RECIPROCAL EXCHANGE: UNDERSTANDING THE

COMMUNITY PARTNER PERSPECTIVE IN HIGHER

EDUCATION SERVICE-LEARNING

A DISSERTATION IN
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by
ALEXIS NICOLLE PETRI

B.A., University of Missouri-Kansas City, 1992
M.A., University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2003

Kansas City, Missouri
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Alexis Nicolle Petri, Candidate for the Doctor of Education Degree

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates service-learning from the community partners' perspective, especially in terms of reciprocity. As a central construct in the theory of service-learning, reciprocity for community partners is virtually unknown. Little scholarship exists that explains or explores the benefits and opportunity costs of service-learning. One purpose of this study is to help higher education become better informed about how communities contribute to the education of students involved in service-learning and how colleges and universities can take steps to ensure reciprocity. This qualitative study uses constructivist grounded theory to gain insight into the experiences of community partners with service-learning at the collegiate level. The study sought to answer the following research questions: What are the community partners' experiences with higher education service-

learning? Reciprocity is a definitional characteristic of service-learning. Do community organizations experience reciprocity when they partner with institutions of higher education for service-learning? How does higher education service-learning contribute to the community organizations where students do their service-learning? From the community partner perspective, what do their organizations contribute to student service-learners? All twenty-four participants in the study are community partners for service-learning associated with Rockhurst University. Individual interviews, Donor Edge organization profiles, and the Rockhurst University self-study for the Carnegie Elective Classification in Community Engagement were utilized for data collection and analysis.

Keywords: service-learning, higher education, campus-community partnerships, reciprocity, mutual gain, community-based organizations, and nonprofit organizations.

APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Division Chair of Education, Leadership,

Policy, and Foundations, at the School of Education, have examined a dissertation titled

"Reciprocal Exchange: Understanding the Community Partner Perspective in Higher

Education Service-Learning," presented by Alexis Petri, candidate for the Doctor in

Education degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

Supervisory Committee

Bonita Butner, Ph.D., Committee Chair
Education, Leadership, Policy, and Foundations

Daniel Mahala, Ph.D.
Department of English Language and Literature

S. Marie McCarther, Ph.D.
Education, Leadership, Policy, and Foundations

Ronald Slepitza, Ph.D.
President, Avila University

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to the many people who inspired or supported me in researching and writing this dissertation. I am acknowledging people in two general categories: formal and informal. Each category will have their own paragraph, and while it is the nature of linear text to have one come before the other, they are much more interwoven in my life and my thoughts.

First, the community partner organizations and their staff who participated in the research, and whose names I cannot mention due to confidentiality, shared their insights, experience, wisdom, knowledge, and time with me. I appreciate their generosity of spirit and their commitment to and passion for the important work they do every day to continually improve quality of life in Kansas City for everyone who calls the region home, even temporarily, especially those who are marginalized and/or vulnerable. Community partners, you know who you are, and thank you! Second, I appreciate the willingness of Rockhurst University to welcome my study and to help connect me with their service-learning community partners. Thank you Julia Vargas and Alicia Douglas. I also greatly appreciated Dr. Renee Michael for serving as external auditor for the study and reviewing my data and coding. Third, I would like to thank my English 110: Introduction to Academic Prose students. Through their hard work and experiences as service-learners while I was researching and writing the dissertation, I believe I was inspired and challenged to continue to push to better understand and articulate the community partner

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

America values and has a history of democratic civic engagement at the local or

grassroots level. The federal government, state and local governments, education, and

nonprofit organizations all recognize the importance of volunteerism and community

engagement to sustain a democracy. The public purpose of higher education in the United

States charges colleges and universities with broad outcomes for their students, including

ethics, respect for self and others, and the citizenship skills necessary for a diverse

democracy (Rudolph, 1962; Newman, 1985). Criticism of higher education has prompted

colleges and universities to be more socially responsive (Boyer, 1988; Bruckhardt,

Holland, Percy, & Zimpher, 2004; Rhoades, 1997). One approach common to colleges and

universities to better connect campus and community in meaningful, mutually beneficial

ways is service-learning.[1] The commonness of this approach can be seen in the national-

level data on college student community engagement. From numbers alone, service-

learning makes a significant national contribution. According to the Campus Compact

annual survey (2009), the value of service given to communities by their member

institutions totaled $5.7 billion in 2008 (based on value of a volunteer hour set by the

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[1] The hyphen in service-learning is intentional and is not a typo or misconstruction of grammar rules. It

signifies an equal focus on service and learning so that one does not modify the other.

1

Independent Sector) and resulted in 282 million hours of service given by students at the 1190 member institutions.

Service-learning is a teaching methodology where through an assignment students complete a community-based project that meets real community needs and also relates back to the subject being studied. Service-learning is characterized by reciprocity between the community partners and the higher education institution through constructing projects that maintain academic rigor and provide the students with valuable real-world learning (Public Law, 1993). Through service-learning, students' increase their appreciation of the academic discipline studied and deepen their understanding of civic responsibility (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995). Researchers and faculty have focused extensively on student outcomes and campus advantages stemming from service-learning.

Statement of the Problem

The ideal of service-learning is that it rebuilds higher education and helps foster vital, healthy communities. Meaningful, high-quality service-learning that teaches students to be agents of social change is not accidental. It is valued by the institutions and the community partners–the value is evident through shared resources and strong campus-community partnerships. When embraced, service-learning becomes much more transformative for all parties: community-based organizations, faculty, and students. The emphasis shifts from students serving those less fortunate to students, faculty, and the

university valuing communities as places for learning that bring together diverse populations to collaboratively take action. Typically, service-learning is under-resourced and lacks visibility and credibility at the institution. Faculty, staff, and students sometimes assume all service is created equal. After all, community organizations have access to higher education's most precious resource, students, and plenty of extra hands on task so they can accomplish more. No one sets out to ask more of community partners than they receive in return. On the other hand, what are the experiences of community partners? How does the service-learning project change all participants, including the community partners? Scholarship abounds detailing the benefits of service-learning for institutions of higher education and students, but much less so for the benefits for community partners, and there is a dearth of scholarship exploring reciprocity as a construct. Some scholars and practitioners alike are wondering where the service is in service-learning (Cruz & Giles, 2000; Stoeker & Tryon, 2009).

Purpose of the Study

In the United States, education is closely tied to the idea of giving back. Many people volunteer because of what they perceive as value from their education, their faith, or their neighborhood. These motivations are intertwined with the democratic ethic of volunteerism and the rise of the nonprofit sector. There are many social, political, and educational values woven throughout service-learning. At its best, service-learning both

3

produces and reproduces an altruistic social ethic of a durable community connection that leads to democratic citizenship. Nonprofits and schools also produce a similar social ethic.

As colleges seek relevance for the education they offer, and as they try to reconnect with their mission, the community may be sharing resources with the colleges. Research has justified repeatedly that students benefit from these altruistic actions (Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001), but there is little research that examines the benefit to the community. To question the benefit of the service-learning for those outside the academy is to question the service-learning enterprise. In many ways the service-learning enterprise could be constructed as a modernist, Enlightenment project wherein the haves swoop in and help those who have not. The founders of the service-learning movement had something much more liberating in mind, an agenda that connects the purpose of higher education with the renewal of democracy and civic action (Butin, 2010). As the decades wear on the reviews are mixed. Two common critiques of service-learning are (1) students go to college to learn not to serve (Fish, 2008), and (2) higher education's dalliance into community issues costs communities more than it gives them (Stoeker, 2009).

The purpose of this constructivist grounded theory study is to examine how reciprocity works and the features of reciprocity that shape how communities feel about service-learning. Having a better understanding of community partners' perspectives of service-learning in higher education could help colleges and universities promote reciprocity in partnerships for service-learning. A three-tiered approach yielded a

comprehensive understanding of the mechanics of reciprocity. Tier one is a community

conversation forum designed to define what constitutes service-learning from the

community perspective and to ask participants to describe how service-learning works.

Tier two consists of follow-up interviews with nonprofit staff and Pk-12 staff and

educators. In this tier, I gathered the details specific to organizations and their experiences,

needs, and hopes for the future. I asked them to describe the direct and indirect benefits

they received by engaging in service-learning partnerships. In the third tier, documents

about the nonprofits are gathered. All of the data was coded and analyzed. A series of

findings resulted that illuminate, from the community partners' perspectives, what

colleges and universities can do to encourage reciprocity among partnerships for service-

learning.

Two Scenarios

Many service-learning outcomes hinge on the interaction between the students and

the community partner. The following two scenarios will illuminate the difference

reciprocity makes to service-learning. Scenario A begins with a group of sophomores at a

Midwestern university sent to cook and serve meals at a soup kitchen. The kitchen is a

busy place and the few staff members are a dedicated bunch, if overworked, who are

committed to obtaining food and sharing it in a way that allows for those in need of it to

retain as much human dignity as possible. The students arrive and do not know what to do:

they have never before prepared a meal for hundreds of people; they do not know how a commercial kitchen is run. A burden is placed on the few, busy staff to get the students trained, help them feel welcome, and ready them to serve. The students process the situation based only on shock value of interacting with individuals with whom they may not otherwise have interacted. Everyone muddles through and there is a variation of experience and outcomes with each person. In this scenario there is very little reciprocity and the community organization is in the position of using resources to help the students rather than serve their clients.

In Scenario B, the faculty member and service-learning director visit the community partner to ask about the needs of the organization. The community partner notes a need for regular Friday night kitchen/service help, and recommends that students dine at the soup kitchen to observe how it works. The faculty member presents his intentions to the class for the service-learning project and for how the service and learning are intertwined. In the process of discussing who will serve at which location, recognizing that this location will take a larger commitment than the other locations, one student who has commercial kitchen experience volunteers to be a group leader and help his fellow students at the site. The students' commitment to the project makes the community partner open up to the students and to teach them a lot about community organizing and food insecurity. The students begin to ask questions about the United States and hunger. The students decide to try to make a difference. They advocate with the university

administration that students with extra meal plan points at the end of each semester be able to donate them to a pool where the food service company would buy food in bulk and make a donation to the community partner twice a year. This becomes a tradition at the university and a durable partnership for the community organization. The faculty member gains visibility for the service-learning project and makes it an ongoing part of his course. The community partner can feed even more people a wholesome meal. In Scenario B there is a high level of reciprocity between the college student service-learning program and the community organization. I suggest that the reciprocity is an important part of the overall quality of the service-learning experience for the community partner, the faculty member, and the students.

Research Questions

This study addresses a mechanical puzzle about beliefs and views; motivations and social/cultural practices; and actors, actions and relationships in service-learning. The inquiry examined the following questions:

1. What are the community partners' experiences with higher education service-learning?

2. Reciprocity is a definitional characteristic of service-learning. Do community organizations experience reciprocity when they partner with institutions of higher education for service-learning?

3. How does higher education service-learning contribute to the community organizations where students do their service-learning?

4. From the community partner perspective, what do their organizations contribute to student service-learners?

Theoretical Framework

This study used qualitative research methodology. Based on readings of Mason, Creswell, and other scholars of qualitative research, there remains a need to justify qualitative research in the midst of a world tilted toward quantitative methods. Mason (2007) notes that qualitative research should be conducted systematically and rigorously. This study sought a balance between research that was strategically conducted while maintaining flexibility and contextuality—hallmarks of qualitative research. As the researcher, I did not shy away from what Mason calls "active reflexivity," which is a continual process of self-scrutiny pertaining to the researchers' role in the process thereby giving the self the same level of scrutiny as the data. Lastly, Mason notes that qualitative research strives to "produce explanations or arguments, rather than claiming to offer mere descriptions" (p. 7). From my reading on research methodologies, constructivist grounded theory, by design, has enough of the active reflexivity and leads to "explanations" rather than "mere descriptions."

Grounded Theory

The main intent of grounded theory is to develop a theory about a process or phenomenon–in this case it would be about the experience of community partners in service-learning and other forms of post-secondary institutions' community engagement. In 1967, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss initiated grounded theory in sociological research with the intent of better representing participants under study (Creswell, 2007). The main impetus for grounded theory is that theories that emerge from research should have as their foundation the data from the field. Glaser and Strauss came to criticize each other and moved apart with Glaser founding Glasserian grounded theory and Strauss and Juliet Corbin moving forward with grounded theory. Constructivist grounded theory, advocated by Charmaz, positions the research method out of positivism and into contemporary qualitative methodologies after the postmodern turn in qualitative research. Additionally, Clarke, and structural analysis, seeks to move grounded theory even further into postmodernism. These branches of the grounded theory family of influence emphasize subject participation in constructing a theory and interpreting data from the ground up as well as a pragmatic end outcome for the data.

Charmaz's constructivist grounded theory fits well with my purpose and topic. I like the idea of connecting with community partners to build a theory for service-learning community partnerships that will be available to both service-learning offices and

community-based organizations for best practices and developing policy. Constructivist grounded theory appeals to me because I think the community has not been included enough in service-learning research. When community organizations are consulted, the resulting information is published back into the higher education voice and theoretical constructs. Ultimately, beyond the process of my dissertation, I would like for the theory that emerges from this study to be given back to the communities that partner with education for student learning. I plan to do this by showing that community partner representatives were involved with the study, that their perspectives were documented with rigor and analyzed conscientiously (which the grounded theory discipline guides). This information will be made available to community-based organizations in texts that are evidence-based but also accessible and void of the terminology of research.

Another important aspect of grounded theory and the service-learning partnership research utilizing it is that connecting with the subjects to test the analysis is an important step in the process. The resultant research is available for the community partners/subjects and their evaluations of it are included in the research process. Additionally, because of the transparency of the coding process and the involvement with subjects, grounded theory research yields highly usable information for informing practice and policy. At this juncture in better understanding community partner experience, it is vital that the intended audience is able to interpret, evaluate, and use it for their purposes.

There is very little research that actually asks community organizations about their

experiences with service-learning. Three of the most influential pieces of research utilize

grounded theory as an approach for analyzing qualitative findings (Dorado & Giles, 2004;

Holland, 2001; Stoecker & Tryon, 2009). For using grounded theory, the main reason

given is that it provides a method of incorporating community perspective and applying a

rigorous, scholarly analysis of the data gathered from multi-staged qualitative research

designs. A majority of the research on service-learning partnerships has remained at a

more superficial level and focuses on how satisfied community partners are with their

service-learning relationships. As a research method, grounded theory allows scholars to

move beyond satisfaction surveys toward a deeper exchange between researcher and

subjects.

Two recent books addressing the state of service-learning prompted this research.

Butin's (2010) most recent book, <u>Service-Learning in Theory and Practice: The Future of</u>

<u>Community Engagement in Higher Education</u> provides a scholarly, critical examination of

the trajectory of service-learning from its beginning to current practices and

recommendations for the future. Butin raises the issue of the role of the community in

service-learning and asks important questions regarding the state of service-learning from

the academy's perspective. He discusses the work of Randy Stoeker and points out the

lack of attention paid to the community partner experience. Butin asserts the service-

learning/civic engagement movement has volunteered itself as the "standard bearer for a

revolutionary redefinition of the nature of scholarship and institutional transformation"

11

(Hollander, 2010, p. ix). In doing so the movement places most of its academic energy on making the case based on evidence of student outcomes to institutionalize service-learning/civic engagement because faculty roles and rewards are not changing and academic affairs budgets are tight. Accrediting bodies increasingly recognize service-learning/civic engagement and it has become an unfunded mandate for higher education. Meanwhile, funding bodies have shifted their focus to K-12 service-learning, most notably the Carnegie Foundation and Learn and Serve America. In this spiral, the community partners who make service-learning/civic engagement experiences possible are not included in the scholarship. In that regard, their voices are not been present in the forming of policies and structures to support community-based experiences for students.

Stoeker and Tryon (2009) undertook a lengthy research project where they worked with students to interview community partners and then code, analyze, and write up their findings using grounded theory. The result is a book, the only one I have found, that focuses on the community experience of the service-learning movement. Like Butin, Stoeker believes in service-learning and orients his scholarship to applied settings. His critical look at service-learning is in the spirit of strengthening the teaching methodology and bringing campus and community closer together in a spirit of reciprocity. Stoecker's work is the foundational scholarship of this research. While I cannot replicate his study because I do not have a class of students learning qualitative research methods, I can use it as a touchstone. Dorado and Giles (2004) have also used grounded theory methods to

better understand the experiences of community partners. Their research is based on a relatively small number of community partner interviews (p. 13). Qualitative research and grounded theory are time-consuming endeavors and so it is difficult to have a sizeable sample population. I reached out to a large enough number of community partners so that my findings are usable for service-learning practitioner-scholars.

<div align="center">**Limitations and Delimitations**</div>

All qualitative research methods have a common weakness, that qualitative researchers typically "position themselves in a study" (Mason, 2007), which is a formal process of recognizing the personal values that researchers bring to a study. One of the greatest limitations of this study was that the researcher both defines the reality of the community experience in service-learning and measures the reality defined. Following the guidelines for constructivist grounded theory reduced this limitation, but did not remove it. Because it is easier for individual bias to influence a qualitative project than a quantitative project, I was vigilant about when and to what extent my values impacted the project or were formative (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). In some ways my research is inductive and quite often shifts during the implementation in order to keep pace with growing understanding of the focus of the research (Mason, 2007).

Another limitation to my study is participant bias and threats to trustworthiness. I tried to identify times when I suspected that participants were saying what they thought I

wanted to hear, or may have felt obligated to paint a positive picture of situations that were not completely positive. To minimize this, I emphasized that their participation in the study was confidential and that they would not be connected by name or organization to findings. Further, in the typed transcripts I randomly assigned each organization a code name that corresponds to the military phonetic alphabet (i.e. Alpha, Bravo, Charlie). A final limitation to the study is that the knowledge produced will not generalize to other settings.

Service-learning, generally, is a broad topic that is often researched. The same can be said for its cousins of experiential learning – community-based learning, community engagement, and civic engagement. When it comes to investigating the learning in service-learning, educational researchers have made a plethora of discoveries. However, when it comes to understanding the experience of community partners, communities, and geographic areas and their role in service-learning, far less research has been completed. One important delimitation I place on my study is to focus on the communities and not on the students, faculty, and university. As is seen in the literature review, there is a gap in research on the community as a factor in service-learning, even though the setting of the service-learning is one of the main pillars of quality. Community organizations are often unaware what service-learning is and post-secondary institutions are often unprepared to help the busy organizational representative effectively prepare for service-learning. A second delimitation of the study is in focusing on service-learning and not the full range

14

of experiences students have in the community while they are students. At the same time, the study treats almost synonymously service-learning, community-based learning, community engagement, and civic engagement (when formalized as a requirement). As a form of experiential education, service-learning shares similarities with internships, field education, practica, and voluntary service. Andrew Furco (1996) places these forms of education on a continuum. At one end of the continuum are internships and practica (professional development), with their primary focus on the students' career development. At the other end are volunteer activities, in which the emphasis is on the civic involvement and the services provided to recipients. Furco locates service-learning in the middle of the continuum, and states that it is unique in its "intention to equally benefit the provider and the recipient of the service as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service being provided and the learning that is occurring" (Furco, 1996, p. 5).

The final delimitations to discuss are methodological and procedural. I selected a qualitative research method because I am interested in the breadth and depth community partners brought to the study. Going into fairly new territory, the instruments available for quantitative study do not focus on service-learning and will need to be significantly adapted. A qualitative study is a solid first step in addressing part of the gap in research focused on the community partner perspective in service-learning.

Creswell identified five standard approaches to qualitative research: narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. I selected

grounded theory because I want to develop a theory that is usable for community-based organizations to prepare for service-learning and for colleges and universities to understand the community partner perspective and incorporate community concerns into their service-learning models. For the most part, many colleges and universities may feel they are considering community partners in attempts at mutual gain; however, this knowledge is developed on a case-by-case basis. It would be much more productive to have research that could support policy regarding campus-community partnerships for learning. Narrative research, phenomenology, ethnography, and case study do not seem as equally well suited for arriving at a theory that, in further research and subsequent studies, could be tested by quantitative means.

Assumptions

Several assumptions are foundational to this study. The main assumption is that the study participants will answer the questions in a forthright manner rather than telling me what they think I, or Rockhurst University, wants to hear. The second assumption made in completing this study is that the questions I ask will generate the data necessary to address the research questions. The third assumption is that the study participants understand service-learning and distinguish between service-learning and general volunteers. Lastly, to enhance the validity of the study, I will triangulate the data through a community conversation, interviews, and analysis of pertinent documents.

16

Definition of Terms

Civic Engagement

Often civic engagement is used interchangeably with community engagement, however it is a bit different. Civic engagement refers to the ways post-secondary institutions, their administration, faculty, and students work to make a difference in the civic life of communities. According to the American Democracy Project this means not just gaining the knowledge and skills to make a difference but also to recognize one's role as part of a larger social fabric and therefore coming to see social problems as everyone's problems, not just the individual who is suffering. Civic engagement speaks to the sense of public spirit that has shaped the history and public mission of many colleges and universities. Similarly, the Coalition for Civic Engagement and Leadership defines it as "acting upon a heightened sense of responsibility to one's communities. This includes a wide range of activities, including developing civic sensitivity, participation in building civil society, and benefiting the common good" (as cited in Jacoby, 2009).

Community

For purposes of this study, community is both a location, external to the community college/college/university campus, and the relationships among people and organizations.

17

Community Engagement

Community engagement describes when universities become involved in the communities that surround their campuses or are located in the same region. Community engagement is a broader classification than service-learning and includes also co-curricular service and outreach programs of the institution.

Community Partners

The organizations that partner with colleges, and universities for purposes of service-learning. These include nonprofit organizations, medical clinics, hospitals, schools, local government, churches, and neighborhood groups/grass roots groups.

Reciprocity

For this research, reciprocity is defined as two or more parties that come together to take collective action toward a common purpose and in the process the parties are transformed by this collective action in a way that allows for increased understanding of a full variety of life experiences, and over time works to alter rigid social systems (Henry & Breyfogle, 2006).

Service-Learning

There are many definitions of service-learning which adapt this teaching

methodology to a variety of educational contexts. From its earliest definition, the concept

of reciprocity was attached to service-learning when its theoretical founder noted that

service-learning is "premised on reciprocal learning" (Sigmon, 1979). One of the most

influential definitions is that of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993:

> Service-learning means a method under which students learn and develop
>
> through thoughtfully organized service that: is conducted in and meets the
>
> needs of a community and is coordinated with an institution of higher
>
> education, and with the community; helps foster civic responsibility; is
>
> integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students
>
> enrolled; and includes structured time for students to reflect on the service
>
> experience.

Signed by President Clinton, the National and Community Service Trust Act established a

vision for the importance of service-learning as a pedagogy.

Volunteerism

According to Campus Compact, the leading definition of volunteerism comes from

Toole and Toole (1992), which is "People who perform some service or good work of

their own free will and without pay" (Toole & Toole, as cited in Campus Compact, 2003, p7). In a higher education setting, this is when students give of their time and talents for the benefit of others. In a community setting, this is when individuals share their time and talents for the benefit of the organization and their clients.

Significance

This research on the effect of service-learning on community partners will be useful for both student affairs and academic affairs in higher education. As community colleges, colleges, and universities build and sustain relationships with community-based organizations for student learning, understanding the perceptions of community partners will enable the building of more durable, productive partnerships. It should also be informative for setting policies regarding campus-community partnerships. Often the policies surrounding service-learning are based solely on risk management and liability. While this is important, strong community partnerships limit risk and liability and are a good investment when students are going off-campus for community-based experiences.

Additionally, this research will be helpful in seeking funding for service-learning. Many funding organizations, such as the Kellogg Foundation and the Corporation for National and Community Service, are interested in how service-learning affects communities. They want to know the positive outcomes for higher education and also want to see assurance of reciprocity (civic engagement, n.d.). This research project will

also have significance for community partners, many of whom do not know how to utilize service-learning. Small- and medium-sized organizations do not have resources to spare and so understanding best practices and lessons learned from their peers will be helpful. Hopefully this research will serve as a basis of workshops that institutions can host for their community partners about service-learning. Beyond workshops, institutions of higher education may consider the community partner perspective when assessing their missions, which often include community engagement (Holsinger, 2012).

The researchers and scholars of higher education, in addition to service-learners, can learn from communities and can also be part of social transformation. The ideal of service-learning is that higher education joins communities for learning, innovation, and applying the resources of the academy to community-identified needs.

Summary of Findings

The most pertinent findings of this study can be seen in light of the following areas: how higher education can be better community partners; ways nonprofits and schools make partnering with higher education both beneficial and efficient; and the difference reciprocity makes in the partnerships. The ways higher education can improve their partnerships with community organizations is mainly through improving their communication with and feedback to their community partners related to the service-learning. This communication gap does not fit well with the culture of nonprofit

21

organizations or PK-12 schools. Often, higher education insists that nonprofits accept the fundamentals of their culture, such as the academic calendar and students prioritizing their coursework and athletics over their service-learning (nonprofits do not inherently see service-learning as part of the students' coursework). Larger nonprofits have adapted to this gulf in organizational culture, while smaller nonprofits struggle with it more. Being innovative and valuing reciprocity has the potential to surpass these challenges. The study, in chapters four and five, delves into these findings in much more detail.

