a Living Cities symposium and local leadership from the McKnight Foundation and Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. Partners include Augsburg College, Bethel University, Fairview Health Services, HealthEast Care System, Metropolitan State University, Minneapolis Community & Technical College (MCTC), Regions Hospital/HealthPartners, St. Catherine University, Saint Paul College, the University of Minnesota, and the University of St. Thomas.

Each Anchor Partner is invested in our physical infrastructure to serve patients, students, and employees along the Central Corridor. We use the term “anchor” to indicate the important role each partner plays in our local economies and to describe how each partner is anchored to the health, vitality, and growth of the neighborhoods around us. The Anchor Partner capacity comprises 15 zip codes, 60,000 employees, 112,000 students, and $2.5 billion in annual spending.

The opening of the Metro Transit Green Line in 2014 provided an opportunity to collaborate to spend more of our procurement dollars with Central Corridor businesses, hire more residents from Central Corridor neighborhoods, and increase transit use by our students and employees. Our strategic work within the three focus areas of procurement, transit, and workforce will strengthen our organizations and bring more prosperity to the Twin Cities region.

Procurement: Buying Local

Our procurement goal is to create wealth in communities adjacent to the Central Corridor by focusing and aggregating the demand from the Anchor institutions to local suppliers that employ and invest in the community.

---

1 Paul Pribbenow is President of Augsburg College and Chair of the Central Corridor Anchor Partnership. Laura Beeth is System Director of Talent Acquisition at Fairview Health Services.
Our objectives are (1) to create or attract jobs to the Central Corridor by increasing the amount of local purchasing made by the Anchor institutions by 5%, and (2) to create cost savings over time for Anchors through collective procurement. The benefits to Anchors include better vendor pricing and customer service, ability to receive more customized products and services, a lower carbon footprint, and sustained and enhanced neighborhoods surrounding Anchor facilities. This initiative helps to increase employment in Corridor neighborhoods, stabilize the Corridor, and build relationships between vendors and Anchors.

a. **Spending More in the Central Corridor**

We worked with the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City (ICIC), a non-profit research and strategy organization focused on inner city economies, to develop a data-driven strategy to spend more procurement dollars in Central Corridor neighborhoods. This study completed a full analysis of spending by the Anchor institutions. It examined 1.6 million transactions, focused on sectors where spend was over $1 million, and found the collective spend on goods and services to be $3 billion per year. Twenty-five percent of Anchor spending is addressable, translating to 36 industries where spending could be shifted. Anchors could feasibly shift over $328 million in purchasing from out-of-state businesses into the Central Corridor. In the top ten categories of spending there are about 55 potential suppliers located in the Central Corridor.

b. **Preferred Purchasing from Local Vendors**

We have initiated preferred purchasing options for window cleaning, appliances (offering 25-35% discounts to Anchors), snow removal (savings of 40%), and food. A modest increase in spending can trigger positive impacts on employment opportunities for local residents. Leveraging this spending power also demonstrates the Anchors’ commitment to Corridor communities.

c. **Food Purchasing**

We continue to gain traction with local food purchasing. At MCTC, we shifted some purchasing from Sodexo food services to local groceries and deli food vendors. At Fairview, Regions, and HealthEast, we continue to
engage Sodexo to source local produce from Corridor vendors.\textsuperscript{17} Sodexo’s 12 distributors/vendors with operations in Minnesota collectively provide $25 million to our health care partners, 0.53% of which is generated from Corridor-based suppliers (16.2% from Minnesota-based suppliers). As of February 2017, Sodexo uses three vendors in the Central Corridor and is looking for ways to expand a new partnership with The Good Acre, a local food hub that works with small-scale farmers, many of whom are Hmong, to bring their produce to large-scale buyers.\textsuperscript{18}

Sodexo has collaborated with our health care partners to review their food purchasing and found that some entities within our health care partner organizations source significantly more local food purchases on a percentage basis.\textsuperscript{19} For example, Mercy Hospital, part of the Regions network, spends 17% with Minnesota suppliers while Regions spends 1.8%.\textsuperscript{20} Sodexo is planning to conduct additional analyses to determine if there are Minnesota-based products that the larger health care Anchors could purchase to increase Minnesota-based spend.\textsuperscript{21}

d. \textit{Making Local Purchasing Work}

Our strategy to shift partner purchasing to more local vendors often requires us to buy from smaller vendors without a record of supplying large institutions. Some locally procured goods and services are more expensive in the short term.\textsuperscript{22} Yet, over time, buying local tends to lead to cost savings. For example, Fairview’s contract with Prescription Landscape for snow removal cut Fairview’s plowing costs by 38%.\textsuperscript{23} An added bonus is that when local businesses get more business, they hire more local employees.\textsuperscript{24}

Some purchasing by Anchors is bound by state and federal statutory requirements, meaning that partners cannot always participate equally in our purchasing initiatives.\textsuperscript{25} Due to the organizational structure of some of our partners, small entities within individual partner institutions are often located outside of the Central Corridor, making the focus on Corridor purchasing more challenging. Additionally, significant amounts of addressable spend identified in the ICIC report fall in areas where there are insufficient vendors or production within the Corridor.\textsuperscript{26}


\textsuperscript{19} \textit{ld.}

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{ld.}

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{ld.}

\textsuperscript{22} Martucci, Brian. “Jobs, Housing, Transit: Leveraging the Economic Power of the Central Corridor’s Anchor Institutions.” \textit{The Line Media}, February 12, 2014.

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{ld.}

\textsuperscript{24} \textit{ld.}


\textsuperscript{26} \textit{ld.}
c. **Lessons Learned**

Each Anchor’s top leadership must communicate that local procurement is a priority and ensure that procurement staff is aware of the goal of increasing spend within the Central Corridor. Anchors should adopt a policy of including at least one Corridor-based vendor in requests for proposals over a certain amount and commit to Corridor-based suppliers for professional and commercial equipment. Ten Anchors have already purchased from professional and commercial equipment Corridor vendors, confirming that there are viable vendors available in this category which has the highest potential for shifting spend to the Corridor.  

f. **Case Study: Inclusionary Contracting at Augsburg College**

In 2016, Augsburg became the first Anchor to implement the Partnership’s inclusionary contracting policy, adopted in December 2014, stipulating the goal of hiring more minority and woman-owned local businesses. The policy asks CCAP members to consider adding contract language on large capital projects of at least $250,000 committing the contractor to hiring local, women, or minority-owned firms for a minimum of 10% of total project cost.

In summer 2016, McGough Construction, the general contractor for Augsburg College’s Hagfors Center for Science, Business and Religion, hired local, women, or minority-owned firms for almost 13%—$7 million—of total project cost. The largest contract was over $3 million awarded to Twin City Glass Contractors, a woman-owned business in the Central Corridor. Many public Anchors are already committed to similar contracting goals through state contracting requirements.

**Transit: Growing a Culture of Transit Use**

We aim for our employees, faculty, and students to fully utilize the Green Line and other transit to connect to economic opportunities. Our objectives are (1) to increase transit use among Anchor employees and students by 5% in five years through improved transit pass options and increased transit marketing and outreach; and (2) to improve last mile connections to the Green Line via bus, biking, and walking. We seek to attain better transportation choices for students and employees, a lower carbon footprint, and a reduced need for parking expansion. The Central Corridor benefits from improvements to last mile connections—better bike lanes, bus, and pedestrian connectivity.