Chapter Summary

In this introductory chapter, I have set up the basics for the study. The problem is the lack of scholarship that focuses on community partner experiences of service-learning. The purpose is to add to a growing body of scholarship that brings visibility to the important role community partners play in service-learning. I hope through increased visibility, this scholarship helps higher education service-learning programs audit their community partnership practices and develop policies that are formed with reciprocity in mind. Chapter Two contains a literature review that examines the service-learning movement in more detail, especially as it pertains to community partner experiences.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This second chapter presents a literature review on reciprocity and service-learning community partnerships between institutions of higher education and community-based organizations. While the research questions focus tightly on community partners and reciprocity, the literature review will take a more comprehensive approach to service-learning. The literature review is organized into several large sections. The first section provides a broad discussion of service-learning generally and includes an overview of the seminal scholarship that supports the movement. The second section delves into the literature on reciprocity and mines it for relevant information applicable to service-learning (this relates to research question number two). The third section examines the research pertaining to student outcomes. This area of service-learning research is saturated; the literature review relates to the most highly influential studies. Because the focus of the study is the community experience of service-learning, and not the variety of ways students experience the community setting while in college, the literature review focuses fairly specifically on the community experience of service-learning and does not attempt to summarize all of the student learning outcomes. The fourth section looks at the connection between faculty experiences of service-learning and their perspectives on

23

reciprocity. The fifth part of the literature review – and the bulk of it – focuses on community partnerships, a less-studied side of service-learning. Due to the lack of literature focusing directly on the community experience of service-learning, the literature review will examine research on campus-community partnerships more broadly.

Understanding Service-Learning

America has a value for and history of democratic civic engagement at a local or grassroots level. As far back as the mid-1800's Alexis De Tocqueville wrote that the "strength of free nations resides in the local community… Without local institutions, a nation may establish a free government, but cannot have the spirit of liberty" (De Tocqueville, 1835, pp. 55-56). The federal government, state and local governments, and community-based organizations all recognize the importance of volunteerism and engagement to sustain our democracy. The public purpose of higher education in the United States charges institutions of higher education with broad outcomes for their students including ethics, respect for self and others, and the citizenship skills necessary for a diverse democracy (Rudolph, 1962; Newman, 1985). Colleges and universities are often called upon to encourage their students' explorations of social justice through curricular programs such as service-learning and co-curricular instruction groups.

Criticism of higher education has prompted service to be more socially responsive (Boyer, 1988; Bruckhardt, et al., 2004; Rhoades, 1997). To understand service-learning generally, it is important to examine how it works from a classroom perspective.

The ideal service-learning project involves faculty, students, and community working together. Faculty establishes specific learning objectives for the students, identify what the students learn that is related to content, that is related to the community experience, and that is related to the students' explorations of their roles as individuals in an information-based society. The best practice is to develop the service-learning project in with the community partners, and at a minimum to inquire what needs the community has that the college students may help to address. High-quality service-learning depends on two things: faculty interest in teaching and learning through this interactive, community-connected style and community partners involved as collaborators and co-teachers (Sandy & Holland, 2006). Weak service-learning programs are deficient in all the above points: community organizations are not consulted and students are left to figure out for themselves how their community experience connects to the course content (Sandy & Holland, 2006). All of these things take time for planning, building relationships, and sustaining relationships. Not all colleges and universities invest this level of time in service-learning. There are only estimates as to the scope of service-learning in post-secondary education and the current estimation is that more than one-half of U.S. institutions of higher education offer service-learning courses (Petri, 2006). Even with

half of higher education institutions hosting service-learning courses, that still is not evidence enough that the service-learning movement is established in higher education. With half of higher education estimated to host service-learning courses, the lack of scholarship focused solely on community partner experiences becomes even more glaring.

Role in Higher Education Reform Movements

In the 1990s a call began for reform in higher education. Ernest Boyer galvanized the reform movement with a philosophical exploration of a vision for higher education published in Scholarship Reconsidered, New Models for the Role of Scholarship, Teaching and Learning (1990) and in the Chronicle of Higher Education, "Creating the New American College" (1994). The reform called for universities to become better connected to public life and to the application of the knowledge they produce. Boyer (1994) described the "New American College" as:

> an institution that celebrates teaching and selectively supports research, while also taking special pride in its capacity to connect thought to action, theory to practice. This New American College would organize cross-disciplinary institutes around pressing social issues. Undergraduates at the college would participate in field projects, relating ideas to real life. Classrooms and laboratories would be extended to include health clinics, youth centers, schools, and government offices. Faculty members would

26

build partnerships with practitioners who would, in turn, come to campus as lecturers and student advisors.

While this call to reform was heard and spread across colleges and universities, service-learning was already establishing itself in the practices of the "New American College."

Boyer's work is one of the major forces arguing for the academy to descend the ivory tower. While Boyer's work is 15-20 years old, it is seminal to the growth of service-learning as a teaching methodology, and to positioning scholarship as something that can take place in the community and/or in partnership with community. Additionally, faculty may also base their scholarship on service-learning and this has led to the availability of academic assessment and research on the outcomes of service-learning.

The Boyer model has many points of comparison with another of the United States' unique contributions to higher education, the land-grant system of colleges. Established by The Morrill Act of 1862, and then refined over the next fifty or so years, the land-grant university addressed social concerns arising from the industrial revolution in the United States. In particular, the industrial revolution created a need for professionals trained in the science-based fields, such as forestry, agriculture, engineering, and nursing, who were prepared to meet the knowledge requirements of an industrial society. The land-grant system sought to apply knowledge to the contemporary needs of society. University-Community Collaborations for the Twenty-First Century: Outreach Scholarship for Youth and Families, edited by Richard Lerner and Lou Anna Simon (1998), argues for a

movement towards an "outreach university" which takes the logical and necessary step

from the land-grant idea and the Boyer model toward colleges and universities becoming

society-serving. Lerner and Simon describe the call to reform as universities using

knowledge to improve the life chances of individuals and families residing in surrounding

communities. The challenges set forth for universities to become society-serving reinforce

Boyer's concept of the New American College. These challenges also drive toward the

capacity of universities to educate change agents through approaches to teaching and

learning like service-learning. Whether this is the best role for service-learning is debated.

Some scholars are moving toward service-learning 2.0 which would be called civic

engagement. This trend is due to scholars questioning the veracity of service-learning's

ability to inspire social change (Welch, 2009). Because service-learning is limited by

concerns that faculty who teach it are being activists in their courses and promoting a

liberal agenda, civic engagement is more often organized as co-curricular initiatives.

These have greater latitude to produce social changes (Welch, 2009).

The way service-learning is defined and the appealing nature of the concept of

educating generations of people who have the skills to use their knowledge and talent to

restore community can make us forget that service-learning is not monolithic. In fact, it is

a revolutionary pedagogy in that it changes the nature of teaching and learning. Two

important works address the revolutionary side of service-learning. Bruce Speck and

Sherry Hoppe's volume of challenging articles, Service-Learning: History, Theory and

Issues (2004), examines the history of service-learning, critiques the various theoretical models emerging from the history, and relates those to a growing sense of the ethics of service-learning. Service-Learning in Higher Education: Critical Issues and Directions (2005), edited by Dan Butin, takes a postmodern pedagogical look at service-learning. Butin takes a cue from Francois Lyotard's postmodern theory and dismantles the "grand narrative" of service-learning. Butin does not argue that service-learning is not achieving the goals set out for it as a teaching methodology. Instead, it is imperative to examine the service-learning narrative. Specifically, what assumptions about identity and power are at play? Who defined the power dynamic? Are there unintended consequences? (Butin, 2005). These are extremely important questions to ask when considering service-learning due to a strong historical inclination to reduce the experience to the haves doing for the have-nots. Many service-learning scholars and practitioners are adamant that high-quality service-learning is mutually beneficial for all parties and that there is a real reciprocity between college/university and community-based partners and their clients. Butin's book presents new scholarship that examines the transformative power of service-learning that considers voices of all, social justice, class, ethnicity and geography. Scholarship presented in each of the chapters demonstrates the benefits of service-learning that insists on democracy and reciprocity.

One of the chapter's in Butin's book, "Service-Learning as Crucible: Reflections on Immersion, Context, Power and Transformation," by Lori Pompa, reflects on her own

29

experiences teaching a class that is held in a prison composed of college students from outside the prison (known as outside students) and students who are in prison (known as inside students). Pompa reflects on the experience, pulls together insights from student experiences and explores how this service-learning project has made a difference in everyone's lives. Mostly she comes to an important conclusion – that higher education needs the community and its "tangible and intangible gifts that challenge, deepen, and enhance the world of higher education" (Pompa, 2002, p. 176). When there is not mutual gain, there is not transformational learning. When there is not transformational learning, the service is more like charity and lacks the shared experience that comes from mutuality.

Service-learning is not an uncontested approach to teaching and learning. For example, Stanley Fish (2008), in Save the World on Your Own Time, targets a direct response to two books that in his view politicized the college classroom: Educating Citizens: Preparing America's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003), and Educating for Democracy: Preparing Undergraduates for Responsible Political Engagement (Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, & Corngold, 2007). For Fish, the academy runs into problems when it admits into the classrooms the partnering with the community for public good outcomes. Faculty, according to Fish, can legitimately do two things: "introduce students to bodies of knowledge and traditions of inquiry that had not previously been part of their experience; and (2) equip those same students with the analytical skills… that will enable them to

30

move confidently within those traditions and to engage in independent research when the course is over" (2008, p. 13). When faculty moves from teaching the truth to pedagogies such as service-learning, they begin teaching the controversies. This obliges the academy to justify the truth it sees and teaches and to be all things to all people. Fish asserts that faculty needs to stick to being good teachers and researchers, and in those ways, to positively influence students and to make rigorous disciplinary contributions. Any time teaching or research leaves the realm of pure pursuits for truth or knowledge it becomes politicized, subjecting the academy to political critique. One example of political critique argues that service-learning is not an academically rigorous practice and that its main intent is to undermine the capitalist enterprise by indoctrinating students and in the end sacrificing reason for emotion (Egger, 2008). This narrow view of service-learning does not permit student learning from community experiences that require deductive reasoning, inductive reasoning, or reasonable action. Many practitioners and scholars find service-learning to require and teach important self-reflection skills as well as raising questions about social justice issues that are far from imprudent or warm-feeling and are neither democrat or republican causes.

Butin argues that the service-learning movement can actually become stronger by paying attention to the arguments of those who oppose its place in the academy. Butin insightfully points out that contrary to Fish's claims, service-learning exemplifies the academic pillar of the search for truth because it is a "destabilizing pedagogy that

implodes our grand narratives" and in doing so it promotes a perpetual search for truth among students (Butin, 2010, p. 68). Truth is not solely or necessarily found in the classroom or during a lecture. This may be why, aside from student learning outcomes, many colleges and universities invest in supporting service-learning as a route to reconnecting with their civic mission (Holland, 1999, 2000, 2001).

Higher education sees great potential in service-learning, and its pedagogical relatives of community engagement, civic engagement, practicum/unpaid internships. One of the challenges is that teaching methodologies are bound to a semester as far as the student work goes, and then those semesters add up to an overall contribution that faculty members make through teaching courses with service-learning components. Yet, meaningful service-learning requires that students take part in addressing real problems, identified by the communities as such. Those real problems are typically the work of entire systems of networked organizations that are "fluid and chaotic" (Crosby & Bryson, 2005, p. 5). It becomes increasingly important that service-learning programs, faculty members, and colleges and universities, find a way to understand the ongoing, systemic work of community-based organizations as an important part of the context for the project. Ultimately, it is this real world context that adds much of the potential to service-learning, chaotic though it may be, because we share a common fate (Gilbert, Johnson & Plaut, 2009). Some colleges and universities address this through a system of "community connectors" (McKnight, 2003, p. 13). These important individuals are faculty site-liaisons

who work with a particular community partner they know well and they steward the institution's relationship with the community partner in a way that is asset-based and promotes academically rigorous service-learning (Gilbert, Johnson, & Plaut, 2009; McKnight, 2003, p. 13). This has potential of furthering the intellectual merit and promise of service-learning.

Community engagement, and service-learning as a distinctive part of community engagement, has run its course as a social movement. It is now time for service-learning to become much more focused and disciplined as an intellectual movement. Part of the frustrating outcomes experienced by leaders of service-learning over the past decade are shallow institutionalization, exhaustion from being all things to all people, lack of a clear sense of organizational purpose, leaders who are subject to burnout from the implications of all the challenges brought on by social movements (Butin, 2010).

Institutionalization/Institutional Outcomes

Not all universities have made a commitment to weaving service-learning into curricula in an intentional manner. Even at lead programs where major program outcomes, large funding and student buy-in are the norm, colleges and universities still have not found ways to assure reciprocity in civic engagement work. Ostrander (2004) reports on the results of five in-depth case studies of civic engagement at five very different colleges and universities. Based on interviews with all constituents–administration, faculty,

33

students, community-based partner organization representatives and clients—Ostrander identified four key findings. The finding that most resonates with the focus of this study is that higher education must innovate in the area of campus-community partnerships to develop procedures that share power and resources (Ostrander, 2004). This sharing of power and network capital leads to the best results from an investment in service-learning. It could be argued that Ostrander studied low-quality programs, but she did not. Ostrander, who is faculty at Tufts (which has one of the leading schools dedicated to civic engagement and democracy) worked with colleagues to identify the lead institutions in the field. Amidst major program outcomes, large funding and student buy-in, one of the key findings is that the university needs to find ways to assure reciprocity in civic engagement work. True reciprocity takes time, attention and innovation. Most importantly, it takes faculty and administrators who understand that connecting service-learning within a context of institutional value for community engagement leads to stronger student learning outcomes for social change. Aside from student learning outcomes, many colleges and universities invest in supporting service-learning as a route to reconnecting with their civic mission.

An important reason for connecting campus and community through student learning and curriculum is to develop degree programs that are highly useful for and respected by the regions where institutions are situated. This becomes important for degree programs that educate professionals who will, eventually, become leaders in the

34

communities and areas of practice (for example, education, nursing, medicine, dentistry, and law). Techniques like service-learning then become points of entry to the communities where graduates will work. A best practice for higher education is when common-ground training of students occurs that brings together multiple dimensions of academic degrees to better understand persistent challenges in communities and better prepare future leaders to not only inherit the challenges but develop innovative, sustainable solutions, or at least helpful ones (Willis, Marcdante, & Schum, 2000). Service-learning has been found to be especially beneficial for education students. While field experience and student teaching provide valuable practice in the craft of teaching, service-learning helps future teachers understand that education is an endeavor of partnerships, even elementary education. Service-learning helps education students become "[prepared] for a new mind set so that whey they may enter the school as a teacher someday that they will be thinking who in the community can be their partners" (McKenna, 2000, p. 98).

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching developed the Community Engagement Elective Classification, which is a voluntary classification for which institutions of higher education may apply. The application requires institutions to undertake a rigorous self-study process that focuses on the ways community engagement – including service-learning – and campus-community partnerships are part of the fabric of the college or university. In a reflection essay about the data collected in the first round of elective classifications, Driscoll noted that two areas proved challenging for a majority of

successful applicants: "assessing the community's need for and perceptions of the institution's engagement and developing substantive roles for the community in creating the institution's plans for that engagement" (Driscoll, 2008, p. 41). For many of the most committed colleges and universities, there is still road to be travelled for building meaningful partnerships characterized by reciprocity.

From an institutional point of view, the debate continues over the existence of a civic engagement and service-learning movement that is vital to the mission of higher education. The promise of public work in the academy is positioned as a way of transforming students, higher education, and eventually even society (Langseth & Plater, 2003). All of this exploration risks losing credibility without meaningful inclusion of community partner voice. Burkhardt and Pasque reviewed a book directed at administrators as a how-to manual for service-learning and civic engagement published in 2003. The reviews note that the focus on roles and structures within the higher education sector risks being stymied unless administrators pay attention to the environments in which higher education exists and the "relationship between higher education and the society it serves" (Burkhardt & Pasque, 2005). Throughout the entire book, notes the reviewers, the community voice is near silent. Even when having the best intentions for the community and for dismantling grand narratives, higher education has not taken the step of building reciprocal relationships with community-based people and organizations.

Understanding Reciprocity As It Connects to Service-Learning

Reciprocity is a central, important construct of service-learning. The literature on service-learning stresses the importance of reciprocity between higher education and community for students to have the type of transformational learning experience necessary to be inspired (and perhaps feel empowered) to take action toward social change. Given the strong participation by colleges and universities across the country, service-learning has become a force for social change. While it does not automatically guarantee that students will become agents of social change, the research shows that students are moved by their experiences in community settings, value opportunities for learning and experience in community settings, and are changed through the process of working together (Jacoby, 1996). In service-learning, reciprocal learning is fundamental: "service-learning is a philosophy of reciprocity which implies a concerted effort to move from charity to justice" (Jacoby, 1996, p. 13). Colleges and universities are often called upon to encourage their students' explorations of social justice through service-learning. Students identify social justice learning when courses expose them to information about experiences dealing with systematic oppression and provide them opportunity for guided narrative reflection (Mayhew & Fernandez, 2007). It is impossible to teach students in a reciprocal learning environment if the learning projects themselves are not carried out in the same spirit of reciprocity with community partners.

37

Reciprocity is a problematic construct for three reasons: there is a lack of consensus of which elements define reciprocity; there are differences between disciplines about how reciprocity plays out in human behavior; and the history of contracts beginning with the Romans and continuing right up to contemporary juridical practice, has reinterpreted the ideology of reciprocity (Terradas, 2002). Delving into legal history and how contracts have shaped society's notion of reciprocity, there are obligations attributed to reciprocity that go beyond the actions of the contract to include "stronger, sustained and outstanding human qualities. Also, the nature of these qualities is to create enduring personal bonds instead of discrete matters of contract" (Terradas, 2002, p. 36). Reciprocity is more than a measurable exchange: it is an elusive but utilitarian craving for something beyond a contract. Something that is durable, trustworthy, and valuable.

Scholarship on service-learning tends to present a much more structured picture of this method of teaching and learning than in practice it actually has. There is a great deal of chaos and unpredictability in service-learning, as in many real-world experiences. Part of the reason it may hold so much promise is because, like reciprocity, it is untidy. From the perspective of a practitioner scholar, service-learning is individualistic and has an appeal for many faculty members that cannot fully be described in a way that incorporates all of the individual experiences into one blanket theory. Many of the social justice lessons and social change service-learning seeks to inspire are related to public policy issues. When it comes to reciprocity, public policy theory identifies this chaos and

unpredictability as fertile ground for addressing the complex, urgent problems faced by our society. Those problems are, like service-learning and reciprocity, typically ill-defined and require responses that are not singular, positivistic, or easily defined, but rather are networked, fluid, and chaotic (Gilbert, Johnson, & Plaut, 2009; Crosby & Bryson, 2005).

For the purposes of this study, the definition of reciprocity is based on the scholarship of Henry and Breyfogle (2006). In a traditional view of reciprocity, two or more parties "come together to contribute their respective resources to some commonly defined interests" (p. 27). Henry and Breyfogle's alternative approach to reciprocity begins with "the position of collective activity and emphasizes systemic, evolutionary change over time. From an enriched view, goals for a program… include notions of how the people involved …[are] changed over time" (p. 32). The traditional view of reciprocity is complicit in maintaining the status quo of the servers and the served and does not account for any change in all the participants of service-learning projects – not just the students, not just the community partners, and not just the clients of the community partners. Henry and Breyfogle's reciprocity theory allows service-learning to transform the unequal relationships between the servers and the served, "allowing for greater individual understanding of various life experiences as well as alteration of rigid social systems over time" (p. 34). This reciprocity theory is built on the community partner scholarship of Enos and Morton (2003) and the critique of Boyte (2003) who

39

suggests action instead of service is more descriptive of what transpires. Ultimately, this reciprocity theory is built on Dewey's various theories of duality (Henry and Breyfogle, 2006).

In addition to Henry and Breyfogle, there are other approaches to reciprocity. The most well-known foundation for reciprocity is the Golden Rule as popular among school children and predating that, the Bible's wisdom telling its readers to "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Plickert, Cote, & Wellman, 2007). In western culture, reciprocity is considered a universal norm (Plickert et al., 2007), but in practice it is more variable and complex. From a quantitative study focusing on reciprocal exchange among people in terms of emotional support, minor services, and major services, researchers charted a model for how reciprocity among people works. Through modeling and path analysis, the researchers demonstrated that in practice, reciprocity is most important and common when exchanging resources that feed social capital and help cope with quotidian matters. Interestingly, they note that in the case of major services, such as expenditures of large amounts of time and money, that there is seldom reciprocity (Plickert et al., 2007). This may be because one side gives something so out of proportion to what is possible for the other side to contribute that any efforts to give back are completely over-shadowed.

Reciprocity may be more than a universal norm for western cultures. Evolutionary biologists also study reciprocity. Interestingly, biologists classify reciprocity as part of cooperation and discuss it as a direct benefit that is socially enforced, along with reward,

punishment and policing (West, Griffin, & Gardner, 2006). Reciprocity, in evolutionary

biology, is important to survival and motivates social behavior. In considering service-

learning, the classification of social behaviors fall into two areas: those that have

beneficial consequences and those that are costly. Behaviors that are beneficial to the actor

and the recipient can be considered as either mutual benefit or reciprocal altruism (West,

Griffin, & Gardner, 2006). As far as understanding service-learning and reciprocity,

applying this scientific examination of human behavior suggests that the consequences for

actor and recipient are by definition positive. Benefits increase through cooperation, which

is primarily characterized by reciprocity and altruism. Additionally, the scientific research

pertaining to human behavior ascribes to strong reciprocity a definition that combines a

propensity to regard others for cooperative behavior as well as a predilection to sanction

those who violate the norms of mutual benefit (West, Griffin, & Gardner, 2006). In the

science of human behavior, reciprocity is not free of judgment, and in a sense it does not

exist outside of making a judgment about an action or behavior and identifying what gives

that action or behavior value enough to be a benefit. Chances are high that all constituents

of service-learning think about reciprocity and it probably influences to what extent-- or

even whether—partnerships in service-learning are sustained.

Through an economic lens, reciprocity also encompasses retribution. Reciprocity is defined as a behavior acted in response to either a kindness or an unkindness (Falk & Fischbacher, 2006). A major part of reciprocity is "how people evaluate the kindness of an action" (Falk & Fischbacher, 2006, p. 294) and the evaluation hinges on the consequences of the behavior or action as well as the underlying intentions. This can be seen in various behavior games, such as public good games, where subjects bid how many tokens they want to give to public good in different scenarios. While the best response is to bid zero tokens, most subjects have a tendency to bid more tokens based on value judgments of the contributions of others in the scenario (Falk & Fischbacher, 2006). As a society, there is a strong tendency to reward kind actions and to punish unkind actions, whether or not the individual players can afford the rewards or the punishments.

Collaboration and reciprocity are not interchangeable concepts. A fundamentally important aspect of considering reciprocity is invitation: for reciprocity to exist, there must be an invitation for the behavior or action. Without the invitation, service-learning, or any sort of service activity, can easily become "paternalistic imposition" (Cushman, 1998, p. 29). When that happens, the service-learning is no longer mutually beneficial. In considering research participants and the benefits derived from being a subject in a research study, Powell and Takayoshi examined ethics in relationships supposedly characterized by reciprocity (2003). It is common in research, including research conducted by faculty at institutions of higher education, to construct situations that

primarily benefit the research project and are not reciprocal. This happens when the participant role is limited to what that participant can give the study and not what benefits the participants can receive from the study, other than monetary benefit. In order for participants to truly benefit and for studies to be reciprocal, researchers need to expand the ways they think of participants and benefits to include a relationship outside the strict focus of the study (Powell & Takayoshi, 2003). In many fields, scholars are rewriting the traditional roles of the researcher and researched to be much more reciprocal (Kirsch, 1999). The implication this holds for scholars is "if we want authentic reciprocity, research participants should be allowed to construct roles for themselves and us in the same way we construct roles for them. Further, we should be willing to adopt the roles created for us at least some of the time" (Powell & Takayoshi, 2003, p. 398). While these scholars are analyzing the research relationship, their findings have merit when considering service-learning, another relationship between higher education and individuals outside of the academy. In a service-learning relationship characterized by high degrees of reciprocity, the college or university would not establish all the parameters and would extend other benefits to the community partners beyond the established protocol of the service-learning project. Often, community partners have reasons beyond the service-learning project for entering into the relationship or maintaining the relationship with a particular college or university.

In social sciences more generally, a common operational definition of reciprocity has two types of values or benefits: utilitarian value of the good, service, or social outcome, and symbolic or communicative value (Molm, Schaefer, & Collett, 2007). The aspect of reciprocity that carries symbolic value is the one that fosters social capital in relationships (Molm, Schaefer, & Collett, 2007) or network capital among intricately tied groups of people (Plickert, Cote, & Wellman, 2007). Reciprocity provides a symbolic benefit in two ways: it minimizes the risk or uncertainty in the reciprocal exchange by demonstrating reliability or trustworthiness; it expresses acknowledgment or appreciation for benefits received and/or proves mutual proclivity to further invest in the partnership (Molm, Schaefer, & Collett, 2007). When making exchanges, it is the utilitarian value of the benefits that govern whether two entities enter into the exchange and it is the building of trust and regard between the partners that is greatly influenced by reciprocity (Molm, Schaefer, & Collett, 2007). In considering the behavior of service or volunteerism, there is a definite necessity for a democratic society that individuals participate in community and give of their time and talents. But the capital that an individual, group, network, or community gains from service is meted out by the utilitarian and symbolic values derived from reciprocity. Without reciprocity the service is more like charity and lacks shared experience and transformation (Pompa, 2002). An intrinsic element in reciprocity, as described by the science and social science theories and applied to service-learning, is the practical purpose of connection between campus and community. Campus and community

do share a common fate. "There is great value in trying to build this deeper sense of connection, … We all face the dangers and costs of social problems and we share the responsibility for creating and changing the conditions that allow those problems to persist" (Gilbert, Johnson, & Plaut, 2009, p. 37). Inarguably, higher education is part of the public good and holds a stake in building a better, more just future. The issue perhaps is whether higher education wants to be involved in the actual building, one brick at a time, of this shared future, or whether a college or university would prefer to shape the future through teaching students about truth and excelling at research.

When service-learning at an institution is not fully supported, that lessens the likelihood or even possibility of reciprocity in service-learning. One major challenge with building service-learning programs in higher education that foster reciprocal relationships among faculty, students, and community partners is that these types of relationships require time, space, and funding – all of which are at a premium. The colleges and universities with the strongest service-learning programs have several things in common. First, they have at a minimum one, full-time, professional director of service-learning (Strong, 2009). It is the role of this director to connect with the various constituents to support the building of relationships. Additionally, strong programs house service-learning in a centralized office and pay for it with institutional funding (Strong, 2009). This denotes a commitment to the program and is an important part of symbolic reciprocity and cues community partners that other resources and collaborations are possible. Locating service-

learning in the provost's office, or similar executive academic leadership, is important to assure that institutional best-practices are put in place (Kenworthy-U'Ren, Petri, & Taylor, 2006). These practices legitimize service-learning for faculty, especially important for faculty committed to community engaged scholarship often in the face of having their scholarship unrecognized by institutional policies governing tenure and promotion (Strong, 2009; Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). Reciprocity is a two-way street; it is as important for faculty to have visibility and recognition for their commitment to service-learning as it is for community partners.

Student Outcomes

While the institutions as a whole and executive leadership remain unevenly convinced and perhaps even a bit skeptical about the service-learning movement, the field has been answering this skepticism with increasingly rigorous research on the impact of service-learning on student learning and student college experiences (Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001). The case has been building and will be explored in this section.

Social Change

Service-learning has had a role to play in many universities connecting their capacity for the production of knowledge with the needs of local communities. Janet Eyler and Dwight Giles, in their book, Where's the Learning in Service-Learning (1999),

46

provided a scholarly landmark which synthesizes several prominent, national studies from the 1990's and ushered in many best practices for the field. In their influential synthesis of service-learning research, Eyler and Giles recognized service-learning as a response to higher education reform critics' concerns regarding the disconnectedness of the academy. They also identified the importance of the application of knowledge to community issues and the reciprocal application of experience to learning through reflection. Because many service-learning programs, begun as the work of dedicated faculty members with their community partners and enthusiastic students, predated the scholarship and did not have the benefit of best-practices, these programs have struggled to and have not ever become fully institutionalized (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

While many faculty members and directors of service-learning hold social change as the ultimate goal for service-learning, this goal is not always viewed with the same priority by elite members of communities and/or administration. The reason for this is that inevitably some interest or need is advanced over another. The service-learning practitioner seeks environments where students have the opportunity for transformational learning – where students move beyond charity to asking fundamental questions and feeling empowered to take steps toward social change, hopefully long-term (Eyler & Giles, 1999). About 33% of service-learning participants claim to have a new perspective on social issues based on the project. These students shift their understanding of the locus of social problems and become more committed to the importance of social justice and the

need to become personally involved with political structures (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Most significantly, the students who had the strongest transformational experiences also were in programs that were longer-term and where the concept of "social transformation" was "explicitly part of the curriculum" (Eyler & Giles, 1999). From this level of high-quality service-learning, students come to realize that they can – and often do – contribute to their communities (McKenna, 2000). This sense of giving back leads to an increased awareness of self in society and often to an enhanced social ethic (McKenna, 2000). Educating, empowering and inspiring students to become agents of social change takes deliberate action and vision from faculty as well as from the colleges and universities where they teach.

Service-learning in education programs can be a poignant way to empower students towards social change action. Taylor and Trepanier-Street (2007) discuss how Jumpstart participants gain civic and multicultural knowledge through a service-learning model. Jumpstart is a mentoring and reading program that prepares and supports work study students in reading to young children already behind in pre-literacy. Work study students spend 10 hours per week at a Head Start center and an additional two to four hours per week in planning time. Jumpstart strengthens students' communication and leadership skills and gives them the opportunity to connect with complex community issues. The quantitative study found a statistically significant increase in students' self-reported understanding of civic issues and feeling more able to address the issues. Most

importantly, students believed they could make a difference in their communities. This study found that service-learning as a main program component does lead to students feeling better equipped to be agents of social change (Taylor & Trepanier-Street, 2007). Spiezio, Baker and Boland (2005) examine the impact of service-learning on students' attitudes toward civic engagement at four colleges and universities. The study finds that service-learning can change students' attitudes towards engaged citizenship. Additionally, because the study involved students in 39 courses across the academic general education spectrum, it also found service-learning a promising and feasible enterprise in each academic discipline (p. 274). The recommendations from the study encourage colleges and universities to build service-learning into general education systematically across the disciplines for greatest impact to civic education/civic engagement (p. 285). By addressing service-learning systematically universities are best able to prepare students to be the change communities need and contribute to a strong and promising future.

Multicultural Competence

Many studies have concluded that service-learning is valuable for college students because it prompts participants to re-examine stereotypes and increase tolerance for others (Eyler & Giles, 1999). This happens in part from students experiencing a growing awareness of social structures and contemplating the social issues they observe at the service-learning site (Enfield & Collins, 2008; Marullo, 1998; Jones & Hill, 2001; Eyler &

Giles, 1999). If the service-learning project is set up with respect for diversity and with the goals of enhancing students' multicultural education it can be quite effective. When a project is characterized by reciprocity, the students have a structure to process what they encounter in the community setting that encourages them to question stereotypes, embrace tolerance, and perhaps enhance their own multicultural education. The difference reciprocity can make in student outcomes is when the students are responsive to the needs of the community organization and consider the perspectives of those marginalized by society (Boyle-Baise, 2002). Beyond simply enhancing education, service-learning can provide students the opportunity to build multicultural skill "such as increased capacities for empathy, patience, attachment, trust, and respect" (Enfield & Collins, 2008, p. 102). When service-learning is set up intentionally it is possible to avoid reenacting the dynamic of the privileged to serve those less fortunate.

Self-efficacy/Communication Skills Outcomes

Service-learning can and often does have a powerful and emotional impact on students, especially self-efficacy, interpersonal skills, communication skills, increased understanding of diversity, and a commitment to future civic engagement (Astin & Sax, 1998; Astin, Sax, Avalos, 1999; Eylers & Giles, 1999; Gray, Ondaatje, Flicker, Gershwind, & Goldman, 1999). In the traditional conceptualization of service-learning, reflection is the process of connecting experience and learning, which is the main route

leading to the above outcomes (Billig & Waterman, 2003). Reflection is important to inspiring students to become agents of social change. How reflection leads to transformational learning is demonstrated through Kiely's (2005) longitudinal case study that examines how students participating in a service-learning program experienced transformational learning. The particular service-learning experience focused on study of and a culminating service trip to Nicaragua. Typically, reflection is touted as the way students process and apply knowledge in service-learning. Kiely presents a much more complex picture. Kiely's research identifies five categories of transformational learning that relate to students as global citizens: contextual border crossing, dissonance, personalizing, processing, and connecting (pp. 14-15). These categories form a series of holistic learning processes that are unique to service-learning.

Academic Outcomes

At some universities, transformative pedagogies such as service-learning are supported and interwoven into curricula. When this happens, service-learning becomes much more powerful for all parties: community-based organizations, faculty and students. The emphasis shifts from students serving those less fortunate to students, faculty, and the university valuing communities as places for learning that bring together diverse populations to collaboratively address needs. Service-learning can also enhance the educational experience for students by creating a seamless education environment to

51

connect what they learn with the challenge of a real community issue. This environment leads to better academic performance, stronger relationships with peers (Wolff & Tinney, 2006) and faculty (Astin & Sax, 1998), and increased participation in campus life (Keup, 2005–2006). Years of data demonstrate service-learning promotes deep learning and personal development among both first-year students and seniors (Gonyea, Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, & Kinzie, 2008).

In addition to student formation and societal outcomes, service-learning is often the pedagogy of choice for character education. Educational researchers Astin and Sax (1998) stressed the positive correlation between amount of organized student participation in service to the community and students' intent to pursue community service after graduation. Small-scale (under 10 hours) projects do not lead to the same larger character-building results as longer-term service-learning projects (Reed et al., 2004).

Beyond personal development, service-learning enhances connections to academic goals. Reed et al. (1999) embarked on the service-learning research project in an Abnormal Psychology course with the goal of increasing mastery of course content, improving social responsibility, and helping the community. They found that students involved with service-learning had higher scores on exams and higher scores on survey measures of learning level, ability to apply theories in practice, personal development, and motivation than their non-service-learning peers. Similarly, McKenna and Rizzo (1999) also found that students identified service-learning as reinforcing course concepts (92%)

and agreed that service-learning was a significant contributor to their learning (90%). Multiple other scholarly studies show similar student outcomes.

From an overview of the student outcomes from service-learning, it becomes clear that the faculty have a significant role to play in quality service-learning that lives up to its potential. Often, even when a college or university has invested in service-learning support offices, the faculty facilitates reciprocity as part of student learning.

Faculty and Service-Learning

In higher education, especially when it comes to retention of students, it is the faculty who have significant opportunities to engage students in relevant learning experiences that affect how the students feel about their education and themselves (Tinto, 2006/2007). Service-learning is a "highly personalized curriculum" with direct benefits for the relationship among faculty and students (McKay & Estrella, 2008, p. 359). In the area of integrating academic and social outcomes for students, service-learning is an important pedagogy – one that is proven of particular benefit to first-generation college students.

While the college or university may value community engagement, it is the individual faculty member who incorporates service-learning into his or her course(s). Typically this decision is voluntary and is left to faculty personal preference rather than having designated courses that are service-learning, by design, and by their role in the degree program (Bulot & Johnson, 2006). When service-learning is disconnected, it is the

53

role of the center for service-learning to promote cross-disciplinary teaching and learning communities for faculties. The resource of having such as a center reduces the opportunity costs for faculty and allows them to focus more on teaching and learning. Without a center, faculty must invest significant amounts of time in building relationships with community partners, differentiating service-learning from volunteering, and finding activities for the students that meet real community needs and are closely related to the learning objectives of the class (Bulot & Johnson, 2006). Faculty find their greatest rewards are a teaching experience where students are much more engaged and their own satisfaction from the community partnership, which often extends the faculty members' networks (Bulot & Johnson, 2006). The time invested and the rewards are not recognized by the college or university in promotion and tenure or extra supports, such as a graduate teaching assistant.

Among higher education faculty, service-learning participation trends show that women and faculty of color are more likely to connect their teaching, scholarship, and service to community engagement (Astin & Vogelgesang, 2006, Antonio, Astin & Cress, 2000; Baez, 2000). Some research documents that "for ethnic minority faculty members in particular, there are perceived obligations to one's ethnic/racial community" (Astin & Vogelgesang, 2006, p. 97). Because of the lack of institutional reward for service-learning or community engagement, this is potentially distracting from projects that are more consistently rewarded in the professoriate (Turner, 2002).

Of the faculty who do teach service-learning courses, they peruse this pedagogy because of the student learning outcomes as well as the increased classroom engagement of students (Gelmon, Holland, & Shinnamon, 1998; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon & Kerrigan, 1996). Other faculty believe that higher education should teach students to be responsible citizens (Campus Compact, 2009). Faculty who teach service-learning courses view teaching as their major role (Hammond, 1994) and they teach service-learning out of an interest in curricular innovation and a goal of promoting student learning (Bringle, Hatcher, & Games, 1997).

Given the influential role of faculty when it comes to service-learning and community engagement, a 2006 HERI study found that while 81% of faculty believe that institutions of higher education are obligated to partner with the local community to address pressing needs, only 31% stated that their colleges make this work a priority (Astin & Vogelgesang, 2006). Additionally, among faculty, 42% collaborate with local communities for research and teaching (Astin & Vogelgesang, 2006). Faculty are the culture bearers of their institutions and their perceptions of priorities as well as their actions matter.

The previous section provides a broad overview of student outcomes from service-learning. Where much is known about students and the teaching and learning aspects of service-learning, the community partner experience is less charted. The next section

explores the perspectives of nonprofits, schools, pre-schools, and local governments that host college student service-learners.

Community Partner Experiences

Nonprofits, schools, and local governments, the common partners in service-learning, have been hit hard by the downturn in the economy. They have very little unallocated resources to give to service-learning, especially when it comes to staff time as they have had waves of personnel reduction (Salamon, 2002). A slowly growing body of work is assembling that seeks to understand the community partners experiences in service-learning. Yet there remains a dearth of actual community voice in the research on campus-community partnerships for service-learning, particularly regarding the community partner experience of service-learning and especially the benefits of service-learning to community partners (Bushouse, 2005; Burkhardt & Pasque 2005; Miron & Moely, 2006; Basinger & Bartholomew, 2006; Tyron, Stoeker, Martin, Seblonka, Hilgendorf, & Nellis, 2008; Dorado & Giles, 2004). The extant literature on service-learning suggests that the overall value of service-learning to community partners is generally assumed as long as the project itself is designed well (Basinger & Bartholomew, 2006). If community partners are not providing input as to the benefits they receive, it is impossible for higher education to know the value of service-learning to communities.

56

This task becomes even more challenging when the benefit does not derive from the service but from the relationship more generally.

Campus community partnerships are seen as satisfying when the partners perceive the outcomes as being proportionate to their investment. Two prolific and influential scholars of service-learning and civic engagement, Bringle and Hatcher, compared the study of campus-community partnerships to romantic relationships between people. In an analysis of initiating relationships, they noted that it is important to have a clear mission to provide a foundation for the partnership. Compatibility and effective communication are also essential components of strong campus-community partnerships for service-learning. Other lessons that can be learned from relationship scholarship include the following: 1) relationships progress in a non-linear fashion; 2) outcomes must exceed minimal expectations for success; 3) relationships are seen as satisfying when the partners perceive the outcomes as being proportionate to what they each put in to the relationship. All of these gleanings speak to the importance of reciprocity in building and maintaining partnerships with community-based organizations (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002).

Like romantic relationships, campus community partnerships have the potential to be important, significant, and even transformative to the parties involved. The following is a description of what relationships could mean when campus and community engage:

These partnerships are relevant to a variety of issues confronting higher education. They extend far beyond local relationships; they force us to

think about the overall purpose of higher education. There are many hotly

contested issues in higher education in the United States and

internationally, ranging from affirmative action to the significance of tenure

to the exploitation of employees and the increasingly corporate nature of

higher education to the content of curriculum. The study of higher

education/community partnerships adds an important dimension to the

debates around these topics. The issues impacting affirmative action,

tenure, and curriculum are tied to the broader relationship between

academia and society – higher education's relative accessibility and

relevance to a majority of Americans. (Maurasse, 2002, p. 2)

The reason why community partner perspectives are not studied may be political.

Maurrasse is the leading scholar on campus-community partnerships and it does not take

long for him to note that there are tensions between the academy and society – tensions

not just around what students learn and how they learn it, but around the way higher

education does business both internally and externally. To truly have reciprocal

partnerships between campus and community would mean building relevant partnerships,

prioritizing and respecting them, supporting faculty who seek them out, and recognizing,

in the case of service-learning, the community as co-teacher of students.

One area where campus-community partnerships are working is between higher

education and K-12 education. In Partnerships for Service-Learning: Impacts on

<u>Communities and Students</u> (2009), Kelshaw, Lazarus, Minier and Associates make the case for the success of this type of educational collaboration. In nine case studies, faculty members scrutinize their partnerships and the role college students can play in supporting both in-school and out-of-school educational programming. While the cases all support the importance of reciprocity, these studies still look at community work from the perspective of higher education and identify the work higher education needs to do in helping K-12 schools during this time of public school crisis and reform. Even in areas of recognized success, the community voice is near silent. It may be not out of disregard, but rather due to the strict pace of the academic calendar or even the temporal nature of the professor-student relationship. Higher education may need to focus on sustainability in partnerships for service-learning.

In understanding the process and degrees of community partnerships for service-learning, Enos and Morton (Jacoby, 2003) were the first to advance a framework focused on how campus-community partnerships develop. They assert that the depth and complexity of a relationship develops over time and that most partnerships are transactional in nature: one-time events and short-term student placements. When the partnerships become characterized by joint creation of work and knowledge, then the relationship becomes transformational. By the nature of the partnership, the transactional stage has an exchange-based and utilitarian focus. In their discussion of factors impeding partnerships, Enos and Morton have much more knowledge of the university perspective

59

and discuss difficulties associated with the tenure and promotion system, the prestige of pure research, and the unavoidable limitations of the academic calendar. While the heart of their research argues for taking risks and building enduring and significant campus/community partnerships, the perspective of community partners in this process remains unknown.

Jones (2003) provides a set of best-practices for forming service-learning partnerships and notes the "need for a more explicit framework for the relationships that anchor service-learning activities" (p. 154). Faculty and staff in higher education settings must overcome barriers to partner with organizations who are skeptical regarding the institution's motivation. In putting any of the sets of principles for good partnerships to work, it is important to note that relationships are seldom as tidy as a list of principles suggest. The pitfalls to which faculty and staff must take note are: power dynamics, fit, communication, and acknowledging expertise—of the community partner, that is, not the faculty member (Jones, 2003).

The ultimate challenge of service-learning for community partners is whether its benefits are significant enough to invest scarce resources in the student learning project (Bushouse, 2005). Resource allocation is difficult in the present economy for nonprofit organizations and there are significant opportunity costs associated with service-learning. Bushouse, building off the work of Enos and Morton by exploring the experiences of community-based partners, found that many community organizations were disinclined

toward progressive movement through the stages of partnerships. Most of the community partners leaned toward transactional partnerships. They also preferred experiences where their outcomes were favorable in a cost-benefit analysis. The main conclusion and recommendation of Bushouse's research is that higher education finds ways to decrease the economic costs for community partners in service-learning. Community partners may value most the utilitarian benefits or reciprocity either because they are more tangible or because they have received other resources in other areas that make up the difference.

The greatest challenges for community partner organizations were dealing with students' class schedules, the short-term commitments, and finding time to train students so that they could serve effectively. Community partners also identified that having better communication systems would be helpful (Vernon & Ward, 1999). Building deep partnerships works to overcome these challenges so that broad participation can be assured from semester to semester (Schmidt & Robby, 2002). Overall, however, most studies show that community partners viewed service-learning positively, especially when it came to their regard for the college or university (Schmidt & Robby, 2002; Vernon & Ward, 1999).

Dorado and Giles performed a grounded theory study to better understand 27 community partnerships in the New England area. These partnerships are not part of any one college or university's service-learning. A common service-learning transaction (almost one third of the partnerships studied) followed this formula: the students do what

the organization needs, such as serving soup, and their learning is derived from interacting with clients/people with whom they would not normally interact. The community partners in this case have many sources of volunteers and the college or university is just one of those sources. There is very little expectation riding on this tentative type of partnership, and it may remain tentative throughout its duration. On the opposite end, just over one-third of the partnerships could be described as being on a committed path of engagement. These partnerships are both young and more established, so the designation is not necessarily linear. It has more to do with a sense of connection between the mission of the organization and the service-learning project as well as the representatives love of working with students (Dorado & Giles, 2004). Certainly not all relationships with external organizations need to be on a committed path. The transactional partnership still produces results. What needs to be considered in that instance is whether the student work meets real needs for the organization.

Miron and Moely (2006) note a slight increase in studying community partner experiences, yet this increase is still scant compared with the plethora of research on student learning outcomes and service-learning program models. They also noted that the community partner experience scholarship failed to report on the reliability or validity of measures and their participant sizes were so small as to inhibit generalizability. Miron and Moely interviewed 40 representatives of community partner organizations that had been involved with service-learning at their university. During the process of the interview the

participants also completed a quantitative survey. This mixed-methods approach yielded

several interesting findings about community partners, notably: length of involvement in

service-learning programs was a contributing factor in the amount and frequency of

contributions to program planning and implementation. Also the more students at a

particular site the higher regard the community organization representative had for the

university. In the community partner experience duration of partnership and the number of

students involved matters.

One way of understanding the community partner experience is to compare it with

theories of giving that enlighten the nonprofit sector about why people donate voluntarily.

Basinger and Bartholomew (2006) hypothesize that community partner representatives

who become involved with service-learning do so out of a desire to "give valuable

learning experiences to the student as much as the desire to receive something of value

from the student" (p.16). This article begins to tackle the mechanics of reciprocity through

this dual understanding that community organizations want to give to students–they are,

after all, in the business of helping people. Through a reciprocity frame, this finding makes

sense. Social norms reinforce the inclination to give, as well as a sense of satisfaction in

supporting those in need of resources or those with whom the giver empathizes (Batson et

al., as cited in Basinger & Bartholomew, 2006). The results showed that a few

organizations partner for service-learning because they need the help but the majority were

motivated by a desire to help students learn (mean = 4.54 on a 5.0 point scale), to foster a

positive relationship with the university (mean = 3.74 on a 5.0 point scale), because service-learning participation is part of their mission (mean = 3.86 on a 5.0 point scale), and to cultivate future volunteers (mean = 3.80 on a 5.0 scale) (Basinger & Bartholomew, 2006). The community partners participate in service-learning to contribute to the learning and to help grow a civically engaged group of future volunteers.

Basinger and Bartholomew's findings are corroborated in Worrall's 2007 study. Community partners see themselves not as the recipients of the service but as co-educators. For the twelve community partner organizations in Worrall's qualitative study, they valued the opportunity to be part of and commit to student education. Because of this value, the benefits of partnering with the university for student learning outweighed the challenges. One area where community partners give much more than they receive is shorter-term service-learning where students come a time or two and the community makes the same arrangements as other who serve much longer. Community organizations sometimes lack a liaison who knows higher education who can broker arrangements beyond a volunteer coordinator, who may or may not have a penchant for working with colleges and their students.

Common space is an important aspect of reciprocity. Evans and Boyte refer to this as "free space" and note that it is important for participatory, egalitarian, or public good work. Such space is located between the private space of individuals and the public space of large institutions (Evans & Boyte, 1992). In many ways, community centers or other

open and friendly nonprofits where people gather for education, support, or other services, are the perfect spaces to incubate the networks and reciprocity needed to embark upon the urgent problems of contemporary society. One of the new models of campus-community partnerships, that is quickly becoming a best practice, came out of Otterbein College's Center for Community Engagement. Their model calls for "community connectors" who are faculty site-liaisons with the responsibility of teaching service-learning courses and knowing a particular partner organization quite well. Typically the service-learning courses are taught at that organization and the community connector stewards Otterbein College's collaborations and relationships with the community partner (Gilbert, Johnson, & Plaut, 2009). These types of innovations serve well higher education and the nonprofit sector.

The literature represents an additional challenge faced by community partners: the problem of short-term service-learning. The small- and medium-sized organizations, which often make great service-learning partners and can have the most to gain, also assume the most risk in service-learning partnerships. According to Tryon, et al. (2008), many smaller organizations view service-learning as an "unhelpful time sink" (p. 16). This group of scholars used a project approach and grounded theory methods to engage community stakeholders in "identifying issues, diagnosing those issues, developing the prescriptions for them, implementing the prescription, and then evaluating the impact" (Stoeker, 2005, as cited in Tryon et al., 2008, p. 14). The coding process allowed the group

65

to qualitatively assess for inter-rater reliability using grounded theory as founded by Glaser and Strauss. The primary challenges of short-term service-learning center around time, supervision, difficulties in finding direct service for a short duration, project management within a short amount of time, and issues with the academic calendar. Because service-learning is often required within the confines of a course, the community partners have an additional challenge of motivating students and dealing with resistant students. The research brings to bear real issues about direct service for short durations of time and the impact that has on clients, such as low-income homeless children who lack stability and are hurt when they become connected and the students then disappear at the end of their requirement. The findings focus on how and why organizations continue to participate in service-learning with the conclusion that community partners see mentoring students as an extension of their organizational missions. Other organizations expressed a fear that by saying no to short-term/semester-based projects they risk not being invited to be part of an offer of help that would truly be beneficial (Tryon et al., 2008).