---

27 Id.
29 Id.
30 Id.
32 Id.
34 Id.
a. **Impact Along the Green Line**

The Green Line opened June 2014, tracing an 11-mile route between the downtowns of Minneapolis and Saint Paul and offering all-day operations and stations located every half-mile to mile.\(^{35}\) Within six months of the opening of the Green Line, the percentage of residents living in areas of high poverty decreased by 8%—the first such decrease in decades.\(^ {36}\) This decrease came not from gentrification or resident displacement, but rather from people staying in place and earning higher incomes on average.\(^ {37}\) Other factors that impacted this reduction included overall improvements in the economy and greater job accessibility via the Green Line, with approximately 2,000 more jobs within a 30 minute commuting range for Saint Paul residents (2015 data).\(^ {38}\) The mix of market rate and affordable housing along the Green Line also boosts neighborhoods along the route.

b. **Transit Toolkit**

We prepared a transit toolkit for Anchors to utilize in their efforts to expand transit use among their employees. Ideas from the transit toolkit include multimodal wall maps, freestanding kiosks, and real-time information displays.\(^ {39}\) The wall maps can be customized to their locations with basic information about associated routes, walking times, nice ride stations, and bicycle infrastructure. Design staff can add additional features such as landmarks or key retailers. Planned real-time transit information displays and multimodal information displays indicate location of alternative transportation options like Metro Transit, Nice Ride MN, Car2Go, Zipcar, and Uber.\(^ {40}\)

c. **Transportation Survey**

We worked with Metro Transit to survey Anchor employees to gather information about current transit use and how to improve transit pass use.\(^ {41}\) Employees indicated cost and convenience as two main factors in deciding to use transit. Results from this survey conducted soon after the opening of the Green Line demonstrated that commuters were only vaguely aware of Green Line-related logistics. Overall, there was some confusion over costs, frequency, schedules, and routes. Each institution has the continuing opportunity to educate employees and students about the Green Line and its impact on their commute.\(^ {42}\)

---


37 Id.


42 Id.
d. **Transit Outreach**

Concurrent with the opening of the Green Line we launched a mass communication effort including pre-written correspondence for each Anchor.\(^{43}\) We have continued to share general communication from Metro Transit and personal stories about employee and student use of transit.\(^ {44}\)

e. **Shuttle Changes**

The Associated Colleges of the Twin Cities (ACTC), with the assistance of Metro Transit and St. Paul Smart Trips, a nonprofit organization that promotes the use of transit and other sustainable transportation options, collaborated with us to explore alternatives to the ACTC shuttle that provides connections between five campuses.\(^ {45}\) The new A Line: Snelling Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project resulted in part from this collaboration, better connecting members of these campuses to the overall transportation system.

f. **Last-Mile Connections**

Many Green Line or bus trips end in walking or biking to a final destination. We inventoried the “last mile” connections to understand opportunities to enhance these end-of-route connections.\(^ {46}\) The inventory included estimated cost, potential funding resources, and relative priorities. It also included opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle connections and enhanced connections to local bus routes, such as wayfinding signage and upgrades like the Snelling Avenue BRT project.\(^ {47}\) We want to champion the implementation of high priority walking and biking connections that connect Anchors to the Green Line, and to share transit connections via maps, apps, and other outreach efforts.\(^ {48}\)

g. **Transit Passes: College Partners**

College student transit promotions allow us to introduce new students to the regional transit system. In 2014, we worked with Metro Transit to launch the *Try Transit* initiative which provided discounted passes to 1,500 Anchor students and employees.\(^ {22}\) Ninety-five percent (666) of the allotted number (700) of Go-To Cards were sold to Allina, Fairview University Medical Center, Metro State University, Regions Hospital, and the University of Minnesota.\(^ {49}\) In Phase II, 94% (748) of the allotted number (800) of Go-To cards were sold to Augsburg College, Hamline University, MCTC, St. Kate’s, Saint Paul College, and St. Thomas.\(^ {22}\)

\(^ {43}\) Central Corridor Anchor Partnership. “2014 Detailed Transit Pass & Outreach Plan.”


\(^ {47}\) Id.

\(^ {48}\) Id.

In 2016, we initiated the Freshmen Go-To Card Program in partnership with Metro Transit, which included subsidized transit passes for four partner campuses (Augsburg, St. Kates, St. Thomas, and Bethel).\textsuperscript{50} Freshmen were provided a pre-loaded Go-To card and encouraged to load at least $10 onto their cards to be eligible for a $10 bonus, with each school providing the matching funds.\textsuperscript{51} The Partnership has also developed an app – Green Line Go! – to orient transit users to the amenities and activities within a quarter mile of each Green Line station.\textsuperscript{52} We also implemented a social media contest to encourage transit use among freshmen at the four participating colleges, encouraging students to share self-generated, transit-themed content.\textsuperscript{53} The contest was shared via internal email lists to those who received a Go-To card and through CCAP’s Twitter account.\textsuperscript{54}

Forty-six percent (1,166) of Go-To cards distributed to students were used at least once.\textsuperscript{55} Nearly 21\% (242) of all Go-To cards users redeemed a bonus. Ridership by students at partner institutions from August to December 2016 totaled 11,512 rides, with an average of 9.7 rides per participating student. The majority (69\%) of students used the bus while 25\% used the light rail, 5\% used the A Line, and 1\% used other transit modes.\textsuperscript{56} The Partnership continues to work with Metro Transit to develop a sustainable, long-term transit promotion strategy.

Starting in fall 2017, Metro Transit is offering incoming students a discounted semester transit pass. Incoming students at CCAP partner colleges will have the option to purchase a heavily discounted College Pass, good for unlimited rides on Metro Transit trains, buses, and the North Star line. Fall semester college passes will be available to incoming students for $90 (an $80 discount).\textsuperscript{57} Academic year passes will be available for $150 (a $190 discount). Participating college partners will purchase a $5 Go To card to familiarize incoming students with transit options. New students can use the $5 Go-To cards to test ride transit, and colleges can offer programming specific to encouraging transit familiarity among new students.\textsuperscript{58}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \underline{h. Transit Passes: Employer Partners}

Partners have instituted programs to introduce and promote the use of the MetroPass, a monthly pre-tax transit tool offered by Metro Transit, to promote transit use among CCAP employees. From 2013 - 2017, there was a 59\% increase in transit use at Gillette Children’s (a former Anchor) and a 21\% increase at HealthEast.\textsuperscript{59} In 2015, Regions Hospital transitioned its employee transit incentive program to the MetroPass program, increasing its employee transit use by 34 employees, all of whom have since given up their parking contracts.\textsuperscript{60}

\end{itemize}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{50} \small{Metro Transit & Central Corridor Anchor Partnership. “Anchor Partners – College Student Transit Promotions.” August 5, 2016.}
\textsuperscript{51} \small{Id.}
\textsuperscript{53} \small{Central Corridor Anchor Partnership. “#10dollarTransitBonus Social Media Contest.” September 16, 2016. http://www.centralcorridoranchorpartnership.org/news/10dollartransitbonus-social-media-contest-1.html.}
\textsuperscript{54} \small{Id.}
\textsuperscript{55} \small{Metro Transit. “Fall 2016 New Student Transit Promotion: Sales and Ridership Results.” March 28, 2017.}
\textsuperscript{56} \small{Id.}
\textsuperscript{58} \small{Id.}
\textsuperscript{59} \small{Central Corridor Anchor Partnership. “Report on Transit Activities.” January 2017.}
\textsuperscript{60} \small{Central Corridor Anchor Partnership. “2016 Annual Report: Pathways & Progress in Securing Regional Prosperity.”}
\end{flushright}

I. Workforce: Creating Pathways

Our goal is to achieve a workforce among Anchor institutions that is more representative of local communities within the Central Corridor.\footnote{Central Corridor Anchor Partnership. “Workforce.” Accessed August 7, 2017. \url{http://www.centralcorridoranchorpartnership.org/workforce/}.} We aim for better local health outcomes, improved educational achievement, and increased household incomes. Our workforce objectives are (1) to increase Anchor institution employment from Central Corridor zip codes from 13% to 18% in five years, (2) to achieve racial diversity goals across all job categories among Central Corridor Anchor institutions in five years, and (3) to reduce the racial employment gap in the Central Corridor zip codes from 14% to 10% in five years.\footnote{Id.} In 2015, the Partnership surpassed its objective to boost Corridor zip code employment in Anchor institutions, with 19% of Anchor employees coming from Corridor communities.\footnote{Id.}

a. Scrubs Camp: Envisioning College and Health Care Careers

Scrubs Camp, created by HealthForce Minnesota with locations each summer at Augsburg College and Saint Paul College, introduces high school students to a vision of college and career pathways in healthcare.\footnote{Central Corridor Anchor Partnership. “2016 Annual Report: Pathways & Progress in Securing Regional Prosperity.”} Participants engage in an immersive experience to explore careers in health and medicine via hands-on sessions, tours of facilities, and interactions with healthcare professionals.\footnote{Id.} By using college labs, facilities, and classrooms, students experience what it is like to be on a college campus.\footnote{Id.}