Service-learning's emphasis on reciprocity is the main distinguishing factor from higher education's tendency to view the community as a laboratory for students. Faculty members develop more effective, efficient, and sustainable initiatives when they enter the partnership with a view that the community site is a place where teaching, service, and learning contribute to community-defined needs equally as much as student learning (Cushman, 2002). Ultimately, striving for reciprocity leads to sustainability. Basinger and

Bartholomew state "studies assessing the impact of service-learning must go further to understand the reciprocal nature of the 'service' in service-learning" (2006, p. 15).

In the afterword of their book, <u>The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service-Learning</u>, Stoecker and Tryon (2009) discuss the reactions to their research on community partner perspectives. It is welcomed by representatives from community partner organizations and by a few scholar practitioners of service-learning. From higher education and from the civic engagement movement leaders, it is admonished. Stoecker and Tryon describe how individuals leave their presentations and send letters/emails denying that service-learning could ever do any harm. These critics point to satisfaction surveys which provide evidence of "grateful" (p. 188) community-based organizations. The research of community partner perspectives on service-learning is not always affirming. But if higher education is going to truly pursue being a good citizen and neighbor, sometimes the question must be asked and the truthful response must be heeded. This is the important role of assessment in any endeavor.

The main purpose of assessment in service-learning is to measure for the collaborating partners the return on their investment. This helps justify the partnership and ultimately to sustain it. The challenge of assessment is that each constituent expects something different from the partnership. With the level of complexity of service-learning partnerships, it is little wonder that assessment of service-learning courses is limited typically to some form of documentation of the number of hours students give in service

and/or writing reflection journals. Often assessment is not part of a service-learning

project and so faculty has little way of knowing if the collaboration was effective. The

Portland State University model of assessment brings together a four-part design that

includes measuring goals (what do we want to know about the project?); variables (what

will we look for in the project?); indicators (what are we going to measure?); and method

(how we will measure it?). Using this comprehensive model and starting at the beginning

of the project will assure buy-in from all sides of the service-learning partnership

(Holland, 2001). However thorough the method is, one of the overlooked problems

remains ensuring the community partners have an equal voice in assessment without too

great a time burden.

There are different styles of service-learning partnerships. The styles most often

characterized by a high degree of reciprocity are a combination of hierarchist and

egalitarian (Kecskes, 2006). The hierarchist style is rule-bound and organizationally

cohesive and the egalitarian style characterizes collective decisions and is influenced by a

high degree of reciprocity. A hybrid is recommended because the structure of the

hierarchist style is a stable foundation for egalitarian operational style (Kecskes, 2006).

For true reciprocity in a partnership it is important to understand cultural theory and be

able to be intentional in organizational structure and decision-making styles. Another way

of looking at this is through the negotiated order metaphor which explains how individuals

enmeshed in group relations change as they make adjustments over time to the way the group functions (Fine, 1984).

Part of the challenge with developing partnerships for service-learning that are characterized by high degrees of reciprocity lies in the perception that campus and community are separate entities that have clear and distinct boundaries. "As long as campus and community partners see themselves as …brought together by individual relationships and mutual interest in a particular collaborative project, their investment in each other will be somewhat limited" (Gilbert, Johnson, & Plaut, 2009, p. 35). This implies that there is a real, durable opportunity for urban-serving universities and community colleges to build true reciprocity in their service-learning programs for the simple reason that a significant portion of their students and graduates are residents of the region, and did not relocate to the region with the single purpose of attending college. It is uncertain whether this is enough to blur the divide between campus and community, even though alumni are often employed at the community partner organizations and working with the students. When alumni meet students through service-learning, it may be only circumstantial and may not influence reciprocity. The reason being is that reciprocity is not accidental. It is the part of a jointly created perspective on the issue or issues both parties collectively decided to address (Enos & Morton, 2003). Higher education has a leadership role to play in helping organizations figure out how to connect to area colleges and universities in mutually beneficial ways. Mutual gain/reciprocity is the most desirable

69

end goal for campus-community partnerships because it incentivizes the partnership on both sides, strengthening the likelihood of sustainability (Maurrasse, 2001). When reciprocity is the goal it is important for partnerships to incorporate checks and balances so that either party's interests are not overlooked, particularly the interests of the community partner(s). To that end, higher education should work with communities to help them learn how to partner with to institutions of higher education (Maurrasse, 2002).

To date there has yet to emerge a fair and accurate assessment tool for measuring progress of campus-community partnerships. While often social responsibility is written into institutional missions, most institutions of higher education do not perform any sort of social accountability audit. However, higher education is also coming to better understand the cost of not investing in strong partnerships with the communities they serve (Maurrasse, 2002). Higher education needs to take another look at the structures it has in place for service-learning to assure that this revolutionary pedagogy is positioned to live up to its potential. It may even be time to reassess how service-learning is structured in higher education (Butin, 2010). This reassessment would result in having community studies departments for students and for faculty to pursue service-learning of the highest quality (Butin, 2010). The literature demonstrates that service-learning has the potential to accomplish much for students, colleges/universities, and society as a whole. However, as service-learning has progressed over the decades, its welcome may be wearing thin with community partners unless some changes in modus operandi are made. This research

70

project aims to provide evidence and direction from the community partners' perspectives pertinent to the longevity of service-learning.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I examined the literature relating to service-learning, campus-community partnerships, and reciprocity. The literature review was organized into several large sections. The first section provided a broad discussion of service-learning, while the second section delved into the literature on reciprocity. The third section examined the research pertaining to student outcomes. The fourth section looked at the connection between faculty experiences of service-learning and their perspectives on reciprocity. The fifth part of the literature review focused on this less-studied side of service-learning, community partnerships. The intent of surveying the findings of other scholarship relevant to this topic was to build a foundation of knowledge pertaining to reciprocity in service-learning from the community partners perspective. The next chapter explores the methodology I used in this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Reciprocal Exchange was designed to help address a gap in the literature and scholarly research on service-learning. To best answer my research questions, I thought a qualitative mode of inquiry most appropriate. My research questions addressed the affects of service-learning on community partners, focusing on the concept of reciprocity between campus and community. Constructivist grounded theory was the most appropriate type of qualitative research to identify and understand how reciprocity works in service-learning between campus and community, and from that understanding, to suggest strategies institutions of higher education can use to be better community partners. This chapter focuses on the specifics of my research design and provides a discussion of research design, sampling, data collection, validity, bias, and data analysis process.

This study addressed beliefs and views; motivations and social/cultural practices; and actors, actions and relationships in service-learning. Service-learning is a teaching methodology where through an assignment students complete a community-based project that meets real community needs and also relates back to the subject being studied. The ideal of service-learning is that it rebuilds higher education and helps foster vital, healthy communities. In its ideal conception, service-learning would be characterized by reciprocity between the community partners and the higher education institution through

72

constructing projects that maintain academic rigor and provide the students with valuable real-world learning (Public Law, 1993). Researchers and faculty have focused extensively on student outcomes and campus advantages stemming from service-learning. Because the ideal of service-learning is that higher education joins communities for purposes of learning, innovation, and applying the resources of the academy to community-identified needs, understanding reciprocity is important to understanding how to reach this ideal. The inquiry examined the following questions:

1. What are the community partners' experiences with higher education service-learning?

2. Reciprocity is a definitional characteristic of service-learning. Do community organizations experience reciprocity when they partner with institutions of higher education for service-learning?

3. How does higher education service-learning contribute to the community organizations where students do their service-learning?

4. From the community partner perspective, what do their organizations contribute to student service-learners?

Through a better understanding of the experiences of the community partners in service-learning and through learning from their perspectives on reciprocity in service-learning, higher education should enhance campus-community partnerships. The goal of

this research was to identify ways higher education could improve upon practices for building and sustaining partnerships with community-based organizations and schools for service-learning. An additional goal of this research was to identify best practices for community-based organizations and schools in partnering with higher education.

Rationale for Qualitative Research

Based on readings of Mason, Creswell, and other scholars of qualitative research, there remains a need to justify qualitative research in the midst of a world tilted toward quantitative methods. Mason (2007) notes that qualitative research should be conducted systematically and rigorously. This study sought a balance between research that is strategically conducted while maintaining flexibility and contextuality—hallmarks of qualitative research. As the researcher, I did not shy away from what Mason calls "active reflexivity" which is a continual process of self-scrutiny pertaining to the researchers' role in the process thereby giving the self the same level of scrutiny as the data. Lastly, Mason notes that qualitative research strives to "produce explanations or arguments, rather than claiming to offer mere descriptions" (p. 7). Constructivist grounded theory, by design, has enough of the active reflexivity and leads to "explanations" rather than "mere descriptions."

74

Increasingly, grounded theory is being used in education, even though it has its roots in sociology. Grounded theory is a strategy of inquiry wherein scholars develop conceptual frameworks or theories through a process of inductive analysis that is grounded in the experiences of the participants/subjects. The strengths of grounded theory are that it favors analysis, fresh categories, and is systematically focused. Traditional grounded theory comes from positivism because that was the predominant epistemology when grounded theory was initiated in the 1960s. Because my own epistemological assumptions align much more with postmodernism, it is important to me to look to one of the more contemporary takes on grounded theory. Additionally, service-learning challenges the Enlightenment projects of human reason and progress, and so it is necessary for congruence of topic to also connect with a method after the postmodern turn in the historical timeline of qualitative research (this is covered in further detail below).

Constructivism is a perspective in the social sciences (as opposed to constructivist education practice) based on the assumption that individuals, including researchers, construct the realities in which they participate. It recognizes there are multiple realities and begins with a particular experience, in this case service-learning, and asks how members construct that experience. The role of the researcher is to enter this phenomenon to the best of his or her ability with the purpose of understanding it from multiple points of view and to identify the web of connections and constraints in operation within the

75

phenomenon. Researchers who operate within constructivism acknowledge that their research is itself a construction (Charmaz, 2006, p. 187). Constructivist grounded theory adds the contemporary recognition of the existence of multiple realities and the focus of people as actors and constructors of their lives to the grounded theory framework.

Charmaz (2006) notes that grounded theory methods provide researchers and practitioner scholars a framework to help start the research, continue to be involved and engaged with the project, and to complete the scholarship in a way that is both rigorous, analytical, and innovative. Charmaz advocates that grounded theory "foster[s] seeing your data in fresh ways and exploring your ideas about the data through early analytic writing" (2006, p. 2). Because service-learning generally is an oft-researched topic, and perhaps even a saturated topic, my research utilized a new approach that is not focused primarily on student learning but on community-campus partnerships that extend resources from higher education to the benefit of external constituencies. In this way, constructivist grounded theory was an appropriate design.

Several influential texts present constructivist grounded theory as an appropriate approach for qualitative research design. There are a variety of qualitative research traditions that are best positioned for specific research goals. Mason (2007) recommends identifying the theoretical framework for one's research after careful review of one's ontological position – that a researcher's focus must be solidly connected to where the

76

researcher "stands" in the world: "what is the nature of the phenomena, or entities, or social 'reality', that I wish to investigate?" (Mason, 2007, p. 14). Following this self-examination, a researcher takes stock of different ontological properties (e.g. motivations, representations, social constructions, experiences, institutions) vis-à-vis the researcher's epistemological position and the intellectual puzzle of interest. Creswell's approach takes a slightly different tack by examining philosophical assumptions and the implications for practice. Creswell focuses on four worldviews that shape qualitative research: postpositivism, constructivism, advocacy/participatory, and pragmatism (2007, p. 19). Finally, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) provide a thorough overview of the history of qualitative research and a lengthy discussion of the various paradigms and perspectives, including areas of contention. It is the chapter by Charmaz (2005) that most influenced my consideration of grounded theory after the post-modern turn.

Charmaz is one of the leading scholars of grounded theory and has worked diligently to bring it into the twenty-first century, noting its applicability to the social sciences due to its fit with social justice inquiry, "furthering equitable distribution of resources, fairness, and eradication of oppression" (Feagin, 1999 as cited in Charmaz, 2005, p. 507). What is most appealing about grounded theory is that it refers to how scholars inquire as well as the results of their inquiry (Creswell, 2007; Mason, 2007; Charmaz, 2005). Grounded theory quite literally begins on the ground floor of the area of

study and builds from there through successive levels of data collection, analysis, and conceptual development. The movement of a grounded theory goes from specific to abstract, so that the result is a theory born of praxis that can then be applied more generally in other instances while retaining its dual focus of social justice inquiry and pragmatism. "Thus, we can use the processual emphasis in grounded theory to analyze relationships between human agency and social structure that pose theoretical and practical concerns in social justice studies" (p. 508). In other words, there is mutual gain for the participants and the researchers – a fitting framework for a study on reciprocity.

An additional appeal of constructivist grounded theory for this study was that it located participants' subjective experiences within a larger structure, which led to illuminating the structures and increasing the participants' and researchers' understanding of how the structures worked (Charmaz, 2005). Because this study was a mechanical puzzle (Mason, 2007), the second generation of grounded theory was particularly apt due to the way it connected social structures with enacted processes that have been made real through actions. Grounded theorists offered insight into how justice or injustice has developed, changed, or persisted, and pragmatic ideas as to how a particular group could progress from injustice to justice.

The founding scholars of grounded theory, Glaser and Strauss, were cutting edge because they offered systematic strategies for how qualitative research could lead to

theory as well as useful guidelines for acting on a need, issue, or problem. They resisted

the over-arching opinion of the day that qualitative methods were impressionistic and

lacked a systematic approach necessary to generate theory (Charmaz, 2006).

The main benefit for taking a grounded theory approach with this study was the way it

provided a systematic framework for the researcher to connect with the situation and gain

an unique understanding of it. According to Charmaz:

> Through our methods, we first aim to see this world as our research
>
> participants do – from the inside. Although we cannot claim to replicate
>
> their views, we can try to enter their settings and situations to the extent
>
> possible. Seeing research participants' lives from the inside often gives a
>
> researcher otherwise unobtainable views. You might learn that what
>
> outsiders assume about the world you study may be limited, imprecise,
>
> mistaken, or egregiously wrong. (2006, p.14)

When researchers use grounded theory appropriately, it has the advantage of

quickening the speed of clarifying the focus of data analysis and interpretation without

sacrificing the detail that enriches grounded theories (Charmaz, 2006, p. 15).

I selected Charmaz' version of grounded theory over the traditional one because it

was more open to the post-modern turn. Through their ontological stance, researchers seek

to understand the lived experience of people through learning about shared experience and

what that shared experience means to those who share it (Creswell, 2007, p. 17). For me, this necessitated openness to many different understandings of reality that are "shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values; crystallized over time" (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 195). I believe there are multiple realities and that we do not ever come to know one provable reality. I have come to know my reality in terms of a dialectic that shaped me as I shaped it. Put more directly, I make my world while the world makes me.

The Researchers Role

With a qualitative research method, the researcher does not use standardized instruments or manipulate large datasets. The researcher is part of the research process and in a sense serves as the tool for data collection. As a qualitative researcher, I reached out to participants, talked with them about their experiences, was as sensitive as possible to their narratives and discourse, and then interpreted what they told me as analytically as possible. According to grounded theory methodology, sensitivity is the extent to which a researcher understands and interprets the perspective of the participants. In other words, the insight, experience, and analytical abilities the researcher brings to the situation under investigation (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). To this study I brought my own bias, education, point of view, and situational knowledge.

80

The biases I bring to this research effort center on my experience as a service-learning director at two different universities: University of Missouri-Kansas City and Rockhurst University. I have worked as a service-learning director for eleven years and am aware of the costs of service-learning to community organizations. Often I have wondered why some organizations continued to agree to provide learning experiences for students. Perhaps like me they have bought into the service-learning ideal. I believe that all students should have at least one high-quality service-learning experience. I also believe that higher education has a duty to connect with community organizations and to help build strong communities.

Ethical Issues

As a researcher I have an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values, and desires of the informants of my study. I articulated the research objectives both verbally and in writing and made certain all participants knew about them upfront. All participants provided their written consent to be part of the study as well as to be recorded using digital audio recording devices. I submitted a protocol to the University of Missouri-Kansas City Social Science Institutional Review Board. As the project progressed, I kept all participants informed of the steps. Additionally, each individual participant had access to verbatim transcriptions of our interview and my written interpretations and reports. The

identity of all informants was kept confidential and I worked with them on choices

regarding their anonymity, their data, and how I reported it.

Reliability and Validity

The meaning of validity in qualitative study is tricky because its roots are in

quantitative study and logical positivism where a researcher uses quantitative methods for

the purposes of testing hypotheses and measuring relationships between variables (Denzin

& Lincoln, 1998). In quantitative approaches, validity seeks to determine whether the

measurements are accurate and whether they measure what they are intended to measure

(Golafshani, 2003). While validity had its start in quantitative research, most scholars

agree it should be considered in qualitative research as well (Golafshani, 2003; Patton,

2001; Clont, 1992; Seale, 1999); however, some identify a "quantitative bias in the

concept rigor" (Davies & Dodd, 2002, p. 281). One approach to consideration of validity

is to consider the following as the essential criteria for quality qualitative research:

credibility, neutrality, conformability, consistency, dependability, and applicability (Guba

& Lincoln, 2005).

Throughout the study, I took steps to build in checks and balances to maintain

acceptable standards of scientific inquiry. Leading research theorists recommend the

following strategies to increase the credibility of qualitative research: prolonged

engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, auditing, and member-checking (Padgett, 1998; Lincoln, 1995). I focused on triangulation, peer debriefing, auditing, and member-checking to increase rigor in my study.

Triangulation involves collecting data from multiple sources. In my study I collected data from the community conversation, interviews, and documents. I also used member-checking as I transcribed data and began the process of coding. In terms of peer review, I recruited a graduate student to cross-check my coding for intercoder agreement. This was done to make sure that my colleague agreed that I applied the coding consistently and that the coding I applied related to the meaning of the text (applicability and neutrality). I conducted checks to assure that there was not a drift in how I used or applied the codes. I did this by comparing data with the codes through the process of writing memos about how I coded each transcript. Finally, Renee Michael, PhD, a professor of psychology at Rockhurst University, served as external auditor and reviewed my entire research project. Starting with the research questions, she reviewed all of the files, coding, and memos. Dr. Michael provided an objective assessment similar to a fiscal auditor (Cresswell, 2009, p.192). Dr. Michael was the faculty advisor of service-learning at Rockhurst University. She has a unique understanding of knowing service-learning, having relationships with community partners, and insight into the workings of Rockhurst. Additionally, she is a recognized scholar of service-learning and as a professor in

psychology she also has extensive knowledge of research methodology, including

grounded theory. Dr. Michael was in a good position to rigorously review this study and

assure that proper method was followed and that the series of codes were applied

consistently. After a lengthy review process, Dr. Michael agreed that the study was

conducted accurately, consistently, and with an appropriate degree of professionalism.

The next step of validation to minimize errors was to check all transcripts of the

interviews and the community conversations to make sure they did not have errors

stemming from the transcription and coding process. After the open coding, I mailed each

participant a printout of the transcripts and the code. I included a one-question form that

asked participants to indicate whether they agreed with the transcript and coding and

provided them a space to comment. I asked the participants to return the form, signed, in a

self-addressed stamped envelope. It was my hope that thorough documentation and thick

descriptions would increase the chances that this study may be replicated in another

region.

Design of the Study

Setting

    As a site for the proposed project, I selected Rockhurst University – a Jesuit college in urban Kansas City, Missouri. The vision and mission of the university exemplify the principles of service-learning and reciprocity. As posted on the website, the mission is: "Rockhurst University exists to transform lives by creating a learning community centered on excellence in undergraduate liberal education and graduate education. Rockhurst is Catholic and Jesuit, involved in the life and growth of the city and region, and committed to the service of the contemporary world." The vision is: "Rockhurst University will be nationally recognized for transforming lives and forming leaders in the Jesuit tradition. Inspired by the example of St. Ignatius of Loyola, this Catholic university community seeks to make God's good world better through learning, leadership, service, and the pursuit of justice."

    Rockhurst University has the longest-standing service learning office in the region (established in 1994) and as a Jesuit university is well known for its service. Rockhurst University has been on the honor roll for community service and recently received the Carnegie Community Engagement Elective Classification. According to their classification self-study, Rockhurst University contributes the following to the

community: $137k in annual donated meeting space serving 10,231 people; 822 work-study hours given to organizations like local charter schools and youth centers; and over 25,000 per year of documented student service hours invested in community service and service learning projects (Rockhurst University, 2010). Rockhurst University routinely offers 47 service-learning courses in an academic year, taught by 27 faculty, representing 13.5% of faculty. Just under 1000 students participate in service-learning each year, representing 30% of the student body (Rockhurst University, 2010). Given this institutional support for service-learning and openness to building community partnerships based out of a sense of mutual respect, Rockhurst University was a wonderful sight to learn about how reciprocity works in service-learning.

I first approached the director of the Center for Service Learning, Julia Vargas, and with her buy-in presented the opportunity to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management (then Bill Haefele, PhD). Dr. Haefele viewed this as a project with mutual gain wherein I would have access to another university and its community partners and Rockhurst University would have information needed pertaining to the level of reciprocity they have established with their community partners. At Rockhurst's request, I met with the faculty who teach service-learning courses and gained their input in the study as well as their permission to contact the community partners with which they collaborate currently or in the recent past.

I submitted the details of my study on the prescribed research application form to

the University of Missouri-Kansas City Social Science Institutional Review Board along

with a consent form and my community conversation and interview protocols. After

review, the IRB decided my research was exempt from full review because it presented

either no known or minimal risks for the participants. Because my study was based on the

community partners of a different university, I completed and submitted my proposed

study on Rockhurst University's prescribed IRB application form, along with the findings

of the University of Missouri-Kansas City's IRB that my research was exempt. The

Rockhurst University IRB similarly found my study exempt from full review and I was

ready to begin. An additional detail to note, I had already passed the web-based training

program in human research subject protection required by UMKC and offered by the

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative.

Participants and Sampling Techniques

The participants of the study were individuals who work for organizations that

partner with Rockhurst University for purposes of service-learning. The main intent was to

reach out to a representative group of participants from a variety of organizations (schools,

health-related nonprofits, issue-focused nonprofits, local governments, and umbrella

organizations); and from a variety of positions within those organizations (classroom

teacher, volunteer director, executive director, social worker). I used maximum variation

sampling, which involves setting criteria for the participants and then selecting

participants that are as different as possible based on the criteria (Creswell, 2007, p. 126).

This allowed my research to be based on a wide variety of experiences. In addition to

maximum variation, I used snowball/chain sampling which identified additional

participants using social/professional networking with the goal of gaining a few additional

participants who were "information rich" (Creswell, 2007, p. 127). The criteria that will

inform my selection of participants will be: type of organization, organizational role, level

of education, and racial/ethnic and gender diversity. All of the participants needed to have

experience with working with college students as volunteers in their organizations.

I worked with the director of the Center for Service Learning and the director of

the Rockhurst University Community Center to develop a process of identifying potential

participants. My first reach out was to the faculty who teach service-learning courses and I

asked them to recommend potential participants. The two department directors, CSL and

RUCC, also forwarded a list of potential participants. This process identified 36 possible

participants. I examined a list of community partners from the director of the RUCC to

add to my pool five additional potential participants who would offer a broader

perspective and context. From this list of 41 potential participants, I reached out to each

potential participant by email. I also sent follow up emails and called potential participants

to gather a participant group of 24 who were representative of different areas of service, different levels of position, different levels of education, and as much gender and racial/ethnic diversity as possible. The participants were invited to participate in a community conversation as well as an interview. At the community conversation, nine participants attended. Most participants preferred to take part in individual interviews and 21 participants were interviewed, five who had also participated in a community conversation.

With qualitative research, there is not a minimum required number to participate in the study. In the grounded theory methodology, a researcher gathers information and data until the topic becomes saturated. This judgment is made by the researcher, based on no longer hearing new stories from the participants (Charmz, 2006). I continued a bit past saturation on the topic generally because I was also trying to understand the breadth of community partner experience across types of organizations.

Grounded Theory Approach

The strategy of inquiry I used for this qualitative study was the grounded theory approach. The main intent of grounded theory is to develop a theory about a process or phenomenon – in this case it would be about reciprocity as experienced by community partners in service-learning. The main impetus for grounded theory was that theories that

emerge from research should have as their foundation the data from the field. Glaser and Strauss came to criticize each other and moved apart with Glaser founding Glasserian grounded theory and Strauss and Juliet Corbin moving forward with grounded theory (Creswell, 2007). Constructivist grounded theory, advocated by Charmaz, positions the research method out of positivism and into contemporary qualitative methodologies after the postmodern turn in qualitative research. This branch of the grounded theory family of influence emphasizes subject participation in constructing a theory and interpreting data from the ground up as well as a pragmatic end outcome for the data.