The camps are supported by donations from Anchor partners and intentionally recruit students from diverse backgrounds. From 2013 - 2017, we supported over 300 student participants in Scrubs Camps from Central Corridor zip codes.\footnote{See Cedar Riverside Partnership. “Scrubs Camp Initiates a Pipeline to Careers in Healthcare.” August 4, 2017. \url{http://www.cedarriversidepartnership.org/news-archive/2017/8/4/scrubs-camp-fosters-a-pipeline-to-careers-in-healthcare}; HealthForce Minnesota. “Stats Summary,” 2016.} Seventy-four percent of participants have received scholarships to cover the $385 camp cost and 65% have been participants of color.\footnote{Central Corridor Anchor Partnership. “2016 Annual Report: Pathways & Progress in Securing Regional Prosperity.”} In 2017, Fairview, HealthEast, and Regions actively supported the
camps. The next five years will bring over 6,500 healthcare job openings in the Twin Cities, presenting a significant opportunity to the Corridor community.

b. C3 Fellows: Gaining Relevant Experience

The Central Corridor (C3) Fellows program connects college students enrolled in health care-related degree programs from Corridor zip codes to health care providers located along the Green Line to gain entry-level employment and experience. Students identify potential jobs, write resumes, fill out job applications, and prepare for interviews with the support of a program director. Personalized support helps students balance school, work, family, and additional commitments. Health care skills training is provided, including AED, CPR, First Aid, and Basic Life Support.

We support C3 Fellows from Saint Paul College, MCTC, St. Kate's, Augsburg College, and Metropolitan State University. Bethel University is also exploring a connection to the C3 Fellows program and recently launched the Center for Healthcare Excellence, aimed at building strong internal and external partnerships to benefit students and the healthcare industry.

From 2013 - 2017, approximately 540 students were enrolled as C3 Fellows. Seventy percent were students of color, 76% came from low-income households, 35% were first generation college students, and 80% continue to reside in Minneapolis or Saint Paul. Nearly all Fellows to date were placed in paid positions in hospitals, clinics, and long-term care. The average wage during this time was $14/hour, about $5 higher than peers not working in their field of study. From 2013 - 2015, overall academic success among C3 Fellows was 10% higher than their

---


74 Id.

75 Id.

76 Id.

77 Id.

78 Id.

79 Id.

80 Id.

peers due to strong mentoring and employment in their field of study.\textsuperscript{82} As of February 2017, the C3 Fellows program has generated over $600,000 in economic benefit.\textsuperscript{83}

Placing Fellows in health care positions at local employers enables students to network in their area of study. After finishing their degrees, Fellows can apply as internal candidates for higher paying jobs. Students learn to build and maintain professional connections while bridging academic interests and interacting with patients from diverse backgrounds.

c. \textit{Next Steps and Sustainability of C3 Fellows}

1. Next steps: new partners

The Partnership has discussed expanding the C3 Fellows program model to include financial services career pathways.\textsuperscript{84} The vision of this expanded partnership would include advancing education partners’ goal of student program completion and employer partners’ goal of improving service through hiring a more diverse workforce that better reflects the community that employers serve.\textsuperscript{85} The Partnership is engaged in a planning process to invite financial services partners to explore joining the Partnership and benefit from student internships through C3 Fellows.

This expansion would increase the scope of opportunities for partnering with college programs on student internships. A scaled up program would make it possible for college partners with strong financial services degree programs to more actively engage in student internships through C3 Fellows.\textsuperscript{86} Financial services is a high demand area and growing career track in Minneapolis and Saint Paul, and almost half of job postings are entry-level positions within the field.\textsuperscript{87}

2. Sustainability: funding and employer demand

C3 Fellows has received outside funding from the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, Hennepin County, McKnight Family Foundation, Saint Paul Foundation, and F.R. Bigelow Foundation.\textsuperscript{88} To sustain the effort, Anchors will continue to contribute to the costs of C3 Fellows programming.

A key challenge to the sustainability of C3 Fellows is institutional demand from health care employers.\textsuperscript{89} C3 Fellows requires entry-level healthcare jobs, of which there are relatively few in Central Corridor Anchor

\textsuperscript{82} Minneapolis Community and Technical College Foundation, Inc. “Grant Application: Central Corridor College (C3) Fellows Program.” October, 2015.
\textsuperscript{84} Central Corridor Anchor Partnership, “Minutes of May 19, 2017 Executive Committee Meeting.” May 2017; Central Corridor Anchor Partnership, “Minutes of July 11 Partnership Meeting.” July 2017.
\textsuperscript{87} RealTime Talent. “Scan of 2016 Job Openings.” 2016.
\textsuperscript{88} C3 Fellows. “About the C3 Fellows Program.” Accessed August 7, 2017. \url{http://c3fellows.org/about-us/}
\textsuperscript{89} Martucci, Brian. “Jobs, Housing, Transit: Leveraging the Economic Power of the Central Corridor’s Anchor Institutions.” \textit{The Line Media}, February 12, 2014.
The shortage of entry-level jobs is structural. Protocols inhibit health care providers from billing for work by non-credentialed employees, and positions within hospitals are more credentialed than ever before. While the majority of students work while in college, their positions may be unrelated to their field, and we know that students benefit from gaining practical experience working in their fields of study. C3 Fellows may address this limitation by expanding to partners in other career areas such as manufacturing and technology.

d. **Nursing Initiative: Building BSN Diversity**

Building on the career pathways success of Scrubs Camps and C3 Fellows, we are introducing the Nursing Initiative in fall 2017. The Nursing Initiative is a collaborative program that supports two-year degree RN nurses from the Corridor to earn BSN degrees. Anchors are investing in the Nursing Initiative because of better health outcomes—patients respond better to healthcare service providers with shared cultural competency. Participating Anchors are excited for this work which, though long-envisioned, none could accomplish alone.

Within the next five years, 55% of the 6,500 healthcare job openings in the Corridor are expected to be four-year BSN nursing jobs. In Minnesota, 2.2% of RNs (120 of 5,360) licensed in 2012 were persons of color. MCTC’s 2015 RN class had 51% persons of color, while the University of Minnesota’s 2015 BSN class had 22% persons of color. The Institute of Medicine’s (IOM) goal, which Minnesota is following, is for hospitals to employ 80% BSN degree nurses by 2020.

The Nursing Initiative will draw from Central Corridor zip codes and will recruit and enroll an initial cohort of 16 Associate Degree RN nurses from Saint Paul and Minneapolis, collectively representing a racially and ethnically diverse cohort. Nurses will have access and support to obtain BSN degrees to be more employable and earn

---

90 Id.
91 Id.
92 Id.
94 Id.
97 University of Minnesota School of Nursing, Minneapolis Community and Technical College Nursing Program.
higher wages in Minnesota. Some program participants may simultaneously work at long-term care facilities selected by hospitals based on existing strategic relationships.

We will evaluate our progress by tracking the number of students enrolled in the Nursing Initiative and maintaining demographic data on the cohort. This pilot effort will lead to greater economies of scale and broadening of our public and private support base. Our pilot program budget relies on foundation support for student tuition and program coordination, employer tuition reimbursement, and student contributions to their tuition.

d. National Recognition

Our Anchors have received national recognition and advancement support for their workforce leadership. In 2012, our Partnership received the Minnesota Hospital Association Health Care Career Promotion Award for our work to advance the Scrubs Camp at Augsburg among Cedar Riverside neighborhood residents, of whom many are Somali or East African. Anchor partner Fairview Health Services received the National Fund for Workforce Solutions/CareerSTAT Frontline Health Care Worker Champion Award in 2016 for its pipeline programs including C3 Fellows, the only organization in the nation to receive this award that year. The workforce programs of our Partnership and individual Anchors have been highlighted in national best practice documents, including The Democracy Collaborative, Local Hiring, Healthcare Advisory Report, CareerSTAT National Fund for Workforce Solutions, as well as local and regional media.

e. Live-Work: Make Your Next Move

We have worked with the Family Housing Fund and Minnesota Home Ownership Center to stabilize and invest in Central Corridor neighborhoods by creating materials that encourage employees of Anchor institutions to consider living in the Corridor. By increasing the number of Anchor employees who live in the area, we can reduce carbon emissions, reduce transportation costs, strengthen neighborhoods, and contribute to a more dynamic community. An ongoing aim of our Partnership is to encourage Anchor employees to live within the Corridor.


102 Id.


108 Id.
Conclusions: Challenges & Lessons

The Central Corridor Anchor Partnership presents unique opportunities for collaboration on shared initiatives. With eleven partners, our partnership includes many of the largest and most prominent health care and higher education institutions in the Twin Cities region. We have learned that our work is not charity but a strategic engagement to benefit Anchors and the region’s prosperity. None of us could do this work alone, and together we create shared value for long-term benefit. Our efficacy relies on engaged senior leadership and strong communication throughout Anchor institutions.

We sometimes struggle to spread our initiatives and investment equally across focus areas of varying significance for our different partners. Writing grants for and launching a new initiative that focuses, for example, mainly on two-year college partners pulls partnership resources away from developing initiatives to benefit other Anchors. As a result, Anchors must be able to commit to a long-range view of their investment. Our initiatives do not touch every Anchor equally, and each Anchor must understand how their individual strategic mission is being advanced.

We have learned that a communication plan and an adaptive communication strategy are valuable tools in sharing Partnership accomplishments and providing Anchors with details about how the Partnership is advancing in its initiative areas. While we know that effective communication about the Partnership is important to our mission, communication to external and internal audiences can be a full-time endeavor. An ongoing challenge is generating wider familiarity with the Partnership and its work in the larger community, and establishing a strong awareness of the Partnership within all levels of our Anchor institutions. A Twitter account, monthly or quarterly newsletters, and occasional newspaper or journal publications are our main tools for sharing news about the Partnership.

Finally, we know that performance metrics are effective for tracking progress and creating a climate of mutual accountability to ensure that each Anchor is contributing to our overall strategic direction. Setting quantifiable objectives in each of our focus areas – procurement, transit, and workforce – helps us check our progress against the amount of time we have invested in our initiatives. These strategies help us stay on track and always alert for the next opportunity to collaborate for the long-term prosperity of our region.
Nancy Cantor, the Chancellor of Rutgers University-Newark, who works just across a lovely, tree-filled park from my office at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark, has given me so much good advice and counsel throughout the years that we’ve both worked as leaders of nonprofit institutions in this remarkable, resurgent city.

But the chief reason I am permanently in her debt is that she introduced me to the term “anchor institution.” And in so doing, she enabled me to think differently about the role of the arts in this, and in any, community.

In reality, NJPAC has been an “anchor” here in Newark since our inception — an in very much the same way that the Anchor Institutions Task Force has been defining “anchors” all this time.

But now we at NJPAC have the language and the tools to embrace our anchor-hood, so much has changed for me and for the entire leadership team at the Arts Center.

Anchor institutions are hyperlocal, they are grounded in their communities, they advance helpful initiatives and they drive change. As the anchor cultural institution in the City of Newark, and really in the State of New Jersey, here are a few examples of what being an anchor means to NJPAC:

- It means hosting the Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival, North America’s largest celebration of the power of the word, and staging it not just on NJPAC’s actual stages but in churches, parks, schools and community centers around Newark. Hundreds of events at the festival were free to students and their teachers, who pour into Newark from around the state for “the Dodge” every other year.

- It means enlisting our Dance Advisor and Board member, Tony Award winner Savion Glover, to lead a 6-week residency at our Center for Arts Education in which he creates a new musical with 40 kids from Greater Newark. He’s been doing this for three summers now. It’s annually one of the most compelling performances on our stages.

- It means instituting and producing a jazz vocal competition named after Newark Arts High grad Sarah Vaughan that for seven years has drawn thousands of young singers from around the world to apply and to showcase their work at our jazz festival. The winner every year gets a recording contract, a cash prize — and a berth at the Newport Jazz Festival.

- And it means that this competition is part of the Arts Center’s TD James Moody Jazz Festival (named for one of the city’s many jazz legends) that not only brings performers from around the world to our

---

1 John Schreiber is the President and CEO of New Jersey Performing Arts Center, NJPAC
Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships —— So much more than a stage:

How New Jersey Performing Arts Center embraced its role as Newark’s anchor cultural institution stages, but offers performances and workshops for New Jersey students, free performances for the community, and programming from our Community Engagement department that floods churches, schools and parks with jazz throughout the festival.

- And it means developing a master plan for our campus that includes a new community center, which will house arts training facilities for our students, rehearsal space for community groups, and a wide variety of community services right on our campus, alongside low-rise residential developments, retail spaces and a film center. We aim to literally build at least part of the arts-and-education corridor that is beginning to blossom across Newark’s downtown, already rich in parks, universities and arts organizations large and small.

But the point is this: Having a name for what we aspire to be, having the goals of an anchor institution spelled out, and being able to look at other anchor institutions for guidance, is helping us grow as an organization — and to be ever more of a boon to our city.

NJPAC’s backstory

Twenty-one years ago, when it first threw open its doors in downtown Newark, NJPAC was a big, brand-new building — with a big mission that it had taken on, but not yet put into practice.

The Arts Center had been a dream that New Jersey Governor Thomas Kean proposed in 1986. Kean spent a full decade convincing politicians, businessmen and Jerseyans of all stripes that the state needed a magnificent concert hall, a Garden State answer to New York City’s Lincoln Center — and raising the funding to make it a reality. Ground was broken on the project in 1993, and by 1997, it was finally coaxed into brick-and-steel life by the governor, who worked with Newark Mayor Sharpe James, fundraiser (and later the Arts Center’s first CEO), Larry Goldman, Prudential Financial CEO Art Ryan, New Jersey philanthropist Ray Chambers and Merck CEO Roy Vagelos to raise money and support for the building and the education programs that were part of NJPAC’s offerings from the very beginning.

In fact, its creators always envisioned NJPAC as a place with several roles to play. While its most obvious task was to serve as a home for world-class performances in New Jersey’s largest city, NJPAC was also built to jumpstart the revitalization of downtown Newark (which by the 1990s had still not entirely recovered from the effects of the rebellion of the 1960s), to provide an exceptional education in the performing arts to New Jersey’s children, and to serve as a locus for civic and community events – a “town square” for an entire state.

Our founders didn’t have the term “anchor institution” to work with back in the ‘80s. Nevertheless, that’s essentially what they imagined NJPAC would be.
NJPAC now

Remarkably, thanks to the devotion of an enormous number of supporters, today NJPAC has lived up to its ambitious mission, and even expanded on Kean’s vision. The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater make a home on our stages, which are also visited by performers ranging from Yo-Yo Ma to Stephen Colbert and Gilberto Santa Rosa. More than 500 performances and events welcomed Jerseyans to Center Street last season — in a corner of downtown Newark that’s been transformed, since 1997, into a bustling and art-filled neighborhood.

NJPAC’s education initiative, kicked off before the Newark campus was built, is now New Jersey’s largest provider of arts education programs for children, annually reaching almost 100,000 students (from Pre-K to Grade 12), teachers and families. Thousands of New Jersey kids who are exposed to world-class performances on Arts Center stages go on to classes where they can study dance, jazz, musical theater, hip hop, filmmaking and more — either in our Center for Arts Education, or in classes taught by NJPAC teaching artists at schools around the state. NJPAC’s professional development opportunities for teachers — classes and workshops through which we teach regular classroom teachers how to put on a school musical, or how to teach their own students to read music or play the recorder — have added exponentially to the arts education offerings at Greater Newark schools.

Meanwhile, NJPAC has also become the home of the aforementioned biennial Dodge Poetry Festival, the annual TD Bank James Moody Jazz Festival, and the New Jersey Speakers Series — which last year brought President Bill Clinton, among others, to Newark. And NJPAC offers itself as a gathering place for business organizations, religious groups, and community partners, and works to bring arts events off its own campus and into locations throughout the city — from senior centers to preschools and churches. Programming for what we call our “boundaryless campus” involves producing some 200 performances and other events every year, held away from our building, from literacy programs in libraries (which focus on books by and about performing artists like Tito Puente and Misty Copeland) to liturgical dance workshops at churches and hip hop festivals in parks, all run by our growing Community Engagement Department. A plethora of citizens’ committees representing the city’s different demographic groups — from senior citizens to New Jersey’s LGBT community — consult with our staffers and guide our choices.