Charmaz's constructivist grounded theory fit well with my purpose and topic. I liked the idea of connecting with community partners to build a theory for service-learning community partnerships that would be available to both service-learning offices and community-based organizations for best practices and developing policy. Constructivist grounded theory appeals to me because I think the community has not been included enough in service-learning research. When community organizations have been consulted, the resulting information has been published back into the higher education voice and theoretical constructs. Ultimately, beyond the process of my dissertation, I would like for the theory that emerges from this study to be given back to the communities that partner with education for student learning. I plan to do this by showing that community partner representatives were involved with the study, that their perspectives were documented

90

with rigor and analyzed conscientiously (which the grounded theory discipline guides).

This information would be made available to community-based organizations in texts that

are evidence-based but also accessible and void of the specific terminology of higher

education research.

Data Collection

In this study, I gathered and analyzed data in a number of different ways and at a

number of different points. I obtained a unique Gmail account for the purposes of

communication and tracking related to the proposed study. All correspondence was

initiated with the Gmail account to assure that correspondence for the study was

maintained separate from my personal and work email accounts.

Community Conversation

The first step was to recruit participants for a community conversation. Soon after

receiveing study approval from the UMKC Social Science Institutional Review Board and

Rockhurst's Institutional Review Board, I began recruitment. My initial plan was to have a

large community conversation for 30 participants at the Rockhurst Community Center, a

neutral and convenient location. Despite my best efforts at recruiting, only nine

participants responded to the invitations and participated in the community conversation.

Due to the small turnout, three questions were asked at each round and two rotations were held with the final questions discussed in a full group format. Also due to the small turnout, I recruited only two volunteer table facilitators and trained them on the World Café method of community partnerships and on this study. The facilitators followed a protocol for the community conversation that provided an overview of the introduction, table questions, and rotation instructions. Each table facilitator was trained on recording highlighted issues on chart paper.

At the beginning of the event, I provided an overview of campus-community partnerships to the group assembled to set the context. I then facilitated a community conversation using the World Café approach. Participants selected the table that interested them and engaged in a conversation there for ten minutes. The table facilitator charted the ideas and helped manage the time. After ten minutes, I asked participants to find a second table. We did this for two rounds and discussed the remaining questions as a larger group. The purpose of the community conversations was to gather a large amount of data on a series of questions in an amount of time that would not require too much sacrifice from the participants. While the turnout was low at the first event, which prompted me to host a second event, the community conversation process provided the participants time to network, share their thoughts with each other, and have an open forum for expressing their opinions.

The second step was to analyze the initial data and provide a summary to each participant. I coded the community conversation data, using the methods for coding qualitative data as described by Charmaz (2006) and by Saldana (2009). As part of this initial analysis, I wrote a series of initial memos on telling codes that helped develop ideas. Participants were mailed hard copies of the coding and invited to review the coding for accuracy and comment on it. A return self-addressed, stamped envelope was provided for their convenience.

Interviews

The next data collection point was with follow-up interviews with 21 community partners. To maximize convenience, I scheduled these across a two-month period during fall 2011, with each interview set to last approximately thirty minutes, but most lasted an hour because community partners wanted to give me a tour in addition to the interview. I traveled to the community partner – either at work or at a place convenient to the community partner. The interviews were semi-structured and I used a smart pen to audio record the interview. After the interview, I transcribed the interview and produced a typed transcript. I also wrote memos during the data-gathering portion of the proposed study. In the memos I noted my own observations of the interviews, the community conversation,

and other associated elements. After each interview, I sent a hand-written thank you note to each participant to acknowledge and appreciate his or her investment in the study.

It was difficult to find a good number of participants who were representative of the diversity and breadth of Kansas City's nonprofit sector who were also partners of Rockhurst University's service-learning. In a few cases I stopped by nonprofit organizations to introduce myself and leave a one-page information sheet about the study. I hoped that the face-to-face contact would help build trust. Twice in that process, it turned out that the participant had time for the interview, and so it was fortuitous that I had my materials with me and could do the interview. This in-person contact seemed risky to me, but as I reflected on it, volunteer coordinators work with large numbers of people all day and are some of the busiest people I have ever met. This technique helped me stand out from the large numbers of contacts they make by phone and email.

The purpose of the interviews as well as the community conversation was to learn from the participants about what is happening in such a way that I could help correct or resist a researchers' tendency to let preconceived notions about community partners and their perspective overshadow the study. According to constructivist grounded theory protocol, "Interviewers use in-depth interviewing to explore, not to interrogate" (Charmaz, 2006). I prepared an interview protocol or guide with open-ended questions that I took with me to provide structure to the interview. However, following the intention of

94

exploration rather than interrogation, I tried to keep the interviews as informal and conversational as possible. Having the protocol helped me truly concentrate on what each participant was saying, rather than busying my mind formulating the next question (Charmaz, 2006).

As stated above, at each interview I used an interview protocol for asking questions and recording the answers. The protocol contained a heading, standardized instructions to be read at the beginning of each interview, the questions, and probes for each question. The protocol ended with a final statement of thanks and appreciation, which specifically acknowledged the individual being interviewed (Creswell, 2009). Each face-to-face interview was recorded as an audio file as well as a written file using a Livescribe smart pen. This aided in producing a transcript of the interview.

The final data recording was through a research journal I updated after each interview with observations and notes pertaining to my consistency as interviewer and the consistency of the interview format. I also noted where there were significant interruptions or other sensitivities that I would need to remember during the coding process.

Documents

In addition to community conversations and interviews, there are multiple documents that provide a rich source of information about the organizations as well as

95

about Rockhurst University. I used the GuideStar DonorEdge profiles for each of the organizations to obtain the following information: mission/vision, date founded, budget size, major issue area, number of personnel, significant partnerships, and number of volunteers. I also scanned each profile for mentions of key words in CEO statements related to reciprocity and/or higher education. The GuideStar DonorEdge system is a "technology and knowledge platform that enables community foundations to encourage increased charitable giving and to promote awareness of local needs and issues to donors and the community" (GuideStar, 2012). The Greater Kansas City Community Foundation uses DonorEdge as a data collection tool and manages and keeps up-to-date an online nonprofit profile that demonstrates effectiveness in the four major areas of programs, management, governance, and financials. Nonprofits submit information contained in the DonorEdge profiles as well as financial information. The Greater Kansas City Community Foundation staff reviews and verifies the information (Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, n.d.). Utilizing this already-gathered and verified information provided a trustworthy source of descriptive data about the organizations I interviewed.

An additional document I used for the study is Rockhurst University's 2010 Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement 2010 Documentation Reporting Form. This is the standard form that all institutions use who are seeking the Carnegie Foundation's prestigious elective classification. Rockhurst University applied in

2010 and was awarded in 2011 the Carnegie Elective Classification for Community

Engagement. As the DonorEdge data provided a standard, classified framework for coding

descriptive information about the community partner organization, the Carnegie

Documentation Reporting Form provides a standardized framework for understanding

Rockhurst University's community engagement and service-learning in light of

established national benchmarks. Similarly, all of the information reported on the

documentation form was verified by the staff at the Carnegie Foundation, making it a

trustworthy source of information.

After I transcribed and imported all of the documents into the data management

system, I verified information as needed by telephone or email with each participant. I

tried to create a collaborative atmosphere with the participants. I also checked in with the

participants at various steps along the way with short, professional emails. My main

motivation with this was to further respect the investment they made in my project by

participating and by sharing their thoughts with me. Research takes a long time, especially

when the researcher is a practitioner scholar and works full-time. It was difficult to enlist

all of the participants in the study and I did not want to risk having them give up on the

project due to feeling out of the communication loop.

Summary of Data Collection

To summarize the data collection portion of this study, I collected data in three areas. First, a community conversation brought together community partners in a facilitated, organized discussion about reciprocity and service-learning. The notes from this community conversation became the first set of data. Second, I conducted in-depth interviews with community partners. Throughout this process I kept a research journal of field notes and observations as a process of being self-reflective and working to reduce bias. The third area of data collection was obtaining documents about the nonprofits and about Rockhurst University's service-learning.

Data Analysis

Grounded theory has many steps for data analysis, which represents an "ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data, asking analytic questions, and writing memos throughout the study" (Creswell, 2009, p. 184). Data analysis began when I began data collection. First, the data was organized and prepared for analysis, which included digitizing and transcribing interviews. In grounded theory research, as in other qualitative research, "coding means the categorizing segments of data with a short name that simultaneously summarizes and accounts for each piece of data" (Charmaz, 2006, p.

43). I began by open coding the data, which was a process of examining all of the text, documents, and notes gathered to identify the prominent categories of information. At the open coding stage, I strove to be absolutely certain that the evidence supports each of the identified categories. To do this, I used the constant comparative approach to reduce the universe of collected data to a small group of categories that were most relevant to the topic being investigated by the study (Creswell, 2007, p. 160). The open category that appeared most frequently in the data was then identified as the central phenomenon. This process reinforced that the research was grounded in the experiences and ideas expressed by the participants. Once this selection was made, the researcher returned to the data collection to determine how the categories related to the central phenomenon. Charmaz uses a metaphor to explain the relationship between coding and theoretical integration. Through coding, I generated the bones of my analysis; through theoretical integration I assembled the bones into a skeleton (Charmaz, 2006).

The table below presents a list of the codes, arranged alphabetically. To conserve space on the page, the list is arranged in four columns and reads down the column. There is no relationship across rows.

Table 1

List of Open Codes, Arranged Alphabetically by Column

Open Codes

Advice	Collective human elements/actors	How colleges could be better partners	Socio/cultural aspect
Authentic community perceptions	College students	How community partner involved	Solutions/best practices
Authentic experience	Communication	How faculty/staff are involved	Sustainability
Background check	Community engagement	Implicated silent actors	Symbolic
Benefits of service-learning for youth	Community partner as instructor	Importance of communication	Training of community partners

Open Codes

Best practices	Community partners also have a purpose	Importance of reciprocity	Training of students
Better preparation of students by college	Community partners definition of service-learning	Institutional resources provided as outreach to community	Transformative for college students
Both parties planning and acting together toward common goal	Community partners evaluate students	Institutionalization of s-l at university	Transformative for our clients
Building community	Community partners needs	Legalities and liability	Transformative for our organization
Building relationships	Connection to academics	Length of time given	Trust
Career	Description of what students learn	Move from charity to justice	University and community connections
Catholic, Jesuit mission	Description what college students do as service learners or volunteers	Mutual gain	University leadership
Challenges	Discourse - reciprocity	New ideas, develop out of partnerships	University learning from experiences in the community
Change unequal relationships between servers and the served	Diversity	Portal / one contact person	Veiled structure of the ivory tower

101

Open Codes

Changes at organization	Evidence of designing good experiences for students	Privilege	Voice for poverty
Changes in students	Evidence of joint creation of work and knowledge	Service-learning/volunteering vs observation	What partners would change
Characteristics of partnerships	Faculty	Service good for college students - benefits	What volunteers save org
Characteristics of reciprocity	Grooming next generation	Sl connection to career path	Work with communities on how to partner with higher ed for service-learning
Clients	Helps knock down ivory tower	Sl meets needs of organization	

Seventy-five codes were used during the open-coding process. The second round of

coding in grounded theory is called axial coding (Creswell, 2007) and relates to the step

where the researcher reviews the database to understand how the coding categories explain

the central phenomenon. Creswell notes that axial coding reveals the following: "causal

conditions that influence the central phenomenon, the strategies for addressing the

phenomenon, the context and intervening conditions that shape the strategies, and the

consequences of undertaking the strategies" (p.161).

Once I obtained all of the coding, I developed a theoretical model of the process.

The final step in analysis was to generate hypotheses that connected the research

categories with the theoretical model, called selective coding. The final step in analysis

was a matrix that I used as an analytical aid to support my visualization of the resultant

framework across the widest possible range of conditions that still related back to the

phenomenon under study, in this case, reciprocity in service-learning campus community

partnerships (Creswell, 2007).

There are a number of qualitative data analysis programs available. For my study I

used ATLAS.ti for data organization and management, assigning open codes, and creating

memos. ATLAS.ti is a qualitative data management system developed in 1989 at the

Technical University of Berlin, and relased commercially in 1993. Anselm Strauss, one of

the founders of grounded theory, wrote the software manual for ATLAS.ti. The company,

ATLAS.ti GmbH has been operational for almost 30 years and their software is now in its

seventh version, although version 6 was used for this study because version 7 was not yet

available at the beginning of the study. The qualitative data management system allowed

for a variety of documents and formats to be imported to its virtual workbench and file

cabinet. From there, each transcript, PDF file, or report was organized in the database

object explorer and coded. Table 1, above, shows the 75 open codes assigned during the

first round of coding. Also, during the coding, portions of the primary documents were

marked as quotations. The software allows for the quotations to be sorted and organized

by code, and memos to be attached to the quotations. Using the code management system

of the software, all of the quotations and memos were then analyzed to determine which

codes appeared most frequently, and which codes were equivalent, but worded differently.

To determine the axial codes, the second stage of coding in grounded theory, the codes

were analyzed in such a way that connections were built between the codes. For example,

all of the codes related to reciprocity were analyzed and connections were formed among

31 of the open codes listed in table one with the emerging axial code. A dominant group of

codes within reciprocity was importance of reciprocity to community partners, which was

coded 40 times in the interviews and connected to 20 other codes. Following this same

process, the codes that had the greatest density (were used most) became the axial codes.

The axial codes that were the most grounded, or had the greatest number of connections to

other codes, became the selective codes. In this manner, the selective codes emerged from the very beginning open codes. ATLAST.ti's families option and search features supported the development of axial codes, and the in-depth analysis of passages identified as representative of concepts from the data that had features in common (Creswell, 2007). Working with a qualitative data management system reduced the chances of human error and opportunities for bias.

Table 2

Analytical Mapping of Research Questions, Themes, and Categories

Research Questions	1. What are the community partners' experiences with higher education service-learning?
	2. Reciprocity is a definitional characteristic of service-learning. Do community organizations experience reciprocity when they partner with institutions of higher education for service-learning?
	3. How does higher education service-learning contribute to the community organizations where students do their service-learning?
	4. From the community partner perspective, what do their organizations contribute to student service-learners?
Selective Codes	1. Discourse of service-learning from community partner experiences
	2. Importance of reciprocity to community partners
	3. Service-learning outcomes/challenges
	continues

4. Community partner contribution of transformative learning for college students

5. The connection between perception of reciprocity and institutionalization of service-learning

6. Dismantling the ivory tower/jointly creating knowledge

Axial Codes	Reciprocity	Institutionalization	Students
	Service-learning partnerships	Characteristics of service-learning partnerships	Student Learning
	Challenges	Solutions/Best Practices	Academics
	Service-learning outcomes	Forming Relationships	Careers
	Social Justice	Faculty	Diversity
Open Codes	Based on community conversation and interviews		

Chapter Summary

Reciprocal Exchange was designed to help address a gap in the literature and scholarly research on service-learning pertaining to community partners experiences of reciprocity in higher education service-learning. Chapter three detailed the research

method of this study, beginning with a rationale for qualitative inquiry and a discussion of the researcher's role, ethical issues, reliability and validity. The heart of the chapter three was its discussion of study design and grounded theory method and then the presentation of data collection and data analysis. The next chapter will present the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

As a central construct in the theory of service-learning, reciprocity for community partners is virtually unknown. The purpose of this constructivist grounded theory study was to examine how reciprocity works and identify the features of reciprocity that shape how communities feel about service-learning. Having a better understanding of community partners' perspectives of service-learning in higher education could help colleges and universities promote reciprocity in partnerships for service-learning. A three-tiered approach yielded a comprehensive understanding of the mechanics of reciprocity. This study connected with twenty-three participants who are all service-learning community partners associated with Rockhurst University. Tier one was a community conversation forum designed to define what constitutes service-learning from the community perspective and to ask participants to describe how service-learning works. Tier two consisted of follow-up interviews with nonprofit staff and PK-12 educators. Through these interviews, details were gathered specific to organizations and their experiences, needs, and hopes for the future. In tier three, documents about the nonprofits and about Rockhurst University's service-learning program were gathered and reviewed.

108

All of the data was coded and analyzed using constructivist grounded theory methodology. A series of findings resulted that illuminate, from the community partners' perspectives, what colleges and universities can do to encourage reciprocity among partnerships for service-learning. There were four research questions explored through this study:

1. What are the community partners' experiences with higher education service-learning?

2. Reciprocity is a definitional characteristic of service-learning. Do community organizations experience reciprocity when they partner with institutions of higher education for service-learning?

3. How does higher education service-learning contribute to the community organizations where students do their service-learning?

4. From the community partner perspective, what do their organizations contribute to student service-learners?

Chapter Organization

This chapter presents an overview of the study findings. The beginning of the chapter provides descriptive data of the participants, the types of nonprofit organizations represented in this study, and how the general areas of focus connect with Rockhurst University's degree programs and graduates. The next section explores a visual analysis

across the different types of data to establish that they are comparable. The third section summarizes the results of the community conversation. The fourth section highlights each individual interview through the construct of reciprocity. The fifth section examines the collected data by research question. The sixth and final section examines the data by each of the selective codes, which are the main findings of the study. Throughout the chapter are significant quotes from student participants, also referred to as informants and community partners. When these quotes are 40 words or less, they are italicized. When the quotes are greater than 40 words, they are formatted as block quotes. This method was recommended by the graduate studies office to help the reader separate the voices among the researcher, the literature, and the primary sources.

A Prelude to the Findings

I reached out to representatives of community organizations – nonprofits and schools – to listen to their perspectives of reciprocity in service-learning. I was especially curious about whether service-learning achieves the reciprocity that its definition claims is essential for a high-quality student experience. During one of the first interviews, a community partner discussed what it feels like when colleges and universities do not have fully institutionalized, funded service-learning programs.

110

I think if colleges were going to be really intentional about service-learning, the

faculty and program facilitators would be involved with the project on the

community end…. There's so little involvement on the part of the people who want

the kids to do this that I'm not sure they really need anything from us. They don't

come to see the benefits. They're not hands-on watching their students interact with

the other students.

This astute community partner identified the central problem with reciprocity

between campus and community in partnerships for service-learning. Colleges and

universities often depict dismantling the ivory tower as faculty and students scaling down

the outside walls of the tower and participating in the community. Reciprocity works two

ways; dismantling the ivory tower requires that the round stone walls come down, or that

large windows are cut in the tower that enable community members to see inside the

institution in ways that are transparent and meaningful. The questions that arose from the

community partners had to do with how service-learning works at the college: *I wonder

about what is in it for the students? Is this work at our organization counting toward

something special for the students?* Another community partner remarked: *I can't

imagine why students actually do this. It seems unequal to me from the standpoint of we

need them more than they need us.* Related to this mystery is the reflection process.

Community partners are not always privy to the reflection process – they do not hear about

111

class discussions, they do not read reflection statements; they do not even necessarily

know in what ways the community-based experience matters in the academic experience.

There seems to be a breakdown of communication that is endemic of two very different

cultures coming together in a common intersection: student learning. From my years as a

service-learning director, I knew that there is a perception that no one is busier than a

volunteer coordinator at a nonprofit or a high school teacher. Faculty members and

service-learning staff do not want to overburden community partners with an abundance of

text and paperwork. This communication breakdown was not due to lack of caring, at least

as far as this group of community partners expressed. But it also may be having an adverse

relationship on campus-community partnerships and service-learning quality. This study

provided a forum to explore from the community partners perspective the pertinent issue

of reciprocity in service-learning.

Descriptive Data

I gathered and analyzed data from three tiers of the study: community

conversation, interviews, and gathered documents. I then used grounded theory method to

examine how reciprocity in service-learning works from the community partners

perspective. The purpose of gathering additional documents was to place the data from

this study in a context to determine how it fits with the broader narrative of Kansas City

communities and Rockhurst University. Additional data incorporated included DonorEdge

profiles obtained from the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation and written by

representatives from the community organizations, the 2010 Application for the

Community Engagement Carnegie Elective Classification written by Rockhurst University

faculty and administration, and results from a prior Rockhurst University community

partner service-learning feedback survey.

Community Partner Organizations

A primary consideration when examining data for this study was the array of

participating community partner organization and whether it was reasonably broad when

compared with the Kansas City region and the academic offerings of Rockhurst

University. The director of the Rockhurst University Center for Service Learning

identified 41 community partner organizations to be invited to participate in the study.

From the invitations, 24 participants representing 18 organizations enrolled in the study.

Each organization was assigned a code name based on the military phonetic alphabet (e.g.

alpha, bravo, charlie, …) in order to keep the organizations distinct and to maintain

confidentiality. Steps were taken to assure that the military alphabet name did not track

back to the same letter of the alphabet as the name of the organization or the name of the

study participant. To determine that a representative sample of organizations participated

in the study, data about each organization was obtained from the Greater Kansas City

Community Foundation's database, Donor Edge. The Donor Edge Profile organization

type classification is based on the National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE)

classification system (Andersson & Renz, 2009). NTEE was initiated in the 1980s as a

method of researching nonprofits and providing quality information for public policy efforts,

the nonprofit sector, and society writ large (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2009).

The NTEE system classifies organizations into ten broad categories: Education; Environment

and Animals; Health; Human Services; Arts, Culture, and Humanities; Mutual Membership

Benefit; Public Social Benefit; International Foreign Affairs; Religion Related; and a catch-all

category for organizations that do not fit in to one of the main classifications (National Center

for Charitable Statistics, 2009). Table 3, below, details the organizations participating in

this study and how they compare across the NTEE categories. Of the ten broad categories,

six are viable options for service-learning: Mutual Membership Benefit, International

Foreign Affairs, and Religion Related, and the catch-all category were less conducive to

service-learning. This study focused primarily on five categories. Interestingly, the areas

where Rockhurst University did not have service-learning partnersips were areas where

Rockhurst also had fewer or smaller degree programs: Arts, Culture, and Humanities; and

International, Foreign Affairs. That considered, the study encompassed five of the six

probable categories of nonprofits, which was reasonably broad.

114

Table 3

Comparison Between Study Organizations, Nonprofit Sector, and Rockhurst Degrees

Organization Type	Total # Study Orgs	Percent of Study	Percent of KC region (2009)	Total # Study Participant	Percent of Study Participant	% Degrees Conferred
Education	5	28%	15%	8	33.3%	19%
Environment and Animals	2	11%	2%	2	8.3%	6%
Health	4	22%	10%	5	21%	34%
Human Services	6	34%	25%	8	33.3%	9%
Arts, Culture, and Humanities	0	0%	8%	0	0%	2%
Mutual Membership Benefit	0	0%	>1%	0	0%	NA
Public Social Benefit	1	5%	20%	1	4.1%	>1%
International, Foreign Affairs	0	0%	1%	0	0%	>1%
Religion Related	0	0%	6%	0	0%	>1%
Unknown, Unclassified/ Classification does not match NTEE	0	0%	13%		0%	30%
Totals	18	5.00%	100%	24	100%	100%

Table 3 also compares a percentage of representation of organizations in the study with percentage of organizations in the Kansas City region within each major category. Education and health are both over-represented, but they comprise a large portion of Rockhurst students and academic programs. Based on the National Center for Education Statistics IPEDS Data Center data on degrees conferred by CIP code in 2010, Rockhurst graduated 803 students at Bachelor's, Master's and Doctor's professional practice levels and the top categories were health (34%), business (29%), and education (19%). On the other hand, only 2% of graduates received degrees in the Arts, Culture, and Humanities categories. Rockhurst University has a strong management degree program, and students studying business do participate in service-learning. However, Rockhurst University's service-learning program focuses on non-profit organizations as community partners, and not businesses. Business was not overrepresented in this study because they are for-profit entities. Looking at NTEE classifications of nonprofit organizations in the region, this study focused on areas that were not most representative of the numbers of nonprofits in the region: Human Services (26%) was the largest sector of nonprofits in Kansas City, with Public Social Benefit second largest (18.3%), and Education third largest (14%). In the study, Human Services is largest (33%), Education is second (28%) and Health is third (22%). Because service-learning was set up as an educational teaching methodology in the study, this difference in how representative the organizations were of the Kansas City

nonprofit community was noted in the study but additional partners were not recruited because the sample so closely represented Rockhurst University's academic offerings.

Study Participants

According to the 2010 Census, the population of Kansas City, Missouri, is 459,787. The racial and ethnic breakdown is: 30% African American, 3% Asian, 10% Latino, and 59% White. The study participants were not as ethnically/racially diverse as the Kansas City community at large: 8.3% African American; 4.2% Asian; 4.2% Latino; 83.3% White. As a group, the study participants were mostly female, 83.3%., but this was also representative of the nonprofit sector. To understand how representative the study participants were of the region, at the time of enrolling in the study, they were invited to share demographic information, but they could also opt not to share demographic data. All participants completed the enrollment form and shared demographic data. This bears out one of the limitations of the study, which is lack of diversity.