That’s a lot happening in what was, until very recently, only two buildings: Our main campus, which houses the 2,840-seat Prudential Hall, an acoustically excellent modified opera hall that can accommodate everything from chamber music to rock, as well as the intimate and flexible 514-seat Victoria Theater. We also offer cabaret-style performances in our Chase Room, which can be a rehearsal space or a room for social events as well as a performance venue.

Our second building is the 35,213 square-foot Center for Arts Education — where our Saturday arts training sessions are held, and our extensive artists-in-the-schools programming is administered. It even has its own 70-seat black-box theater for student productions.
But today our programming spills out from these spaces and into every cranny of Newark. During every summer, the three-acre space in front of the Arts Center, Chambers Plaza, is the site of our free Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City Thursday night concerts, a kind of summer-long music festival, a gift to our neighbors, the citizens of Newark and the thousands more who work in the city’s downtown center.

How did we get here?

NJPAC pursues so many projects even as we do all the conventional things an arts center does — staging performances, commissioning new works, teaching arts classes — because of our understanding of our role as an anchor cultural institution, and in an attempt to live up to our mission statement, adopted in 2015:

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center, by celebrating diversity, shall be America’s foremost urban presenter of arts and entertainment, a creative and effective leader in arts education for children, a convener of useful and enlightening civic engagement events, and a catalyst for economic development in its home city of Newark.

NJPAC, now in its 21st year, is currently enjoying a period of great success. Ticket sales and fees have more than tripled in the last 7 seasons from $5 million to $18 million. Our audience has grown more diverse as it has grown in size. We actively pursued both these results: We deliberately made our programming more diverse, and we’ve been gratified that, as we have, our audience has grown. Opening our doors to new audiences and seeking out bookings with artists from every corner of the globe, who are familiar faces to the many different immigrant groups that make up so much of New Jersey’s population, has been not only the right thing to do, but it’s also been a boon to our bottom line. At this point, our budget is made up of 64% earned revenue, and 36% contributed income. That’s the highest earned revenue percentage we’ve achieved thus far, and it allows NJPAC to be ever more self-sustaining and stable.

Pursuing diversity at every level is just one of the strategic priorities NJPAC adopted for its five-year plan. Guiding our work from 2016 through 2020, this plan prioritized five goals: Making our arts education program a national model of excellence, with scalable programs that embrace the Maker philosophy; producing distinctive programming for diverse audiences; developing a sustainable business model; and maintaining NJPAC for the next generation as a vibrant destination within a dynamic neighborhood.

In one way or another, the pursuit of each of those priorities helps build NJPAC’s capacities as an anchor institution, and helps grow and sustain our home city.

Let’s start with programming, the heart of any arts center’s offerings. We’ve actively sought to put the most diverse possible range of performers on our stages over the past five years. NJPAC was built as, and always will be, a home for fine-arts programming — symphony orchestras, modern dance ensembles, jazz — but we passionately believe that we should also be a home for musicians and musical styles from around the globe, for comedians who represent the astounding diversity of ethnic heritages that the people of New Jersey can claim, and for speakers on almost every topic imaginable.
As I write this, in the coming months we at NJPAC are looking forward to hosting performances by salsa star Gilberto Santa Rosa, comedians Jo Koy and Mike Marino, Italian crooner Patrizio Buanne, soul superstar Gladys Knight, India’s Zakir Hussain, as well as the Indiana-born Joshua Bell and the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. This kind of mix is not unusual for us; this is the blend we aim for, and more often than not achieve. We’ve been gratified that as our offerings have evolved to become more diverse, the overall size of our audience has grown.

Beyond simply diversifying our programming, we — through the exceptional work of our executive producer David Rodriguez — set about creating distinctive programming that literally couldn’t be seen anywhere else, because we created it by reaching out to the community of artists that had worked with us, and asking them to try something new.

The performances at our annual *TD James Moody Jazz Festival* are wonderful examples. At the most recent iteration of the festival, in November 2018, we took a particularly close look at Latin jazz, and how it informed the world of jazz as a whole. And we put on stage a remarkable collection of performances that were truly unique. *Congas Y Cantos: An Evening of Latin Jazz* featured world-famous percussionist Sheila E., Latin jazz pianist Eddie Palmieri and Puerto Rican salsa star Tito Rojas, together on the same stage. We had the incredible percussionist Antonio Sanchez play, live, the all-percussion score he wrote for the Oscar-winning film, *Birdman*, while the film played behind him. We brought together two incredible jazz singers — Gregory Porter and Dianne Reeves — for a night of vocal pyrotechnics.

And for a presentation of the 80-plus-year-old Count Basie Orchestra, we pulled in renowned vocalists Catherine Russell and Kurt Elling, and vibraphonist Stefon Harris to play alongside the band.

We also jointly commissioned *Ogresse*, a new work by rising jazz vocalist Cecile McLorin Salvant, in partnership with the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Kennedy Center. This new work paired the singer’s searing jazz vocals and songwriting with a phenomenal chamber orchestra and a moving, metaphorical fairytale about the experiences of a monstrous woman with dark skin, a traumatic past and a taste for human flesh.

These weren’t tours that happened to be passing through town; these were one-time-only performances that came together because we asked the artists to take part in something unique, or went out of our way to support artists who were already expanding their work in new and unusual ways. Because this is something we pursue, NJPAC has become an Arts Center where you don’t only come to see your favorite artists perform, but you come to see them perform with talented peers, to perform new works, or to present their old favorites in a new context. We can’t book programming like this every night, nor would we want to, but it makes the Arts Center a place to keep on the radar for anyone who appreciates jazz, world music, classical music or even comedy. Audiences know that special things happen here.

Expanding our programming also feeds into our goal to be more financially sustainable. Live entertainment is an unpredictable business. Performers get ill, or fall out of favor, or their fans just can’t reach them because of the weather. It’s just the nature of the beast. And the fine arts programming we are committed to — mounting classical music performances, modern dance concerts, sometimes jazz — is not a profitable endeavor under the best of
Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships —— So much more than a stage:

How New Jersey Performing Arts Center embraced its role as Newark’s anchor cultural institution circumstances. We know going in that we’ll lose money on those performances; we believe it’s our responsibility to give those genres a home in New Jersey anyway.

So we’ve pursued ways to ensure the Arts Center has reliable streams of income. In addition to the expected options — concessions and parking sales, for example — we’ve also found ways for programming to boost our bottom line. One way we do this? By creating our own touring productions and sending them out on the road.

Our biggest success story to date is The Hip Hop Nutcracker — a performance in which hip hop dancers spin, flip and fly through the air to Tchaikovsky’s original score, amplified by a DJ and a hip hop violinist. As they dance, they tell a story that’s modern, but tips its hat to the original: The plot concerns a little girl and her disgruntled parents in modern-day Manhattan, then whisks back in time to the 1980s, to when and where the parents first met, at a dance club call the Land of Sweets. We’ve been lucky enough to attach hip hop veteran Kurtis Blow — the emcee who brought the world “Christmas Rappin’” way back in 1979, when he became the first hip hop artist signed to a major label — to the production, opening and closing the performance with his classic hits, and a new piece made just for this show.

The Hip Hop Nutcracker just wrapped its fourth Christmas-season tour around the country in December; in January, the cast came to NJPAC and we filmed the performance for a PBS pledge special that will air next fall, which we hope will continue to feed demand for the production on the touring circuit next season. All of these activities funnel some profits back to NJPAC, supporting our arts education initiatives, our community engagement work, and our fine arts programming.