Table 4

Demographic Information of Study Participants

Organization Type	African American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Latino	White	American Indian	2 or more races	Unknown	Total	Female	Male	Total
Public, Social Benefit				1				1	1		1
Education	2			6				8	7	1	8
Environment				2				2	2		2
Health			1	4				5	4	1	5
Human Services		1		7				8	6	2	8
Totals	2	1	1	20	0	0	0	24	20	4	24
	8.3%	4.2%	4.2%	83.3%	0%	0%	0%		83.3%	16.7%	

118

As a topic of discussion, diversity was brought up by all of the people of color during the interview and one White woman who described herself in terms of being committed to social justice. The study participants had a strong educational background with 87.5% having a college degree. This is much higher than the 2010 Census data showed for Kansas City, Missouri. For population 25 years and over, 29.9% had attained a bachelor's degree or higher. The educational background of study participants more closely reflected Rockhurst University's educational attainment than that of the surrounding region, where in 2010, Rockhurst employed 458 people (full and part time) and 359 (78%) of the positions were for occupational activities that typically required a college degree. It is possible that the clerical, skilled crafts, and service/maintenance staff also had bachelor's degrees, even though, typically, that was not a requirement for those occupations. The study participants and the community partner organizations have more in common with Rockhurst University than with the surrounding region. This could be one reason why the study participants expressed overwhelming satisfaction with hosting Rockhurst University students for service-learning experiences.

119

Table 5

Educational Background of Study Participants

Organization Type	High School Diploma/Some College	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree & Above	Total
Public, Social Benefit			1	1
Education		4	4	8
Environment		2		2
Health	2	1	2	5
Human Services	1	4	3	8
Totals	3	11	10	24

Summary of Descriptive Data

The descriptive data presented the variety and breadth of the community partner organizations participating in the study as compared with overviews of Rockhurst University. The data show that the community partner organizations, the informants of the study, and Rockhurst University have several areas of commonality. The data show that in many ways the participating organizations are representative of nonprofits in the metropolitan area with the exception that the community partner organizations, when

examined by type, aligned more with Rockhurst University's degree programs than with the concentrations of types of Kansas City metropolitan area nonprofits.

Triangulation by Visual Frequent Word Analysis

The next section begins the data analysis with a comparison across the data sources to demonstrate triangulation. In qualitative study, "triangulation is the simultaneous display of multiple, refracted realities. Each of the metaphors 'works' to create simultaneity rather than the sequential or linear" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.6). This section looks across the different sources of data to see where external data illuminates the collected data. The purpose of establishing how the narrative of the data collected through this study intersects with other data is to provide context and an enhanced understanding of the study within a broader narrative of Rockhurst University and of Greater Kansas City.

As described in detail in Chapter Three, three families of data were added to the qualitative data management software, ATLAS.ti:

1) Transcripts of the interviews and community conversation with Rockhurst University community partners

2)   DonorEdge profiles of each community partner gathered to establish basic information about each community partner such as topic of focus, organization size, and age.

3)   Two reports from Rockhurst University focusing on community partnerships – a community partnership evaluation and the Carnegie Foundation Elective Classification report written by Rockhurst University.

ATLAS.ti has a feature that counts words used across primary documents. Through visual analysis, if the word use frequency across the three types of documents formed similar graphed lines, then the connection of the three different families of documents analyzed would be supported. Across the 43 primary documents, 9,137 words were used. This data was exported to Excel and functional words such as articles, conjunctions, pronouns were removed. The number of times the top 30 words were used was graphed with four lines: one line for each data family member and one line for the total of all words. This was done to see if the words used by the community partner organizations to describe their organization, the words used by Rockhurst University to describe their community engagement, and the words used in the community conversation and the interviews made similar lines. This graph became an important tool in analyzing the data because it surfaced important points of departure in the ways key concepts were discussed.

122

Figure 1, below, shows the lines formed by plotting the number of times the top 30 words were used with one line for each general type of data and one line for the total. The lines formed after plotting the top 30 frequently occurring words across the different data types form the same general shape. When the words are sorted alphabetically and the number of uses across families and total are plotted on a graph, the lines rise and fall in basically the same patter. There are two places where the pattern is divergent. First, because the DonorEdge profiles are not documents about forming partnerships with higher education, the discourse specific to higher education does not occur with the same frequency. This results in a flat blue line between challenges and communication where the other documents' narratives discuss "college/university" much more. The other areas where the line representing the text from the DonorEdge profiles differs are regarding "learning" and "students," which again can be explained by nonprofits having a variety of missions, while at the core, colleges and universities are places of learning with students. Having two outside sources which discuss the same general topics – use the same words – heightens the credibility of the qualitative data gathered for this study. It also affirms that the central question of understanding community partner experiences in service-learning is significant for both Rockhurst University and the community partners.

Figure 1.

Comparison of 30 Most-Used Words Across Data Types
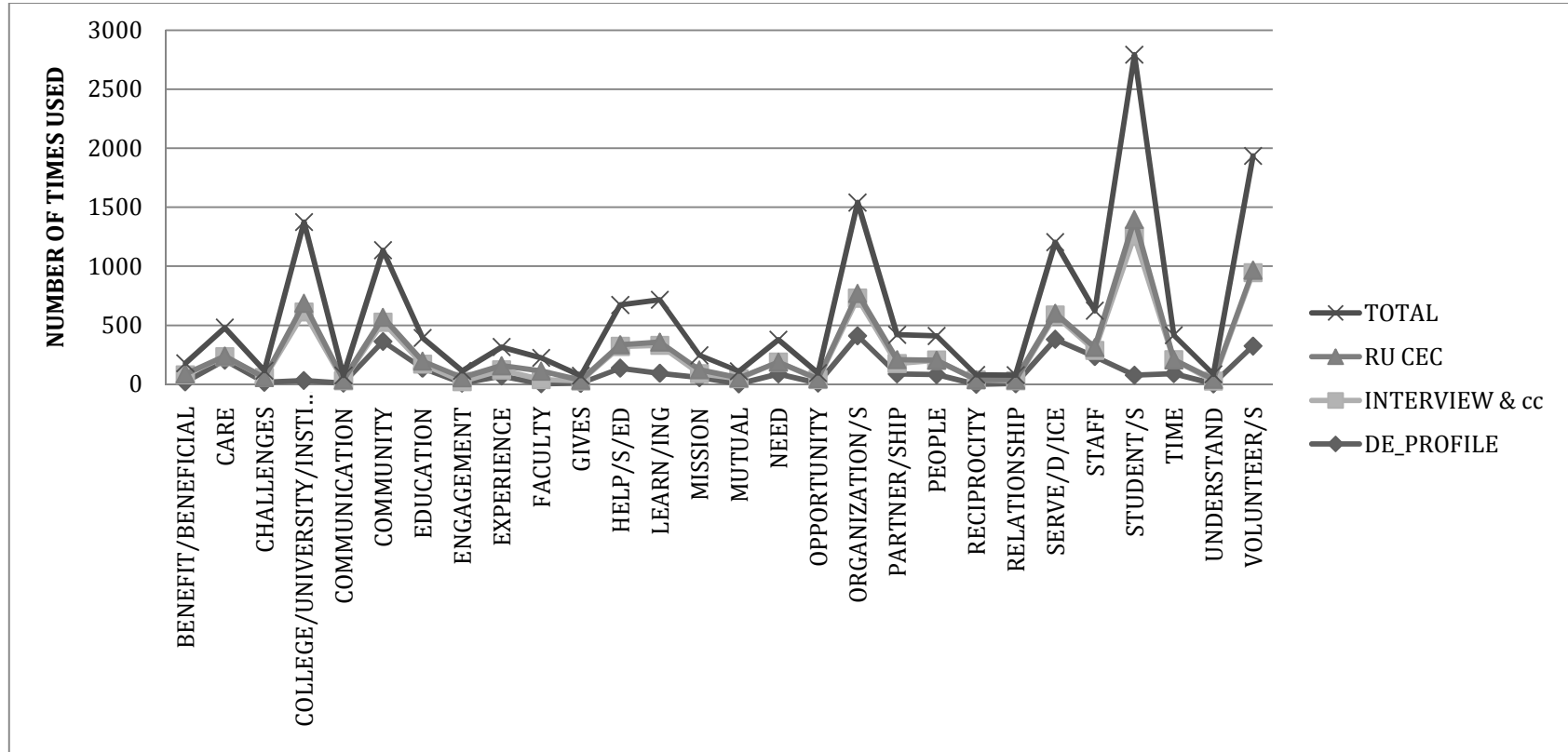
Community Conversation

Introduction

A community conversation was held regarding community partner organizations'
beliefs about reciprocity in service-learning. This subsection summarizes the proceedings
of the community conversation held at the Rockhurst University Community Center. As
an added context for the community conversation, the discussion was not necessarily
evaluative of Rockhurst University's community efforts. Most of the community partners
present revealed through the conversation that they opened up their organization to college
students from at least three, if not more, institutions of higher education. The goal of the
conversation was to understand their experiences with reciprocity – for example, what it
means and how or when it is experienced.

What is service-learning from your perspective as a community partner?

The typical definitions of service-learning provide a description of what transpires
through an academic lens and describe what happens on the learning side of service-
learning. To understand the community partners' experiences of reciprocity in service-
learning, the participants at the community conversation added the following descriptors
to the standard definition of service-learning:

- *Learning through real life situations while providing service.*

- *Teaching the next generation to give back to their communities.*

125

- *When college students are placed in situations that are new to them and challenge their worldviews.*

- *Students who have a purpose at the organization and do real work.*

- *Service-learners are not observers – they are participants!*

- *Service-learning is learning through experiences not only those of the students, but also the experiences of others.*

The community partners put their perspective in the academically-focused definition by describing learning as taking place through the service-learning experience or work, as well as the interactions with others the students may have met in their community-based learning.

What Reciprocity Means to Community Organizations

For the community partners, there were at least two ways of approaching reciprocity. When it comes to reciprocity, the community partners wanted to know among whom for the reciprocity – the institution and the organization or the faculty, students, and community partner representatives involved? This question was a great way to begin understanding reciprocity. For the organization it meant balance, mutuality, being part of the planning, and projects that meet real needs. Reciprocity was not when the community partner organizations come up with something for the college students to do that meets only the needs of the higher education institution. One community partner asked whether service-learning needs to be equal. It is important to note that a couple of community

partners shared that it took a while to learn to work with Rockhurst students and Rockhurst University service-learning. When asked to explain more about this, the community partner described the challenges of communicating with the college students and the time-consuming process of scheduling them for their service-learning. A school-based partner noted that the students could be a distraction and sometimes due to the distraction lessons had to be taught again. Both community partners quickly added that *it is completely worth it*. The community partners wanted to be certain their discussion of challenges were shared in the spirit of continuous improvement and understanding their experiences with service-learning, not as a critique of Rockhurst University or the students. The following bullet points summarize the elements of reciprocity that the community conversation participants offered in the course of discussion:

- *With reciprocity, something is established that keeps going, year after year.*
- *Reciprocity is the golden rule: it's about maintaining friendship.*
- *RU and HPA are as far apart as you can get and be on the same street; reciprocity decreases challenges.*
- *Reciprocity has aided in innovation… new programs, new ideas, develop out of partnerships.*

Reciprocity in the Context of Service-Learning

       The community partners discussed two distinct aspects of service-learning and reciprocity. First, community partners expressed appreciation of Rockhurst University's faculty workshops, which provided orientation and support for how to design and teach a service-learning course. The community conversation participants discussed the importance of universities investing time and energy to prepare faculty and staff for service-learning as part of being a good community partner. For the organizations, reciprocity was not just that students showed up and volunteered, but that faculty members were tuned in to service-learning and had woven service-learning into their courses in meaningful ways. In the words of one community partner: *A service-learning partnership that has reciprocity helps bridge opportunities for learning both ways. It is important to let relationships grow for mutual benefit and not have a prescribed agenda. When colleges look for community need, that is reciprocity.* The participants stated that it mattered to them whether or not the university leadership valued what they did as part of service-learning. *As a community partner I have faith in giving the process opportunity to find mutual benefit for university and organization. As part of this process, I want to know that university leadership values the projects.* The participants connected the position of service-learning projects within the university context with reciprocity and described it as being part of discovering what was important to both the university and the community.

There were a couple questions or comments about what students gain from service-learning beyond community service hours. *Not certain what students get – we need them more than they need us – on the other side, kids learn hard skills/real world application.* To this another community partner responded: *They are there to learn as much as we need their help/energy/ideas.* Another observation related to this discussion is that it is often the younger students who do the ice-breaking in the service-learning relationship because at first the Rockhurst students are uncomfortable.

What Colleges and Universities Can Do Better

The community partners listed the following common challenges to service-learning: complying with the semester schedule, student communication, remembering that college students are not grown-ups, transportation, uneven commitment among groups of students, and finding faculty members with whom to connect for the partnership. Their suggestions for ways colleges and universities could mitigate these challenges related to logistics and processes. The community partners felt it was a worthwhile investment for universities to have some sort of portal or front door for community organizations to connect with the multiple and varied resources offered, specifically service-learning. The University of Missouri-Kansas City's former Center for the City was offered as an ideal model from the community partner perspective because they could connect with the university without an inefficient journey through the myriad departments, centers, and programs of institutions of higher education. On a practical note, several community

129

partners emphasized insisting on products and deadlines enhanced the outcomes for service-learning. All of the participants liked the idea of giving feedback on the students' performance at the organization and did not feel that would be too much for universities to ask.

An Important Endeavor

The participants believed service-learning was an important endeavor because it has the potential to be transformative for each of the groups of people involved. Service-learning has the potential to be transformative for college students because:

- *Students get out of themselves; they come to do service and end up changed/getting more than they thought they gave.*

- *College students now come with a different mindset – they already know about service-learning because they did it in high school.*

- *Service-learning helped college students when they were in high school and they see it as part of life/giving back now that they are in college.*

- *It is harder to not pay attention to someone who has a name and a face.*

The last comment one of the participants made was a direct reference to a tendency to overlook those who are marginalized or disenfranchised. The community partners also reflected on what their clients may get out of service-learning. This also became an important part of reciprocity for most of the community partners present. Service-learning has the potential to be transformative for our clients because:

130

- *Nice to have males come for kids who may not have male role models.*

- *College students bring our students one step closer to college.*

- *It helps our students to see college students struggle with hard concepts in the classroom.*

- *Good experience for our clients to remember or look back on.*

- *Clients do not always think they are worth someone's attention – service-learning is important because it helps change that feeling.*

At the end of the community conversation, the participants networked among themselves. Their voices sounded happy and energetic as they departed the Rockhurst University Community Center and ended their workdays.

Summary of Community Conversation

The community conversation set the stage for the interviews by looking broadly at the issues the interviews would explore in more depth. The opportunity for community partners to discuss among themselves their experiences with service-learning and with reciprocity provided additional insight to how the concepts are related.

<center>**Interview Summaries**</center>

Introduction

The following subsection presents summaries of each of the interviews conducted

for this study. Most of the interviews were conducted with one study participant, but three

had two study participants who worked at the same organization in the interview. The

interviews themselves were given random code names that correspond with the military

phonetic alphabet (e.g. Alpha, Bravo, Charlie). This section provides a context for each of

the study participant's experience with service-learning and perspective on reciprocity.

Interview #1: Alpha

The Alpha organization participated only in the interview and not in the community

conversation. The interview was conducted in a conference room at the organization with a

director-level, full-time professional employee. The conference room was standard for offices but

spread out across the table were materials pertinent to the organization and its work. The first part

of the interview was spent reviewing the study: consent forms; confidentiality; and the process of

transcript, coding, review, and the opportunity for corrections of either transcript or coding.

During the second part of the interview the participant gave a thorough overview of the

organization and how it functions around volunteers. The informant shared a couple of highly

relevant details: first that she had participated in the organization's programming when she was a

teen and it had made a lasting impact on her life. The second thing shared was that she had

<center>132</center>

enjoyed a lengthy career in the business world and had recently re-careered by choice to the organization because it had made such a durable, positive impression. *I'm passionate about it because I know the impact and what a difference it can make. Having gone through [name of org removed] I totally changed my thought process.*

After being debriefed on the organization, I began asking the scripted questions. The participant discussed volunteers and the organization's thoughts on the role of volunteers. *Our volunteers want to give back to the community and this is planting the seed with the students to tell the importance of volunteering. Our volunteers do this because they care, not because they get paid.* At Alpha, the majority of their volunteers are from the corporate sector because they have partnerships with local businesses. *With us being a nonprofit, I like to say that we depend on the kindness of strangers.* When it comes to college students, last year 99 of the 500+ volunteers were college students from Avila University, Midamerica Nazarene University, Northwest Missouri State University, and Rockhurst University. As volunteers,

> college students learned student characteristics, classroom management, and
> different learning styles because of the schools that they're assigned to. They learn
> how to adjust and analyze their thinking process while teaching in an actual
> classroom, you know prior to student teaching. They get exposed to more diverse
> students as far as patterns of learning.

From this informant's perspective, having college students as volunteers at Alpha is important to the children the organization serves.

133

To me, when a college student volunteers -- whether they are future teachers or

someone who just wants to give back to the community -- it really shows the kids

that there's someone out there who cares. It shows them that they can dream and

continue their education. Not just their high school, but right on through college.

This study informant builds a relationship directly with the faculty members and not so

much with the college students. It is a savvy approach to building sustainable relationships:

I work directly with the professor and the professor feeds it down. [For example,]

at Avila they average 20 to 25 kids a semester. It would be difficult if I had to work

with 25 individuals. But I just work directly with the teachers and they filter it

down. So it's not difficult at all.

During the interview, the informant recommended working with one contact at the

college/university and one contact at the school (in her case) and then to communicate regularly

and openly.

I work with one contact. And then I work individually with each teacher that I

placed my volunteer with ahead of time. I let them know that I am assigning a

college student to their classroom and I get their okay…. I do not place a college

student in the class with a teacher who does not know they're coming. Because at

the end of the day, I do not want surprises.

Connecting directly with the faculty member heightens the reciprocity for this community partner

and because of that, she takes the extra step of finding college-student friendly placements for the

service-learners.

Alpha coordinates volunteers (including college students) as classroom volunteers all over the Kansas City region. One additional piece of advice the informant shared when working with college students pertained to the geographic location of the service-learning.

Also it's good to tell your service-learning students that the school is located in a distressed area. But once they get there it's fine. There's a parking lot, there's lighting, there's a security guard. You may see some abandoned houses, some foreclosed houses, it's not the best neighborhood but the school itself is fine. Their security, the principal and teachers are wonderful and the kids are awesome.

Interview #2: Bravo

The Bravo interview took place at a high school, after school, in a chemistry lab. The informant and I sat on chemistry stools across a lab table from each other. There were students about and typical school background noise, but it was a pleasant environment for the interview. I opened the interview by asking for a description of the college student service-learners and what they learn. The community partner described that many of the college students doing service-learning in her classroom come from a *fairly privileged background* and are accomplished. She gave the statistic that none of the college students had earned less than a 30 on their ACT. What the college students come to learn is that the high school students at the struggling inner-city public school are smart:

They come to see our kids come from a culture where they haven't been able to learn in such a way as to excel on the ACT. To me, you can't sit around here too

135

long without realizing that there's a lot of rhetoric that goes on in politics that really isn't related to the issues. Maybe 80 to 85% of our kids are on free and reduced cost lunch but maybe 80 to 85% of those families are full-time working and they still can't afford life and food and shelter.

During the interview the informant described powerful learning opportunities that reach far beyond boosting retention of chemistry basics. By opening her classroom, this community partner is teaching the college students meaningful life lessons. At the same time, when considering reciprocity, the high school teacher admitted that there are challenges to the service-learning arrangement, mostly due to a lack of planning and coordination on the part of the college. Overall, though, she has figured out how to make the situation work to her advantage and have positive outcomes. Her insight on reciprocity from the interview was to be flexible and for the community partner to see past inconveniences to capitalize on the advantages of having college students tutoring high school students in a difficult subject. One way to heighten reciprocity, from the perspective of this community partner, would be to have *involvement on the part of the people who want the kids to do this. That way, they could really see the benefits*. Another factor in building a sustainable partnership characterized by high degrees of reciprocity would be *to get together with their students and our students through some kind of forum to ask questions… Maybe take a couple hours and just put them all together and discuss the tutoring program.* Taking these sorts of steps toward investing in a long-term service-learning partnership would strengthen the sense of reciprocity across all constituencies.

Interview #3: Charlie

      The interview at Charlie organization took place in the morning in a shared work room, but there were no constraints on the conversation with only one other person there sitting across the room. This organization is fairly new but already has a strong and growing volunteer force consisting of people who engage in clean-up projects on weekends and past students who return. What Charlie organization needs most is more tutors and mentors for the high school students, which the informant viewed as a great fit for college student service-learners. At the time of the interview, approximately 33% of the volunteer force were college student service-learners. While college students made wonderful role models, the community partner wanted them to stay longer than the 10-hour required commitment: *Long-lasting relationships really make a difference.* This was attributed to the feeling the community partner had that it takes time for trust to build, and trust was, in her estimation, a primary ingredient in reciprocity.

      In reflecting on the clients the Charlie organization serves, the informant spoke about how much the high school students need the college student service-learners: *Again it's all about relationships and with this partnership they have a relationship with forward-thinking college students. They need this relationship because that is where their mindset is supposed to be. We drill college into them all day long.* What the high school students gain most, from the perspective of the informant, were communication skills and

137

self-efficacy: *I think our students see themselves more as college-bound. It helps strengthen their self-will.*

The community partner at Charlie organization welcomed gaining access to service-learning student reflection papers or other writing to share in their newsletter, with their sponsors, and with their students and personnel. *It could help with the temporariness of the relationship to know that the students gained a lot from the experience.* Knowing that the college students benefited from the opportunity was an important part of reciprocity for the community partner at Charlie organization. Another important connection between reciprocity and service-learning was the idea of how the service-learning partnership has changed the organization.

> When the Rockhurst students first started tutoring here they came after school. The teachers didn't want college students tutoring when the high school students were in detention. The staff would press back to me by saying we don't need any tutors, our students are being disciplined when they're in detention. I wondered, why aren't they using this time so that they could become better students? But now there's been a complete 180 and they not only allow them to come at that time but they embrace it.

For this community partner, reciprocity in service-learning takes time to build, on both sides. It takes time for the organization to open up to the opportunity of the college student service-learners. It also takes time for the college to begin to share feedback with the organization.

138

Interview #4: Delta

The interview at Delta organization took place during a busy afternoon. The informant was juggling many activities and attempting to also participate in the interview. Delta is a large family support center with early learning, school-age care, and health services. Within the Kansas City community and beyond it is highly regarded and enjoys tremendous levels of volunteer support, including college student service-learning. In 2011, Delta had 4,000 volunteers and estimates that in the school-age programs, 40% of the volunteers are college students, a vast majority participating in service-learning. In their early childhood program, 25% of the volunteers are college students and nearly all of them are participating in service-learning. Because the informant had an education background, she has effectively orchestrated formal service-learning partnerships with faculty at many of the area colleges and universities. These partnerships have been beneficial for student learning because of the opportunity to learn from people who are not in the classroom or on the campus.

> Understand that not only do these kids have a lot of challenges but the challenges that affect their education can stem from challenges in the family. It's an eye-opening experience to get up close to some of the things that these children are experiencing and understanding some of the things on their plate. It puts a face to poverty.

An important element that heightens the community partners' experiences of reciprocity in service-learning is to have an over-arching goal for the project. Knowing what the organization needs to gain and how the project relates to the organization's mission and vision are good places to start in developing an over-arching goal.

> My philosophy as a volunteer coordinator is that we are providing opportunities to help teach people about the mission of our organization. We're seeing what our needs are and how can we utilize volunteers to meet those needs. We do have an obligation to teach people about our mission. Everyone on our staff recognizes that…. We are a voice for people living in poverty - we really hope that college students take what they learn and apply it. This is an issue not just in Kansas City but everywhere.

> From the informant's position, colleges and universities could increase their end of the partnership by helping their students arrive at the community organization ready to make a commitment, instead of showing up to fulfill an obligation. The informant noted that she does not engage a volunteer unless there is real need. Therefore, *I don't think that universities should send us folks just because they need to do 30 hours. If it doesn't work both ways it's not the best use of our time*. Building relationships with college students was essential to service-learning characterized by high degrees of reciprocity. The college students need to see behind the scenes and understand how the organization works as part of feeling comfortable enough to persevere through any challenges they may encounter. *The college students also need to understand how valuable their time is for the*

organization and the best way to do this is to show them by finding things that are

intentional and meaningful for them to do.

Interview #5: Echo[2]

The study participant at the Echo organization worked with a large number of volunteers each year, around 600, with about 250 of the volunteers being college student service-learners. Echo partnered with several local colleges and universities for direct interactions with their organizations clients. The main concern pertaining to reciprocity for this study participant was how to best follow up with the college students and thank them. This organization wanted a longer-term relationship with the service-learners than only one semester, due to the relationships that were built and the lessons learned. The Echo organization also worked to empower the college students who completed service-learning projects there by giving them their own locker, name badge, and connecting them with one area. These steps were taken with the thought that the more empowered the college students were, the more help they would be for the organization.

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[2] Due to a job change, this informant could not be reached to approve the transcript of the interview. Even though the informant gave verbal approval for including direct quotes in this dissertation at the time of interview, this summary is only a summary and does not include quotes.