We’re working on other touring productions: Jazz in the Key of Ellison, celebrating the musical world of African-American novelist Ralph Ellison, was created here with inspiration from Don Katz, the CEO of Audible and once a student of Ellison’s. It was first performed during our annual TD James Moody Jazz Festival in 2016, and filled houses in San Diego and Chicago on its first venture out on the road. Carefree: Dancin’ with Fred and Ginger, a tribute to American cinema’s most iconic dance duo, directed and choreographed by the Tony-winning Warren Carlyle, was one of the first properties we created; it toured in 2016. And this year, we’ll debut The Magic Tree House: Showtime With Shakespeare, a live stage version of an entry in the popular time-travelling tween book series. The production is touring this spring, and will perform on our own stages as well. These projects help protect NJPAC’s sustainability — and bring our passion for jazz and hip hop further into the world.

NJPAC in the community

While all this goes on in the spotlight, up on a stage — here or elsewhere — some of the most important work we do happens off stage. Advancing our arts education programming was a key piece of our strategic plan, and we’ve been successful in growing these programs in both scope and overall participation. In the last fiscal year, almost 100,000 students and families participated in our arts education programming. We bring kids here every weekend and all summer long for arts training classes in jazz, hip hop, dance and filmmaking, and where we plan and execute dozens of arts education initiatives that we use to bring arts education into public, private and charter schools across Newark and in cities throughout New Jersey.
Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships —— So much more than a stage:
How New Jersey Performing Arts Center embraced its role as Newark’s anchor cultural institution

These initiatives are extensive, and include several approaches to bringing the arts into the lives of New Jersey’s kids and empowering them to become artists themselves, giving them the tools, the space and the confidence to make art that tells their own stories. Influenced by the Maker philosophy, we’ve created our programs to form a “pathway” for our students from observing performances, to acquiring the skills necessary to create art, and then to authoring their own work. There’s a “pathway” for students to follow in each of seven artistic genres including jazz, dance, musical theater, devised theater, hip hop, poetry and filmmaking.

The first step on that journey is exposing kids to the power, and the many varieties, of live performance. More than 35,000 children every year either come to NJPAC to see one of our SchoolTime performances on our stages, or witness one of our assemblies, for which we bring a whole production to a school, performing in an auditorium or gymnasium. These performances all come with teacher guides and information about how the subject matter keys into New Jersey’s curriculum requirements — but more importantly, these musicals, concerts, ballets and hip hop performances are often the very first live productions that the kids in the audience have ever seen. (And those performances are just the ones we arrange through participating schools. Not in that total? An almost equal number of students who come to our regular evening and weekend children’s programming with their families. Whether it’s The Nutcracker or our annual Mother’s Day performances by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, or a screening of Harry Potter with the score performed by the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, we offer New Jersey families a plethora of ways to introduce their children to the performing arts.)

From there, we extend the opportunity to learn the skills that allow for performance to as many children as possible, often working with the Newark Public Schools or other school districts. More than 5,000 students every year learn how to waltz and foxtrot in our Dancing Classrooms™ residencies, to stage a musical through our Disney Musicals in Schools residencies, create a theatre piece based on their own lives through our Ping Chong residency, or even how to write their own musicals through our Mercer Musical Theater program. For each of these programs, we send a troupe of teaching artists into a school’s classroom twice a week for 10 or 12 weeks. Students learn the skills needed to dance, sing, compose, write, and to pull together a performance for their teachers, peers and families at NJPAC at the semester’s end. Each residency offers the ancillary benefits of all performing arts training — a greater capacity for creativity, the ability to think critically and work collaboratively — but they also have individual bonuses built into the curriculum.

Dancing Classrooms, for example, was created to teach not just the rhumba, but social and emotional skills — confidence, persistence, respect for oneself and for others, how to win and lose gracefully. (Dance competitions are a central part of the program for exactly this reason.) Disney Musicals in Schools not only teaches the kids how to put on a show, it also teaches their teachers how to stage a school musical, and offers them the rights to a Disney musical production for free, for two years running. The hope is to persuade schools to maintain a permanent drama program.

In addition to performances and residencies, NJPAC is also building its teacher professional development offerings. One of our biggest successes in this field is the R.A.M.P. program — Recorder Arts for Musical Pathways. In the last five years, this program has tripled in size, and now involves approximately 3,300 third-graders; to put it another way, with a very few exceptions, every third-grader in the city of Newark takes part.
Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships —— So much more than a stage:
How New Jersey Performing Arts Center embraced its role as Newark’s anchor cultural institution

The outline of the program is simple: We teach a growing group of Newark Public Schools teachers how to read music and play the recorder — and how to teach their own students to do the same. The teachers return to their classrooms armed with new lessons, and enough recorders for their entire class. The kids learn how to read music, how to practice as an ensemble — and, at the end of the semester, most of them come to Prudential Hall to perform.

Let me tell you: Listening to more than 2,000 kids play “Hot Cross Buns” on the recorder is an experience unlike any other! But the real joy of that performance — which usually brings most of our staff down to the stage to listen in — is watching the glee on the faces of these children.

We’ve also expanded our other professional development offerings, instructing almost 1000 teachers during dedicated professional development days this year, focusing on how to integrate the arts into the teaching of other subjects.

NJPAC also offers arts training classes to kids ages 10 to 18; our Center for Arts Education is jam packed with students studying modern dance, deejaying, jazz performance, classical music performances and filmmaking every Saturday, starting at 10 a.m. Among those Saturday programs, probably our most developed offering is our Wells Fargo Jazz for Teens program. Students in this program start their day with lessons, and then rehearse in ensembles that range from trios to our James Moody Jazz Orchestra and our premier, all-scholarship group, the George Wein Ensemble, named after my mentor, the founder of the Newport Jazz Festival. And training is just the start: These kids perform all around the city, get to meet and take master classes with visiting artists and even get to road trip to the Newport Jazz Festival every year. We’re incredibly proud of these young musicians — and especially of the ones who go on to study music at the undergraduate level. As I write, we’ve got four students at the Berklee College of Music on full scholarship. And in 2017, we were bowled over with pride when one of the very earliest Jazz for Teens students, Tyshawn Sorey, now an assistant professor in music at Wesleyan, was awarded a MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship.

In 2018, we staged Katie Cappiello’s devised theater work, SLUT: The Play, an examination of rape culture and slut shaming in a high school environment, with a cast of Newark high school women — and performed it to an audience of 1500 Newark high school students. One of the most gratifying parts of the process was that the playwright, recognizing that she wrote this play based on the experiences of her students on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, spent a day with our cast, discussing their experience with sexual violence and slut shaming in their own communities. She used the words and stories of our young cast — which was made entirely of Latinx and African American women — to rewrite her play in a way that felt true to their use of language and their experiences.

SLUT: The Play is a deeply moving and provocative piece. Because it is so dense and so challenging, it was important to all of us at the Arts Center that we didn’t simply stage it and then walk away from the powerful emotions and questions it raised. Instead, we offered the performance in partnership with the Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey and the Mental Health Association of Morris and Essex, who provided counselors who could address these issues at Newark’s high schools before the performance, who were on hand to lead a discussion at the performance itself — and who were at every single rehearsal. SLUT: The Play was, for the Arts Center, a wonderful learning experience, showing us how we could mount and stage a performance in a way that was also a community gathering, and a useful discussion of a particular issue within that community.
Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships —— So much more than a stage:
How New Jersey Performing Arts Center embraced its role as Newark’s anchor cultural institution

It was the fact that the leadership at NJPAC, including the senior members of our arts education staff, thinks about the Arts Center’s role as an anchor institution constantly that lead us to produce this play — and not to produce it alone, but in partnership with several community organizations, and in a way that served not only our cast, but the community at large. These extra steps were built into the project from its initial conception, not tacked on as an afterthought — it made SLUT: The Play one of the most effective programs we have yet staged.

The news about Newark

Much of what creates the unique blend of performing arts, community building, education and civic engagement that defines NJPAC is a direct response to the fact that the Arts Center is located in — and was built expressly for — the city of Newark, New Jersey.

Newark is a fairly unusual city. It has many challenges to overcome: Approximately 28% of the population lives below the poverty line. Education outcomes here are not equal to those in the rest of the state. Only 14% of the city’s population over 25 years old has a bachelor’s degree or a graduate degree.

And segregation along racial lines is stark here, especially when compared with to the majority white suburbs that surround Newark, many of which — Short Hills, Summit, Livingston, Montclair — are home to extraordinarily wealthy individuals. Meanwhile, in Newark, median household income is $31,000, and approximately 19% of the population has no health insurance. The unemployment rate hovered between 6 and 7% over the past several years, as the national rate plummeted to 4%.