Interview #6: Foxtrot

The study participant for the Foxtrot organization met me in his office for the interview. It was cold outside, but the building used an old boiler for heat that was steaming so strongly the window unit air conditioner was also running. The noise from the climate control and from the people in the hallways seeped in around the edges of our conversation, which began with an overview of college student service-learning at the organization.

Foxtrot works with three colleges, but Rockhurst is their longest partnership for service-learning. Through tutoring high school students, the Rockhurst students *get to see the world through a different lens, that of an urban, African American teen, completely focused on preparing for college.* Seeing the world through that lens dispels the assumptions and stereotypes that the Rockhurst students may have had about inner city youth. These high school students take Advanced Placement courses, have a winning athletic team, and despite 85% of the student body qualifying for free or reduced lunch, 100% of the seniors are accepted to college. Besides service-learning, Rockhurst University has other partnerships with Foxtrot, mostly because of its culture that focuses on high school as a place of learning, not teaching.

The study participant valued the presence of college student service-learners:

As adults in the school, all the time, we are telling the students "you need to go to college." I don't know that they pay attention to us or really hear our message.

142

When a college student takes the time to talk with one of our students and tell us how the classes are and what college is like, well then, our students want to go to college.

The typical challenges with background checks and communication were discussed. Then the study participant made a suggestion that would take reciprocity between campus and community to another level: *It would be wonderful if college professors would do some vertical teaming with our high school teachers. We really want that level of collaboration so we can know where the colleges think the incoming freshmen should be.* This is the type of wish that comes from trust with the community partner. As principal, the informant knew that the school was fighting an uphill battle to meet Adequate Yearly Progress when most students arrive as high school freshman at least two years behind grade level. He expressed awareness that there was still much work to be done and that higher education is a source of assistance. As far as reciprocity goes, the informant said *I feel like we get more than we give. It is nice to have ongoing relationships and it would be awesome if we could give as much as we get from the area universities.*

Interviews #7 & #8: Golf

I met with two study participants representing the Golf organization. The two participants each held different positions in the organization and were at different places in their careers. One was an older adult who had already retired from the corporate world and was working at the nonprofit as a way of giving back. The other was significantly younger

143

and had a social work background. They were comfortable participating in the interview together and bounced ideas off one another in such a way as demonstrated a strong working relationship. The interview was held at time when the organization was not busy and in a location where we were uninterrupted. The informants from the Golf organization were candid, direct, and because college students were a small portion of their volunteer population, their lower stakes only increased their candor. A lengthy and deep conversation ensued regarding the foundation of service-learning and the complex relationship all of the partners in a service-learning relationship have with one another. The nature of the importance of reciprocity in these relationships was also discussed.

While the Golf organization had partnered with Rockhurst University for service-learning, most of their volunteers came from church groups and from the surrounding neighborhood. While the organization does not have many college student service-learners, that does not mean they do not have plenty to offer, especially when it comes to humility, understanding poverty, and believing that they can make a difference. The organization expressed an interest in connecting more with college students because of the energy and new ideas they could bring. The older informant had a longer-term view of grooming the next generation of donors:

> I always look at these college students as potential donors down the road. They need to understand there's a whole other life on Troost than there is at 51st or 55th Streets. The students are going to get jobs and they will be successful in their lives.

144

They may decide to give back. And when they decide they want to give back, I want them to think of [org name removed].

The younger informant had experience with service-learning when he was earning his master's degree. Based on that, he made the recommendation that faculty set up situations where college students spend about 4 hours per week at the host organization throughout the semester. This would enable service-learning students to become fully invested in the organization:

I really encourage people to be present when they're serving – this isn't just shoveling food at people. In the educational setting I had with my Masters we would do direct work and service and then have a conversation in a class. You have to put in some time observing yourself to see the difference.

Both informants discussed the promise of service-learning, when it works. They felt that it had the potential to break down barriers between people, but also had concerns that if not enough time was spent at the organization the barriers could be reinforced, on both sides – college student and client. For the Golf organization, reciprocity meant most of all putting in the time on both sides to learn and build the type of relationships that take down barriers.

Interview #9: Hypo

The informant at this organization participated in the interview and signed the consent forms. The informant also authorized direct quotes. The partnership with

Rockhurst University has been long-standing and was described as being important to the organization. However, the most recent service-learning project had challenges that at the time of writing the dissertation were still being resolved. A summary of this interview has been omitted to maintain confidentiality.

Interview #10: India

The organization with the code name of India is a division within a larger organization and has one staff person. This type of one-issue organization is a common community partner in service-learning because faculty whose research intersects with the issue often establish a long-term relationship with these entities. During the interview, the sole staff person described a partnership for service-learning that has evolved over the years to address challenges, and has been operating fairly smoothly. About 900 volunteers work on the issue, the vast majority of the volunteers are high school and college student service-learners. The informant participant described the service-learning partnerships she has built as *a partnership coalition, and Rockhurst University is actually part of that coalition. We draw on volunteer leaders who are all biologists or naturalists really high up in their fields*. The informant also noted that *Rockhurst is very good at making us feel we are partners. There are some universities where we feel like the babysitters for the day.*

One of the interesting parts of the service-learning relationships that have stemmed from this coalition is the amount of education the volunteers gain in the course of briefings and reflection discussions with the goal of *really turning on the next generation*. Also

146

typical of service-learning partner organizations, this informant had a longer horizon than higher education typically allows with the academic year and so many grants and contracts that run on three or five year cycles. Service-learning has often been described as decades work and the results sometimes occur after the end of the semester or even after a college career. In many ways, community partners discuss the long term service-learning outcomes with a great deal of investment. Perhaps due to the close involvement of faculty members, the community partner feels a sense of reciprocity for herself as the staff, for the organization, as well as for the faculty, students, and the area citizens.

> We do the restoration by involving people. The students certainly help us with our clients-- the clients being the citizens of Kansas City and the land managers of the local governments. Right now there are at least three separate sites that would not be at the restoration level that they are currently were it not for college students....These places have been pulled into parks master plans and have become seriously protected. And so from the perspective of land managers, they are now what they call programmable, which means they are usable by citizens. We also have faculty who go out and do actual studies on the land now that the land is biologically diverse. We often get the results of those studies. We may or may not be able to use that information but it's good to have.

While the community partner generally felt a sense of reciprocity from the partnership with Rockhurst University, in particular, there have still been some challenges. The large work days require significant preparation for a staff of one. Even after working

147

with faculty members and the Center for Service Learning to arrange for pre-registration of the college students, there are still students who just show up, don't show up, or are not prepared.

> For [college students], things like signing up may feel arbitrary, but for us it's very important to know how many people and to know if we'll have a shift covered. Another example is when we are out lobbing down trees on a workday nobody should be wearing sandals and shorts. That is given to them in the directions. But if it is a nice day there will be sandals and shorts out there. I have had to turn some students away…. It is rather frustrating because they're not going to get the full experience when they're out there in little tiny shorts and flip-flops. There are safety issues involved -- not only with the scratches and poison ivy that they may get at the time.

What would make the greatest difference for this community partner, in terms of reciprocity, is if colleges and universities could have individuals on staff with a level of authority who are skilled at communicating with and motivating college students. She surmises it may relate back to the position of the service-learning organizationally within the university.

Interview #11: Juliet

The interview with the volunteer coordinator of a larger, one-issue organization, took place in a small conference room in a tucked away part of the offices. The informant

at the organization with code name Juliet coordinated approximately 2200 volunteers in 2011 but due to program downsizing in 2012 the overall volunteer force is expected to drop to 1500. Of the thousands of volunteers, roughly 30% to 50% are college students. Due to data systems, it was not possible to isolate the number of college service-learning students from the overall numbers of college students. This organization ran a sophisticated volunteer support program, which included special guidelines for service-learning which pre-dated the informant. College student service-learners were valued because of their energy and enthusiasm: *You know how it is when you're young-- it's just that you're invincible and you can take on the problems of the world and solve them all. And so I think that they bring some added energy.*

According to this informant, from her experience with hundreds of college students, the top thing colleges and universities could do to increase the mutual gain or reciprocity community organizations get from service-learning is communicate better with both the community partner and the students. Having a central contact, or portal, for the college would be helpful for community organizations who have needs but do not know how to connect with faculty members.

Interview #12: Kilo

The interview for the organization with code name Kilo took place in an office in the middle of a very large organization, perhaps the largest and oldest organization in the study. As large as the organization was, they did not have the largest number of

149

volunteers. *We have about 635 volunteers between the ages of 14 and 90; 25% of our volunteers are college students.* This particular community partner has worked with Rockhurst University students for approximately twenty years, so the partnership pre-dates the popularity of service-learning and Rockhurst's Center for Service Learning. The organization has a lot to offer students through being organized. The volunteer department is an important part of the organization and could be described in higher education terminology as being institutionalized. Each volunteer must go through a lengthy start up process but in return each volunteer gets specific feedback from the specific area where he or she volunteered. The same goes for service-learning. As the director of the volunteer department, the informant noted that:

> It is important to have integrity, be clear in instructions, follow-through, ask for feedback, and be appreciative…People want to be part of a successful team. And you have to portray that success - you can't fake it. It needs to be there.

Similar to other informants, this community partner discussed her focus on longer-term perspective for outcomes, beyond the constraints of the academic calendar.

> We are hoping what they see here and the process they observed will make a difference for them. When they have achieved their goals, we hope they will be reflective of our process here and what they got out of it. Maybe even want to come back to us and serve our patients. That is our three-way win that we hope will develop. We have a little tracking mechanism to see who was a youth

volunteer, adult volunteer, geriatric volunteer. You have to understand in this day

and age that the average college student will have 11 careers.

Investing in college students over this long of a term, and having the patience to

track engagement over decades for the three-way win shows evidence in having a

relationship with reciprocity with local colleges and universities, particularly Rockhurst.

While there is a connection between reciprocity and institutionalization of service-

learning/buy-in of college students as volunteers, for this community partner there is also a

long-term investment not dissimilar to hopes of alumni offices on college campuses.

Interview #13: Lima

I met the volunteer coordinator of the organization given the code name Lima on a

Saturday on the fourth floor of the facility. The residents were having a church service and

singing. Although initially I was skeptical it would work, we sat off to the side and

managed to progress through the interview without interruption. As with the other

interviews, I began by asking about the overall volunteer force and how the college

student service-learners fit within the volunteers. College students are the organization's

largest group of volunteers, about 75%, with churches filing in the gap. Students come

from as far away as University of Missouri-Columbia and Kansas State University to work

with and learn from their unique group of residents described as *ornery, grouchy,*

noncompliant, fussy, and the best group of people in Kansas City. From the perspective of

the study participant, college students add a different set of eyes and often notice things

151

unseen by the staff. The residents enjoy the youth and vitality and typically open up to the students.

> For us, college students not only compliment but they extend the mission of our organization. Our mission is to get our residents a better quality of life once they come through our doors. The students who come to visit with our residents are real people who lead different lives and add a spark to the day. Many students become friends with the residents and maintain their relationship beyond the semester.

As a service-learning site, this community partner expressed being flexible and offering students a variety of hours for visiting with their residents, especially evening and weekends. Besides a thorough orientation and overview of behavior protocol, the organization welcomes the college students to come and go during visiting hours. This easy-going nature pays off with students who end up building longer-term relationships.

Interviews #14: November

The organization given the code name of November has the largest volunteer force of any of the organizations participating in this study with 60,000 volunteer visits each year. Even though the organization could not sift out how many actual volunteers there are at the organization, having that level of volunteer engagement impresses. *To replace the volunteers with employees*, November stated, *we would need to hire 79 full-time employees, which would cost over $2 million*. The organization has a goal to increase the number of volunteers by 5% each, except for service-learning and other education related

152

sources of volunteers because they already compose a significant portion of the volunteers. The November organization also has service-learning curricula at a number of different educational levels that the organization provides for K-12 education that is led by college students.

The college students who complete service-learning projects tend to do research and curriculum projects for the organization. College students also help with larger scale projects that require heavy lifting and attention to detail. When it comes to the experience of reciprocity, this community partner noted that college students who are associated with a service-learning course tend to follow through more than those doing community service or volunteering. What colleges and universities could do most is to invest in their service-learning internally by having professional staff and some sort of method for helping community organizations connect with faculty who are interested in teaching courses with service-learning components.

> I would say for us it would be inviting community partners out for an afternoon get-together or training session that tells about the opportunities their college students have and how they can impact the community. Just kind of an institute or consortium of community partners talking about how they can come together and partner together. And that way I can call upon that person at the college to say, "Oh my gosh, I have this tremendous fit for a class or a faculty members interest." To me this type of activity suggests that partnership is really important.

As with most of the individuals interviewed for this study, they want to know that service-learning and the partnership in which their organization is investing matters to the college or university.

Interview #15: Oscar

I met with the executive director of a small organization that was assigned the code name of Oscar. We met in a small conference room, overlooking the street that is known as the racial dividing line in Kansas City, Troost Avenue. It is also one of the longest streets in town and a number of the community partners for service-learning have their addresses on this street. Rockhurst University also borders Troost on the western edge of its campus. This organization partners selectively with colleges and universities for specific service-learning as needs and opportunities arise. This informant is a highly-regarded community leader and is well-connected throughout the city. While her service-learning experience is limited, her connection with local universities is extensive. That being, students are fortunate to connect with this organization for service-learning.

> Last semester it was [name removed] who invited me to talk to a group of faculty
> interested in working with outside groups for service-learning projects. I worked
> with a local and state government class. We talked about all of the things that
> converge on Kansas City. I worked with three or four students and we came up
> with a survey for board members. I'm trying to figure out what is it that keeps
> board members at the table, that keeps them writing checks, that is so compelling

154

to them that they will bring others into membership. The students surveyed my

board over the phone and asked them what they value about our organization, what

they don't value, and what we could be doing that we are not doing.

In this example, a group of Rockhurst students completed a project that had a

product as its end goal. This was also a strategy for designing service-learning projects

with reciprocity in mind that was discussed at the community conversation. Additionally,

this community partner, with a broader perspective on reciprocity, felt it was important to

get college students from the campuses to be a more constant presence in the non-campus

communities. *There are things that are going on in the corridor where it could be really*

good to have a presence of Rockhurst and UMKC students. When it comes to reciprocity,

this community partner discussed how Rockhurst's presence along the Troost corridor was

important. The image of the corridor is much enhanced by Rockhurst making the kind of

investment it has in its campus. That shows a real commitment to this part of town and

makes Kansas City that much stronger. Additionally, and with another take on reciprocity,

this community leader has had the experience of lending her voice in support of

Rockhurst. When asked what about the university makes her willing to advocate for their

master plan with city officials, she said:

It is Rockhurst University's sincere desire to not just be in the community, but to

be part of the community that makes me willing to lend my capital with the city to

their cause. Usually the leadership understands how important it is to be part of the

155

community. Their ability to recognize what even a little one-staff-person office can do for them builds credibility.

Interview #16: Quebec

The informant for the organization with the code name Quebec was once a service-learning coordinator and her perspective on service-learning and reciprocity was unique. She had an understanding of what elements lead to the types of student outcomes that makes service-learning a high-impact practice in higher education. While this informant was a development director and not a volunteer coordinator, she was tuned in to the service-learning partnerships at Quebec. The previous year, just over 700 volunteers shared their time and talents with the organization. These volunteers ranged in age from 20 to 65 and completed a variety of activities. The college student experiences at this organization left them with a lot of material to consider.

> The take away from my perspective, working with college students, is it humbles them. I think that is a good quality because it means they are learning something from another perspective, another culture. We can talk about reflection – when they reflect on it, I hope, that is the stuff they are taking back.

Even someone experienced with service-learning from the university perspective experiences challenges when working with college students. Often times the challenges stem from the service-learning being a requirement.

Sometimes they run out of time. They are signed up to come for 5 hours and they work three hours and get bored and leave. Sometimes it is just that they are not interested. Not everybody wants to do everything. Sometimes some of them feel like it is forced on them. It is what the university requires. In some ways it is good because it forces them to do something out of their comfort levels. Often they come out of the experience probably learning more– they are doing something with a great deal of reluctance.

This community partner, probably due to her inside knowledge of service-learning, brought up that one of the things that keeps her from feeling the arrangement has reciprocity is that she never knows about the student experiences.

We tell them about our organization. We take pictures and put them on facebook to recognize them, recognize the university. I send thank you emails and pictures. Where the struggle with reciprocity turns up is that I never hear anything back. Giving us their feedback never happens.… So what we get, we press for: we cajole, we try hard to listen in and observe. Our observation of what we think they are thinking comes from our end. Not from their end. It would make a difference and lead to us make changes…. And if they have follow up questions about the shelter, I don't know what they are.

The impression this informant gave was that the colleges take the service opportunity and keep the outcomes to themselves. At this point in the interviews, it was becoming clear that universities do not offer enough community partner development and recognition.

157

Especially given that higher education has become student focused and the student learning outcomes take place off-campus.

Interviews #17 & #18: Sierra

Two staff members from the organization with code name Sierra participated together in this interview. The interview took place in the afternoon, following a tour of the facility and a general overview of the day-to-day work of the organization. These two study participants were thoughtful and thorough in their answers and were currently using service-learning students as classroom volunteers in an inclusive early childhood program. About 90% of the volunteers at this organization are college student service-learners. Both informants agreed that the college students enhance the work that the teachers do in the classroom. *There are so many adults in the classroom already because of our low ratio that sometimes volunteers say how can I be of benefit? So they really do enhance and allow the kids one-on-one attention.* The organization appreciates the college student volunteers because they support their mission and their vision.

> They also support our vision which is to become a model community of
> professional families and volunteers who are dedicated to the education of children
> with special needs. They can become excited by what we're doing and so it helps
> them to learn and to grow.

One of the student participants reflected on the opportunity service-learning offers compared with her education.

I remember when I was in school and took special education. I don't think the professors had been out of the university to see the real deal for a long time.… They can see what the therapists and teachers are doing with the children. I think it's very eye-opening for the students and their ability to learn to see what happens in special education.

As with any early learning center, the screening process for volunteers is extensive and consists of criminal history checks as well as a two-part tuberculosis test. The community partner expressed an interest in university support for the screening process because it is costly and could deter some students. This community partner organization was also open to developing relationships with faculty that incorporate service-learning and research.

Interviews #19 & #20: Tango

Two different people from the organization known as Tango participated in the study. One had a position in upper-level administration and the other was the volunteer coordinator. The interviews were held separately but back to back. The first interview, with the person in administration, focused primarily on the service-learning partnership with Rockhurst University. From his perspective, the strong connection with the faculty member led to a focus on Piaget and Erickson in the child development class, which he felt helped prepare the college students to get the most learning out of their service-learning experiences.

159

In the shelter we have seen new and improved recognition of shapes by younger children; we've seen improved direct dexterity. We have seen the students assist some of our high school girls with writing papers and actually it's a mentoring kind of relationship. It's a relationship that's a positive relationship that these kids don't have.

Having a solid relationship with the faculty member teaching the service-learning course increased the sense of reciprocity he felt from the partnership. It also has enabled this informant to take on a mentoring role with the college students.

We've gotten pretty hard in the orientation this time. We're challenging them to think about themselves and their roles, to think about their futures, and maybe we can connect them with other situations. We introduced the concept of applied behavioral analysis to a couple of them and pointed out the schools where they could pursue graduate education.

One of the primary benefits of service-learning is the opportunity for college students to explore areas where they may want to work or disciplines they may want to study in graduate school. This type of relationship happened mostly because the faculty member was involved. *In the beginning we didn't have that alignment and that was a mistake. The students weren't connected. For us service experience has to be successful for it to be a win-win for the students and the organization*. In reflecting on reciprocity, the informant brought up for a third time a mentoring role with the college students. Additionally, he talked about how the organization has changed from the service-learning project. *An*

ongoing change is that folks get very uncomfortable about having outsiders in their areas.

They are learning to understand the importance of service-learning, the opportunity for

service-learning and the relationships that it brings.

The second interview with personnel at Tango took place in the volunteer

coordinator's office, just inside the front door of the main building. The volunteer

coordinator was energetic and told many stories about volunteers and the children at the

organization. The general volunteer force ranges in age from 14 to 95, with over 1,000

volunteers total. She was uncertain what percentage were college students participating in

service-learning. One of the main things the volunteer coordinator worked to instill in the

college students was that the staff and teachers of the organization are like their instructors

when they are on-site.

> They need to learn what to do if a fight breaks out and to learn our system. College
>
> students are surprised at seeing the board full of papers that have good grades. In
>
> school you take your work home and you get what you get. Sometimes the parents
>
> know and sometimes they don't know. Kids here don't have that kind of input and
>
> so when they make a good grade it is something that we need to reinforce. I try not
>
> to tell the teams too many horror stories, but they'll see it.

The second informant's main insight when it comes to reciprocity was that colleges and

universities need to have a grade or some other requirement that keeps students motivated

to get through the screening process so that they can participate as service-learners at the

161

organization. She mentioned that when a grade was not involved that the students tended to not fulfill the requirements.

Interview #21: Victor

This interview was held over lunch at a busy restaurant within walking distance of the organization. The informant requested getting out of the office to talk about her experiences with her first service-learning partnership with Rockhurst University. The experiences consisted mainly of lessons learned but they are important to review. Initially, the community organization, with the code name of Victor, felt that the project was a perfect match between their organization and the academic subject matter. For reasons unknown to the informant, the organization contact member, who no longer works there, and the faculty member of the class did not communicate or build rapport. She had asked to help with communication and to serve as a go-to person on the project in its early stages, but that never happened. The informant stressed that she did not believe the outcomes of the project were necessarily anyone's fault, but also stated: *If I were to be involved with something like that again working with the person who is directly involved would be crucial.* The challenges with communicating with college students surfaced during the interview.

> And maybe that's where we're trying to come along with social media a little bit
> more. We're looking into a Facebook page to say let's communicate this way. It

would be really exciting if we could do something like that and maybe if other sites

have tried something like that we could really learn from it.

As far as her perspective on reciprocity, she felt that it is important for both sides

to have realistic expectations of the project, especially during the shaky beginnings of

partnerships.

Sometimes both sides wanted the project to be so much more than what it is.

How do you deal with that and how do you make it something that someone still is

going to come and do and learn something? Setting realistic expectations is hard.

It's hard because we don't know how the semester is going to go for a lot of

reasons. And it's also hard because we don't know how our work is good to go for

a lot of reasons.

From the informant's perspective, the other issues that need to be addressed among

campus and community partnership builders pertain to communication, supervision of the

service-learning students, and agreeing on a timeframe.

Because rather than telling someone what to do you would hope that they would go

out and look around and learn to see what needs to be done and do it themselves.

So I think in an ideal situation it would be more about saying this is your

community how can you make it better? How can you help that person that

students become excited about it and really want to make it community?

For this informant, to feel successful in service-learning and to have a sense a reciprocity,

the most important factor is to have a college student who takes something he or she learns

in class and applies it in a community setting in such a way that it is a next step for the individual. Additionally, *it's important that Rockhurst not just leave community partners hanging there even though we all get busy. I think being proactive and talking to the community partners and checking in is really important.* The informant ended the interview on a positive note. Even though initially the project did not work out, she is ready to partner with Rockhurst University again, and apply what she has experienced.

Interview Section Summary

The above section presented a summary of each interview with a community partner. The summaries were written to present the context of the interview and to highlight the community partners' experiences with service-learning and thoughts pertaining to reciprocity. The greatest commonality across all of the interviews was that service-learning, especially when it works well, is worthwhile. Nearly all of the community partners discussed how much their organizations needed college student service-learners, and identified Rockhurst University as having outstanding students who make contributions through their service-learning and also, for the most part, learn significant life lessons from their service-learning. The organizations that work with children, in particular, discussed service-learning from a standpoint of helpfulness, especially when it comes to the relationships built among children and college student. Many of the community partners emphasized that service-learning is not a silver bullet, that it is important for the community partners to be flexible, see past the inconveniences, and to capitalize on what the students could bring to the organization. Another trend discussed across all of the interviews

164

connected to what higher education refers to as institutionalization, or the ways in which service-learning is structured and supported at the college or university. Many community partners thought having a central portal or front door for community organizations in general would facilitate stronger partnerships. Other community partners thought improved communications, including feedback after the project, were important. Community partners also noted the important role of faculty members in service-learning and stressed that they needed to be involved in and visible with the project. The next section will begin a deeper analysis of the data organized by research question.

Data Discussion by Research Question

This examines the data by research question and also highlights the emerging axial and selective codes, which will be discussed in the next section. There is a one-to-one mapping of each research question with a selective code; however, there are two selective codes that emerged unpredicted by the research questions. Table six, below presents how the research questions and selective codes match up for purposes of the general analysis. The research questions were determined at the onset of the study and used as the basis for forming the study, especially the community conversation and interview protocols. The selective codes are the axial codes that had the greatest number of connections to the codes that appeared most frequently throughout the study.

Table 6

Comparison of Research Questions and Selective Codes

Research Questions	Selective Codes
What are the community partners' experiences with higher education service-learning?	Discourse of service-learning from community partner experiences
Do community organizations experience reciprocity when they partner with institutions of higher education for service-learning?	Importance of reciprocity to community partners
How does higher education service-learning contribute to the community organizations where students do their service-learning?	Service-learning outcomes/challenges
From the community partner perspective, what do their organizations contribute to student service-learners?	Community partner contribution of transformative learning for college students
	Connection between perception of reciprocity and institutionalization of service-learning
	Dismantling the ivory tower/jointly creating knowledge

Research Question One

       This subsection examines the study results for research question one: What are the community partners' experiences with higher education service-learning? Both the community conversation and the portions of the interviews addressed this research question. This subsection will examine community partner responses to questions from the community conversation pertaining to their perspective and experiences with service-learning (e.g. what is service-learning from your perspective as a community partner? Why does your organization host college students in the service-learning context?).

<u>Defining elements of service-learning from the community perspective</u>

       At the community conversation, participants representing Rockhurst University community partners discussed service-learning from their perspective, beginning with what distinguishes service-learning from other types of teaching and learning. The typical definitions of service-learning provide a description of what transpires through an academic lens and describe what happens on the learning side of service-learning. To begin the discussion of reciprocity in service-learning, the community partners thought the traditional definition, which focuses on service-learning as an assignment students complete in the community, should be more descriptive of the actions and outcomes of the service-learning. For community partners to understand service-learning, it would be helpful to have a way of discussing it that includes statements such as: *learning through*

real life situations while providing service; or, *teaching the next generation to give back to their communities.* The community conversation participants noted a common, primary motivation for hosting service-learning, which was as a strategy to provide individual attention to the people the organization serves, their clients. A pragmatic group, the community conversation participants also noted that connecting with a college or university is an easy place to access groups of volunteers, while at the same time grooming the next generation of community leaders. The participants expressed a connection between educational attainment, community leadership, and success. By spending time with Rockhurst students, the participants from community schools hoped their students would begin to see themselves as "college material." Another motivation for participating in service-learning was a belief in providing real world experience to college students.

Importance of service-learning from the community partner perspective

Community conversation participants discussed why they thought service-learning is an important endeavor for higher education and Kansas City communities. From the community partner perspective, service-learning is important because it *helps knock down the ivory tower*. Participants identified four reasons service-learning could be potentially transformative for college students:

1) The college students get out of themselves – they come to do service and end up changed, many get more from the service than they think they gave.

168

2) Many students come to college, especially a Jesuit university, anticipating they will be involved in some form of community-based learning due to its prevalence at the secondary level.

3) It is beneficial for the college students to connect with people from different backgrounds and broaden their horizons. This is important for the future, when the college students are community leaders. The community partners pointed out: service-learning grooms the next generation of leaders [for their work] because it's harder to not pay attention to people with a name and a face.

4) Service-learning is an authentic experience.

These four elements were completely corroborated through the interviews with community partners. Of the 21 interviews, 19 discussed service-learning as an important educational endeavor because it helps future community leaders come to understand social justice issues pervasive in our society at a deeper, more authentic level than only reading about them in class.

As evidenced through interviews, the element of authentic experience as part of service-learning was significant for the community partners. In the individual interviews, they expressed how important it is for learners to have authentic experiences as part of their education.

[Young people often] have no understanding of the value of being a contributing member to society or getting a job or taking care of themselves, let alone others. It's not there. There are so many young people - even ones in college - who have

no idea.… College students having this type of service-learning experience is important and will make a difference.

Another community partner expressed *I wish my kids had had service-learning when they went to college. I think they would have had fewer false starts on their career paths.* The career connection is as important an aspect of authentic experiences as the notion of service for many of the community partners. *It's wonderful for the* [students], *especially those who are interested in education - elementary education, special education, learning disorders. They're able to help us but we're also able to provide them insight into their career path.* Through the interest in expanding education to include authentic experiences, the community partners in the community conversation and the interviews were already discussing at the beginning of the dialogue many of the ideas of reciprocity which would come later.

Service-learning outcomes

For the organizations and their clients, service-learning was transformative and was considered a worthwhile use of resources. Participants noted that their organizations benefited from the following: 1) *Fresh energy and dedication of the students aids the organization in having hands-on help*. 2) Students learn how to be community members. 3) *We as staff act better when we have service-learning students. We become kinder and more gentle*. Community conversation and interview participants surmised that there are also tangible, direct benefits for their clients, such as having males interact with younger

170

kids; having role models for K-12 students so they can come to see themselves as college-bound; and most importantly, *clients do not always think they are worth someone's attention. Service-learning is an important endeavor because it helps change that feeling*.

As part of the dialogue about the community partners' experiences with service-learning, a majority of the participants brought up the organizational structuring of service-learning at the college or university. Most of the community partners also wanted to know how service-learning was supported at the upper levels of administration. After all, it is a way of teaching and learning that involves a lot of resources, which in the nonprofit and educational arenas are scarce. Nonprofit organizations and schools have similar organizational structures, but being smaller, they may also have a more direct relationship between staff and executive leadership than higher education. *It would help me to find out that university leadership values what we do*, said one of the community partners during the community conversations. Other participants quickly agreed; a university's president or chancellor is an important and well-respected figure in a metropolitan region.

When talking about the challenges and problems inherent in service-learning for community partners, especially the challenges to reciprocity, another community partner observed during an interview that *an important solution is to institutionalize service-learning commitments*. This institutionalization included making certain that students were aware of the service-learning requirements and expectations before they enrolled in a service-learning course as well as thorough orientations of faculty and students. *Maybe an*

171

information meeting at the beginning of the semester would give the students an idea of

what it means to be a service-learning student – the expectations as well as what the

students can get out of it. The community partners recognized that they were making an

investment in students and academics at the university, and were interested in evidence

that the university also made an investment in service-learning and in the local

community. This concept of how service-learning was treated at the college or university

was a significant part of the construct of mutual gain. The community partners viewed

their hosting of service-learning as part of their organizational structure and data collection

and thought it would be helpful if the colleges and universities also made service-learning

part of their organizational structure. Possibly because Rockhurst University does have a

Center for Service Learning, while other institutions of higher education may not, that the

community partners saw institutionalization as significant.

Connections with privilege

One of the important aspects of community partners' experiences of service-

learning focused on how quality projects challenge customs and help college students

unpack their ideas of privilege.

> The students/volunteers that I work with are all college students. What I see the
>
> college students learning is -- that many of them come from fairly privileged
>
> backgrounds. What I call privilege is different than racism. It's when you're White
>
> and you don't have to think about being White. You can put yourself in a culture

172

where you don't think about your Whiteness. When you're Black you don't have

that same option. So what it does for them [the college students] is it puts them in a

culture where they become aware of their Whiteness. What I see is that when the

college students get to know the [org name removed] students, they get to know

someone who is Black and they have a name and a personality - a relationship. A

college student who may have grabbed her purse close to her body when she saw a

Black person, after this service-learning project, might think twice about doing

that. Might think it could be one of the kids from [org name removed].

The opportunity for learning more about diversity was very important for several of the

community partners. While most of the study participants were White, several still

discussed their own commitment to diversity. They discussed how they had

transformational experiences through their work and wanted the Rockhurst students to

have access to similar, and perhaps new, understandings of privilege. This type of deep

understanding, or transformational learning, is one of the strengths of quality service-

learning projects. The community partners who participated in this study described

experiences where they witnessed this type of growth in students but it was not every

project or every student.

     All of these defining elements of service-learning from the community partner

experience form the first selective code: Discourse of service-learning. The six selective

codes will be discussed following the continuation of findings by research question. The

next subsection of findings will examine reciprocity.

173

Research Question Two

This subsection examines research question two: Reciprocity is a definitional characteristic of service-learning. Do community organizations experience reciprocity when they partner with institutions of higher education for service-learning? The definition of reciprocity in this study is based on the work of Henry and Breyfogle (2006) which they referred to as an "enriched view" of reciprocity, especially applicable for service-learning partnerships involving K-12 schools. This view is based on John Dewey's exploration of the "nature of cooperative work and the importance of establishing rich processes of democratic life." Henry and Breyfogle stress:

> The traditional view of reciprocity omits the important component of evolutionary change in the service-learning relationship: that multiple parties in service-learning relationships, including "providers" and "recipients," will be changed in the process of their service-learning venture (p.27-8).

For the purposes of this study, the definition of reciprocity has been based on an interpretation of Henry and Breyfogle's enriched reciprocity: two or more parties that come together to take collective action toward a common purpose and in the process the parties are transformed by this collective action in a way that allows for increased understanding of a full variety of life experiences and over time works to alter rigid social systems (Henry & Breyfogle, 2006).

For the community partners, there were at least two ways of approaching reciprocity. The participants asked the question, *reciprocity for whom– the institution and the organization or the people involved*? This question was a great way to begin understanding the concept of reciprocity. For the organization it meant balance, mutuality, being part of the planning, and projects that meet real needs. Reciprocity was not when the community partner organizations came up with something for the college students to do that met only the needs of the higher education institution. Additionally, the organizations felt that there was an important connection between reciprocity and innovation: that new programs and ideas developed out of partnerships that benefited all parties.

During the community conversation, the community partners participating identified the elements of reciprocity from their perspective. One partner noted: *reciprocity has aided in innovation – new programs, new ideas, develop out of partnerships.* Another added that *the mission of our organization includes community involvement. For us, connecting with college students and providing real world experiences for them is part of our mission. Because college students are part of the community – the future of community.* Yet another community partner added that while supporting college students was not in the organizational mission, that service-learning students made a difference: *Service-learning helps us fulfill our mission because we are able to have more one-to-one interaction with the children we serve.* During interviews, several community partners noted that the talent of Rockhurst students was an important consideration in what they accomplished through service-learning. *Because of the caliber*

175

in the students that we have, staff is so much more open to working with the college

students. They see what more can be accomplished by working with the college student

volunteers so they see what can be accomplished and what can get done.

Community partners described how service-learning changed the Rockhurst

students, and how they viewed that change as part of reciprocity.

There is a mutual gain not only through exposure to each other's cultures but also

good learning just the basics about life. As I perceive it some of the Rockhurst

students are kind of sheltered and timid and even a bit shy about being on their

own and out in the world. And even though our kids haven't gone through that

particular process they're also helping the Rockhurst students to know that it's

really not so scary. So it helps our Rockhurst students to realize that Kansas City is

not really so scary.

This community partner described reciprocity in such a way that the community affects

the university in ways that are positive. Often, in the literature about campus-community

partnerships – which includes service-learning – the college or university is an important

anchor in the community. It was an interesting take on the dynamic to see how the

community adds to the experiences of the college students.

Overall, the community partners expressed that there was reciprocity between

Rockhurst University and the surrounding communities. *The image of the* [Troost]

corridor is much enhanced by Rockhurst making the kind of investment it has in its

campus. That shows a real commitment to this part of town and makes Kansas City that

176

much stronger. Frequently this sense of reciprocity did not come from service-learning, but from Rockhurst's presence in the city and the way the university conducted itself. In terms of service-learning and reciprocity, the answers were more mixed and tended to point to challenges. *In the beginning we didn't have that alignment and that was a mistake. The students weren't connected. For us service experience has to be successful for it to be a win-win for the students and the organization.* From the perspective of the community partners, there was a tangible difference between the presence of Rockhurst University in the city and the service-learning partnerships. However, very few community partners had knowledge of both routes to engaging with the university. The community partners who participated in the study expressed a value for service-learning and for Rockhurst University's presence in the city and commitment to the area. They discussed support for the general notion of service-learning.

> We need to think about this because we rely on generous people and our country doesn't work without generosity…. So I think the reciprocity is the lesson that these kids are going to come back in 10 years when they become successful and have their families and start connecting with the community.

The study participants had a long view of the trajectory of service-learning. While higher education thinks in terms of degree completion in four or five years and sees different students progress through their degrees, the community organizations address their mission for decades.

177

When asked what reciprocity meant to the participants and their organization specifically in the context of service-learning, the community partners discussed two distinct aspects of service-learning and reciprocity. First, community partners expressed appreciation of Rockhurst University's faculty workshop to provide orientation and support for how to design and teach a service-learning course. This appreciation led to the observation that universities should take the time to prepare faculty and staff for service-learning. From the community partners' perspectives, this preparation was part of reciprocity between campus and community. For the organizations, reciprocity was more than seat counts of students who showed up to volunteer. Reciprocity was also the responsibility of faculty members who taught the service-learning courses to ensure they had meaningfully woven service-learning into their courses. In the words of one community partner:

> A service-learning partnership that has reciprocity helps bridge opportunities for learning both ways. It is important to let the relationship grow for mutual benefit and not to have a prescribed agenda. When colleges look for community need, that is reciprocity.

This subsection has considered research question two: Do community partners experience reciprocity when they partner with institutions of higher education for service-learning? Several best practices emerged for increasing the amount of reciprocity experienced. When universities have positive community engagement, that affects the reciprocity felt for service-learning because it demonstrates investment in communities.

178

Having forums or some other way to connect community partner and faculty also strengthens the relationships formed between campus and community. Lastly, training or workshops about service-learning are helpful. The next subsection will delve into the third of the four research questions.

Research Question Three

This subsection examines research question three: How does higher education service-learning contribute to the community organizations where students do their service-learning? In reciprocity, campus and communities ideally come together for a common purpose and through that collaboration both parties experience changes that allow for increased understanding. Part of researching community partners' experiences of service-learning and reciprocity focused on the outcomes and challenges inherent for the participants. The outcomes discussed focused primarily on the community partner perspective, and not the student or institutional outcomes.

At the community conversation, community partners identified a number of outcomes for their organizations/schools. The first set of outcomes pertained to the clients of the community organizations; *college students expand our outreach to community.* Service-learning helped provide *one-to-one attention to the clients;* another partner observed, and it was reiterated an additional three times, *service-learning increases the public school student learning*. This is so important that one of the schools mentioned that

179

their new learning strategies program[3] requires them to utilize college students as tutors. Another participant noted that college student engagement in the community helped their clients *see that college is possible; it brings them one step closer to the college experience.* College students brought with them skills that were important additions to the organization: *They know a lot more about technology.* Another community partner remarked, [college students] *often brought new ideas and theories that they learned in class*. At the community conversation, when it came to service-learning programs, all participants agreed that centers for service-learning are *an easy place to access a group of volunteers.* When it comes to college students, *they bring high energy, poise, and social skills.* The community conversation participants discussed the ways in which they were grooming the next generation of nonprofit leaders who *may one day take up our cause and advance it. In that way, service-learning is wonderful for nonprofit organizations.* As another participant observed, and four people readily agreed, *we are giving real life challenges to the college students that they will work through.* The community partners at the community conversation did not describe unrealistic expectations about service-learning or about what the college students could accomplish in a semester.

     During the interviews, study participants expressed similar thoughts about the ease of incorporating student service-learners in their organization.

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[3] The name of the learning strategies program was omitted to maintain confidentiality.

I guess it's through performing the work that we do. The mission of [org name removed] overall is connecting environment, economy, and the community. The students just represent such a big chunk of community, especially how we work with them that it just kind of slides right in there.

The sense that students are members of the community pervaded the interviews. The community partners did not speak about them as being not fully members of the community in which their organization operates. The organizations depicted a sense that they were teaching organizations and wanted to connect with students of all ages, for their own benefit as well as the benefit of clients.

I know Rockhurst students don't cost [org name removed] any money. I think that they save the school money. Another area where they save money is for the parents. When [high school] students get tutoring from college students, the parents don't have to pay for tutoring for their children. So it saves parents money.

Educators especially valued and craved working with service-learning students in their classrooms.

You know these kids need someone that's with them one-on-one even if it's just for 45 min. once a week. That is someone who is taking their time and being very intentional with that specific child …. What 10-year-old doesn't want having one-on-one attention just for them? Just having those volunteers come in and spend that time with that child is incredible. It's also something that our teachers can't do.

When you have a class of 20 you can't stop and spend 45 minutes with one child. It's just not realistic.

Despite all that college student learners added to the community organizations and their clients, there were challenges. The greatest barrier was communication followed closely by issues of maturity. Navigating the university and the semester schedule were other challenges that community partners discussed. The rest of this subsection will look at challenges expressed by the community partners.

One of the greatest challenges experienced by community partners was communication. They were flummoxed by how to get students to respond to communication efforts and hypothesized on the best approach: *Texting is how to communicate with students; they do not tend to check email.* When considering service-learning and the level of coordination that transpires to get an entire class of college students engaged in a community setting in the bounds of a fifteen week semester, communication posed difficulties.

The challenges are mainly in being very flexible in scheduling your classroom. You may have to rearrange your entire lesson on the day that the students decide to come. Last year I had days were 8 of them would show up on the particular time and if I were giving it test it would be ridiculous to waste all that manpower so I would change up my assignment plan. That to me is the only challenge that there is.

182

Aside from not knowing when the students were coming to the organization, other

problems inherent in communication difficulties spread to supplies, safety, and the need

for more faculty oversight.

> [The students] don't often follow up on the details. For them things like signing up
>
> may feel arbitrary but for us it's very important to know how many people and to
>
> know if we'll have a shift covered.   That is one thing that colleges and universities
>
> can do - making sure they have 1 or 2 designated staff good at communicating
>
> between the potential organization and the students themselves. If faculty is taking
>
> this very darn seriously, the students will be more apt in taking it seriously.

The communication challenge was one that left the community partners desiring more

intervention from college personnel, whether faculty or service-learning directors, to help

guide the details and follow-through. *It's important that Rockhurst not just leave*

community partners hanging there even though we all get busy. I think being proactive

and talking to the community partners and checking in is really important. This

communication challenge related directly to institutionalization of service-learning and the

level of commitment a college or university makes to staffing community engagement

programming.

Some community partners blamed the communication problems on a generation

gap and others on issues of maturity: *They're kids; not grownups.* Many of the typical

challenges in the classroom present in the community context as well. Service-learning

often involved group work, where *one or two people do the bulk of the work and then*

there are the others. Additionally, many of the Rockhurst students, who are traditional-age college students, were still learning about thoroughness and attention to detail.

There's also the thing that I have to keep aware of is their level of efficiency. Maybe it's just my experience that I've had but like they crank things out so fast, before I have a chance to get something else lined up. They are very fast but they might not be in depth—they do work that is not really very complete.

Not paying attention could have led to safety concerns, which was top of mind for some of the community partners. Others were concerned over college students not sharing the same sense of obligation. *The first thing I learned about volunteers as we're not paying them and so they don't have the same sense of obligation that I do. I have a different perspective.* All of the community partners were quick to recognize that the students' first obligation was toward their studies and not toward the service-learning site. Another commonly expressed challenge was setting realistic expectations for the project. Sometimes what the community organization needs or what connects best to the class was not a thrilling challenge. *Sometimes both sides wanted the project to be so much more than what it is. How do you deal with that and how do you make it something that someone still is going to come and do and learn something?* This challenge has been endemic in service-learning. Students come with energy and enthusiasm, community partners are ready and willing to teach the students about their issues, but the project at hand falls flat. Community partners expressed that their first semester with a service-learning project was lackluster. There was also a learning curve for community partners when it came to

184

understanding logistics and the pace of a fifteen-week semester. Community partners shared that by the time the project got started, the semester was half over.

Navigating even a university the size of Rockhurst was difficult for the nonprofit organizations and schools. They discussed not knowing whom to contact when they had an idea for service-learning: *Getting connected to university and faculty members is hard on community partners*. Several partners identified the need for a portal or a front door to the university so that community organizations could contact one person with their ideas, needs, and opportunities for collaboration because it is time consuming to negotiate through several different faculty members. Many of the partners had been approached first by Rockhurst, or had made a contact within the university through an informal network. The final challenge discussed by every community partner was a lack of feedback from the university. Nonprofit organizations and schools operate in a culture where evaluation is a critical friend that helps an organization with continuous improvement. *But as far as I know, sadly, there's been no organized learning situation where there's been feedback*. Expressed a bit more bluntly by another community partner: *Also I'd love to see the feedback. If those students think I'm a jerk I'd like to know that-not that I'm going to change*. The community partners craved information about how the process worked and what the outcomes were for the students. After all of the time and energy they had invested in the service-learning projects, it seemed unfortunate to many of the study participants that they did not receive any sort of follow-up with results. When asked if

185

they would use the information, they all agreed that it would be used for improvement, communicating with stakeholders, and fund raising.

> It would be very easy to share the experience with others. It could be shared in our newsletter, with our, with our students, and with the teachers faculty and staff in the building - that would be fabulous. It could help with the temporariness of the relationship to know that the Rockhurst students gain a lot from the experience.

The community partners did not realize that the service-learning students wrote reflection papers for their courses and that some of those reflections could be shared.

The community partners discussed the challenges of service-learning in such a way that they were not blaming Rockhurst. Instead, they explored the options for refining their service-learning projects.

> I think there's a disconnect-there's all these wonderful ideas and the University makes a huge impact on the community. And from the University standpoint I can guarantee they're hoping most of their students might stay in the area because they're going to be more connected with their University…We truly are connected even though we're fragmented by so many things. When people come I think they're just excited afterwards to say wow here's a place in a tough place but making a difference…But we could partner better with organizations such as universities.

The opportunities for higher education to take the next step in building durable partnerships for service-learning permeated this study. Once again, the ways in which

186

higher education contributes to community-based organizations, and neglects to contribute, make a difference in the feeling of reciprocity for the community partners.

Research Question Four

When campus and community collaborate for service-learning, the community organizations contribute to student learners. This contribution is part of the reciprocity because it is the community side of the collective action toward a common purpose that over time works to alter rigid social systems. This subsection examines research question four: From the community partner perspective, what do their organizations contribute to student service-learners?

> Higher education service-learning is literally changing the landscape of the region. The students certainly help us with our clients -- the clients being the citizens of Kansas City and the land managers of the local governments. Right now there are at least 3 separate sites that would not be at the restoration level that they are currently were it not for college students. These areas are now being utilized by citizens.

While some service-learning projects are powerful and make a considerable – and noticeable – difference, not all service-learning is of the same quality. From the perspective of other community partners, the results are mixed as to the difference service-learning is making, broadly, in the Kansas City communities. *I think people who come just to get a grade in the class are not all that helpful. Extra hands are always good, but we*

don't really need them. The above two very different perspectives illustrate part of the challenge of service-learning: student efforts need to address a community identified need. When efforts address a real need, the landscape changes and that has a ripple effect as well as a heightened sense of reciprocity for the community partner. When convenience, seat and service-hour counts, or doing something not truly needed take precedence over the service and learning, the students' efforts do not make much of a difference. When that happens, everyone, including the community partners, has a lessened sense of reciprocity.

Also present in the study participants' narratives was a continued call to build partnerships that reach up the ranks and that bring the community in to the classroom.

> Those kinds of things make more difference to us than having volunteers standing in front of me saying what can I do now. Wouldn't it be awesome to have the Board of Trustees come serve a meal? They could see what we're doing. We could give them the tour and they could say they are four blocks away, why can't we put something together?

In some areas, there are plenty of volunteers. When service-learning loses its focus as a balance between service and learning, and it slips in to being more about service, it tends to compete with the service that traditional volunteer groups (e.g. churches, scouting, and K-12 community service) give a nonprofit organization or school. For service-learning to be worthwhile and meaningful for the community partners, it needs to be different than just another source of volunteers, and the difference needs to be directly related to

188

academics. Some of the community partners shared how they came to reach out to Rockhurst University for a service-learning partnership.

We have about 23 active classroom volunteers. I think about 90% of them are college students. We used to rely on women in the community that were at home. All of that has changed so much we don't have access to those people and they aren't able to come. So we thought we had to do something else and so we made some outreach to colleges and it worked out for us.

As a relatively new teaching methodology, service-learning arrived as an option as many of the typical sources of volunteers either became older or entered the full-time workforce. The community partners who participated in this study had almost all found ways to connect with service-learning students to fill the gap of a shrinking universe of volunteers. When community partners are kept at a distance, service-learning students may become overshadowed by the ranks of volunteers who are at the organization because they want to be, not because they have to be.

The community partners did not have a complete sense of how or whether they contributed to student service-learners. Most community partners, when discussing what their organizations contribute to college students, pointed at the opportunity for real-world experiences.

More and more we have kids going to college and not knowing what is involved with their major in their future career. There are kids who really have no idea what they're going to be doing but they're going to go and pay thousands of dollars or

189

get into debt to do that. I think universities in some manner have got to be

encouraging their students to understand careers.

Community-based organizations see a role in this exploration, as long as the student

experiences also line up with real needs or resource gaps the organizations are

experiencing. Beyond the career connection, the organizations also expressed a lack of

follow-through on the part of the university.

> We rarely hear from the students again. Sometimes we hear from the faculty
>
> member, depending on our relationship with that individual. I guess I feel like we
>
> really cherish the students and invest our time in them as people and then it all just
>
> evaporates. We take pictures and post them on facebook and wish the students
>
> would tag themselves, or even join our facebook pages. I often send thank you
>
> notes. But all my efforts go in to a void. Sometimes it makes me wonder if my
>
> contribution is a valued or if it is expected.

The community partners expressed a sincere interest in feedback from the university. This