By those measurements, things are dire.

And yet, it’s a city that has a vibrant arts scene that is oversized given the many challenges that still exist here. In fact the National Center for Arts Research put Newark in the top ten of the country’s most artistically vibrant cities.

Why is that? How can that be?

Much of this extraordinary community of artists and arts organization grew out of Newark’s history. This city has always been enchanted by the arts, always considered the arts integral to the community, and has always supported public arts projects.

For example, the Newark Museum, which opened in 1909, is one of the great experiments in making a museum into a community center. Its founding director, John Cotton Dana, was an innovator in developing arts organizations that were incredibly democratic in nature. He was the director of the Newark Public Library, where he advocated for stacks that were open to the public. He started the Museum on one floor of the library; he filled it with objects from Japan, Tibet, China and from across Africa, and other galleries he filled with modern American pottery, which no one had yet come to consider art. He courted an audience of factory workers and children — people who were not, at the time, expected to avail themselves of a museum’s offerings. Dana considered a
Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships —— So much more than a stage:

How New Jersey Performing Arts Center embraced its role as Newark’s anchor cultural institution

museum an institution of education; he started a program that allowed schools to borrow artifacts from the museum’s galleries. And he promoted and displayed the work of contemporary artists.

The Newark Museum continues to thrive today, with modern amendments like a Makerspace. (It’s still got Tibetan art, too — in fact, it has an actual Buddhist altar, consecrated by the Dalai Lama.) So does the Newark Library, which itself is open for performances in the renovated galleries of its gorgeous, Italianate building, designed to imitate Florence’s Palazzo Strozzi.

In more recent decades, Newark’s visual arts scene has only grown larger and more varied. The availability of inexpensive real estate, even right downtown, lead to a bumper crop of galleries, all of them offering a space for innovative, boundary-challenging paintings, sculpture and installations. Artists’ studios popped up in buildings abandoned by industry. By 2002, there was a great enough density of artists’ studios and galleries scattered across downtown to prompt the creation of the Open Doors Studio Tour. Now a four-day extravaganza, the recently rechristened Newark Arts Festival offers a slew of artist exhibitions, forums, studio tours, performances, mural excursions, screenings and children’s events across downtown, bringing visitors from across the region into the city to sample Newark’s incredible mix of visual arts offerings, from the exhibitions of long-established stalwarts like Gallery Aferro on Market Street, to the brand new arts incubator, Express Newark, in the recently refurbished Hahne & Co. building. Bus tours of the city’s finest murals — now one of the city’s signatures, thanks to the mural-painted railroad walls lining one of the city’s main arteries, McCarter Highway — are a regular feature.

Newark’s other remarkable artistic heritage is its decades-long position as a preeminent home of jazz music. Jazz historian Barbara Kukla attributed Newark’s musical prominence to a number of factors, among them: Southern musicians who moved North to find their fortune, but lacked funds for Manhattan digs and therefore put down roots in Newark; the boom in Newark’s factories in the early 1900s, which gave rise to a population of factory workers seeking weekend entertainment; and finally, Newark’s unique position as a beer town, the home of brewers including Ballantine, Pabst and Anheuser-Busch, which in turn fueled the establishment of a large number of competing night spots. By the 1930s, the city’s jazz scene was thriving; Duke Ellington was said to have admonished his band to play their best in this town, where the audience was bound to be a sophisticated group of music aficionados. Most of the city’s nightclubs and theaters from its mid-century musical boom are long gone — the Mosque, now known as Newark Symphony Hall, is one exception — but the city’s real legacy are the many prominent jazz musicians who grew up here, including James Moody, Willie “The Lion” Smith, Hank Mobley, Wayne Shorter and, of course, the Divine One, Sarah Vaughan. The Institute of Jazz Studies, the largest and most comprehensive library and archives of jazz and jazz-related materials in the world, keeps the memory of Newark’s jazz-soaked past alive on the Rutgers-Newark campus.

The city’s reputation as a musical hub was also buttressed by the formation, in 1922, of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, which was based in Newark almost from its inception. The NJSO rose in prominence over the years, hitting an early high with the appointment of Henry Lewis as musical director in 1968. Lewis was the first African-American musical director of a major symphony orchestra, and he led the orchestra to new heights — often with his wife, Marilyn Horne, on board as soloist.
Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships —— So much more than a stage:
How New Jersey Performing Arts Center embraced its role as Newark’s anchor cultural institution

The NJSO has had a youth orchestra, and various arts education programs for Newark’s children, since the 1950s. And its devoted fans’ hope of building the NJSO a performance hall worthy of its caliber was one of many reasons city residents, and Newark natives who had moved elsewhere, were so passionate about bringing the New Jersey Performing Arts Center to this city when Kean proposed it in the 1980s.

The opening of both NJPAC and the Prudential Center (and its East Coast branch of the Grammy Museum, which chronicles the entire state’s contributions to popular music) both have added to Newark’s stature as an arts and entertainment hub.

It’s certainly not his only qualification for the job, but it’s not surprising that Newark’s current mayor, Ras Baraka, is both a poet himself, and the son of famed poet and music critic Amiri Baraka.

The vibrancy of Newark’s community of artists and arts lovers became real to me when I chaired Newark 350, a year-long “jubilee” of hundreds of events, pulled together to celebrate the anniversary of the city’s founding in 1666. I served as Programming Chair of the Newark 350 Committee, and the city’s response to the occasion was little short of overwhelming.

The Committee received more than 250 applications from artists and nonprofit organizations and presenters to produce programming in honor of the anniversary. We granted $700,000 to more than 125 organizations; grant amounts ranged from $2,500 to $25,000. The events produced throughout the celebrations nodded to the city’s history, its art, its music and the communities of its five wards, each more vibrant than the last.

How do I fit in?

Working at NJPAC, with its twinned mission of supporting the arts and nurturing a community, is in many ways the perfect fit for my own unique career trajectory, which has always focused on both arts and advocacy. I got my start working for legendary jazz impresario George Wein. Under his tutelage, I produced jazz festivals in communities all over America. Each of these events were hyper-specific to the communities they were in: I produced concerts in parks and community centers, and those performances were as important to the success of each festival as the headliners — Ella Fitzgerald, Miles Davis and Herbie Hancock — who would headline the big show in the local symphony hall.

After that, I took a left turn into Hollywood, becoming the head of the social action and advocacy division of Participant Media, a movie production company that was conceived with the idea that important issues could be at the heart of great filmmaking. The company created movies like An Inconvenient Truth, Waiting for Superman, Lincoln, and The Help; for each film, we created action-driven campaigns, engaging viewers in the activism that was part of each film. All of that was a perfect prelude to taking a job at an arts center with mission in its DNA.

One of the great joys of the work I do is that I’m an arts administrator who gets to be engaged in the larger life of the city. I sit on the Board of the Newark Trust for Education, where I’m able to advocate for arts-based learning,
Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships —— So much more than a stage: How New Jersey Performing Arts Center embraced its role as Newark’s anchor cultural institution and on the Board of the Newark Alliance, where I’m able to advocate for the arts as an economic development engine.

As NJPAC’s CEO, I’m part of the Newark Anchor Collaborative (NAC) as well. This powerful group includes the heads of RWJBarnabas Health, Prudential Financial, Rutgers-Newark, NJIT, Audible — the city’s most prominent employers, and the institutions that are part of the city for the long term. The goal of the NAC: to maximize the impact of anchor institutions in Newark. We’ve researched and adopted “buy-hire-live” strategies to infuse the local economy with capital, and make sure the city’s economic revival benefits all of its citizens. And we’ve leveraged our organizations’ philanthropic and organizational power to improve the lives of current and future residents of Newark in ways big and small.

How is NJPAC an anchor?

Here are some of the events and programs that NJPAC has offered as part of its work to serve as an anchor institution in Newark:

• We hosted the first gubernatorial debate for the November 2017 election. Not only did it focus attention on our home city, but it reinforced the role NJPAC can play in civic engagement.

• We invited 1,300 public high school students to see _Hidden Figures_ followed by a panel of contemporary female African-American NASA engineers, airline pilots, and students. We invited in another 1,400 students to watch _Marshall_ — and then speak with the late Supreme Court justice’s son, John, about his father’s role in the fight for civil rights. Both showings were part of NJPAC’s _PSEG True Diversity Film Series_, which screens films that address issues of importance to the African-American community, each followed by panel discussions featuring experts on the topic. Now a monthly event, the series features films shown on NJPAC’s campus and the Hahne & Co. building.

• NJPAC was an active member of the team that worked to bring Amazon to Newark. One of the huge reasons we billed Newark as a great place for Amazon to build its next headquarters was because of the vibrant 24-hour arts scene that fills this city’s streets, galleries, stages, and indeed, covers the very walls with murals. The National Center for Arts Research that year ranked Newark one of the 10 most vibrant arts communities in the country, citing its performance spaces, support for the arts by local government and businesses, and many arts education opportunities.

• We partnered with theaters around the state to commission New Jersey playwrights to write new pieces — each set in New Jersey — through a program called _NJPAC Stage Exchange_. After initial readings at NJPAC, the plays will be given full productions at partner theaters, underwritten by NJPAC.

• And we have become a collaborative leader in the redevelopment of Newark as a residential community for citizens and new residents. A longtime dream of the Arts Center’s first advocate, Governor Kean, was realized last year when we began to build on the 10 acres of land that surround our theaters, opening our new building, One Theater Square. It’s the first high-rise luxury apartment building to be built from
Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships —— So much more than a stage:

How New Jersey Performing Arts Center embraced its role as Newark’s anchor cultural institution

the ground up in Newark in 60 years. When those 200-plus apartments are filled with tenants (it nearly is, and I was among the first to move in), it will give our neighborhood a population of 24/7 residents to complement the many Newark office workers who fill this area of the city by day, but go home to the suburbs by night. The building will soon open restaurants and multiple retail spaces, too. We’re not building just to fill space: We have spent years masterplanning the best use of this land, and consulting with residents, business leaders and others to determine how to create a vibrant, arts-focused, 24-7 neighborhood in this corner of Newark’s downtown that has long been a place where suburbanites worked and caught a show before heading out of town.

Being an anchor also means maintaining long-standing partnerships with Newark’s other anchors, including hospitals, universities and corporations. Rutgers University-Newark has been a partner on any number of programs.

One of the partnerships we’re most proud of is the one we have with Prudential Financial, a long-time Newark anchor itself, which has had headquarters here for more than 140 years. Art Ryan, Prudential’s one-time CEO, was one of the architects of the plan to build NJPAC in the 1980s and 1990s; he was chairman of NJPAC’s Board for many years, and remains a supporter in his retirement.

Prudential, meanwhile, has become ever more involved in the revitalization of the city, and NJPAC’s relationship with the company and many of its key employees has only grown over time. John Strangfeld, the just-retired chairman, chief executive officer, and president of Prudential Financial, has been the Chairman of our Board for years, and a mentor to me. His colleague Ommeed Sathe, Vice President, Impact Investments, has been instrumental in helping us develop our masterplan for our campus, and Lata Reddy, Chair & President of The Prudential Foundation, as well as the company’s Senior Vice President, Diversity, Inclusion & Impact, has been an advisor and advocate as we constantly workshopped ways to pursue our mission while remaining financially viable. The company, for which our main stage, Prudential Hall, is named, continues to support the Arts Center with significant philanthropy as well.

NJPAC has embraced the fact that the performing arts can bring a community together and provide an entry point into the discussion of topics — like race, like social injustice — that can be divisive. An Arts Center is the perfect place to host difficult discussions. We also celebrate the ways that arts education can enhance the lives of students in the near-term, and in the long term provide them with skills that are critical to 21st century careers, from creative problem-solving to collaborative work styles. Creating programming that encompasses these central mission points — providing an education in the arts, robust community involvement, and empowering our young people to advance their futures and enhance their communities — is an ongoing goal for the Arts Center.

For NJPAC, essentially, nothing is off the table. If we can add value to a conversation, an initiative, program or project that enhances the lives of patrons and community members, we’re game. Sometimes this means we are actively engaged as a collaborative producer; sometimes it means we have a singular conversation that acts as a catalyst for something that takes place off our campus.
There is nothing circumscribed about our definition of an anchor other than our ability to add value to the city, and to say “yes” to something new and useful whenever possible.

What comes next?

What we’ve grown into, in short, is what we were always meant to be, even if the men and women who built this place didn’t use the words “anchor cultural institution.” And better yet, thinking about the Arts Center as an anchor has led us to find new ways to expand what we do, and how and where we do it. What we’ve realized is that, as an anchor institution, there are many different ways that the Arts Center can contribute to our city’s vitality.

For example, we can make this neighborhood vibrant by building a space for new residents to live here. (And, significantly, we can do so without displacing anyone; One Theatre Square stands on what was once an underused parking lot.) NJPAC’s first foray into real estate development has gone well enough so far that we’re pushing ahead with further plans: We have a new member of our leadership team devoted to overseeing our real estate development goals, and we hope that in the next five years we’ll be able to add many new amenities to our campus, including more low-rise residential projects, a hotel and conference center, a film center and possibly a film production facility. Our new community center and arts training facility is already funded and will be built within the next five years.

Other anchor cultural institutions

There are many other arts and cultural organizations across the country that are adopting the initiatives and language of anchor institutions. The Arts Center was fortunate enough, in 2016-17, to be part of a study of cultural anchors, led by Karen Brooks Hopkins, President Emerita of Brooklyn Academy of Music, while she was a Senior Fellow at the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

The study sought to answer the question “How can anchor cultural institutions in low income communities, and communities in transition, make the maximum social, economic, and artistic impact?” The goal was to get cultural organizations more involved in the anchor conversation alongside traditional anchors, “eds and meds” — universities and hospitals — as well as to encourage arts organizations to embrace the anchor mission, thereby committing to serving their communities to the fullest.

In addition to NJPAC, the study looked at AS220 in Providence, Rhode Island and MASS MoCA, in North Adams, Massachusetts.

---

Multi-Anchor Institution Economic Development Partnerships —— So much more than a stage:

How New Jersey Performing Arts Center embraced its role as Newark’s anchor cultural institution

AS220 is a non-profit community arts organization in Downtown Providence with multiple galleries, performance spaces, a print shop, an electronics lab, a darkroom, a dance studio, 47 live-work spaces, a bar and a restaurant. The organization is grassroots, hyperlocal, and they describe themselves as “unjuried and uncensored” — meaning anyone can exhibit or perform work in their spaces. Since its founding in 1985, AS220 has become a genuine anchor in the city. They hold a total of 100,000 sq ft. in downtown Providence, over three historic buildings that represent a $25 million investment. They’ve achieved all of this with an operating budget just over $3 million and an equal pay policy across all non-profit staff of $19/hour.

By contrast, MASS MoCA is one of the largest contemporary art museums in the world, occupying over 600,000 sq ft. of gallery space in the former Sprague Electric Factory in rural North Adams, at the northwestern corner of the state. When the factory closed in 1984, a majority of the city’s residents were out of a job. Then, MASS MoCA’s founders, a group of staff members from the nearby Williams College of Art, came up with the bold idea to turn the factory into an art museum.

By highlighting these three organizations, the study proved that arts and cultural institutions of varying sizes, locations, and job descriptions can adopt the anchor mission and thrive. Although these three organizations have vastly different resources at their disposal, they were all able to make a significant difference in their communities, and all found the idea of functioning as one of their city’s anchors a useful guide in planning events, programming and outreach.

The charge

So in the end, this is what I want to ask you to consider: I encourage you today, if you are located in a city, small or large, that has a really vibrant arts institution — whether it is a performing arts center, a museum, a theater company, a gallery, a public radio station, or even a sports franchise in an arena that is community minded — to reach out and start a dialogue with them. The opportunity for partnership is always there, and the outcomes are always good for the community. All you have to do is be a willing co-conspirator, an authentic and equal partner, and have the ability and the desire to say yes.

We in the arts are absolutely available and delighted to show you a good time on a Friday night in one of our performance spaces, but I encourage you to look a little deeper. We have so much more to offer.

Bibliography:

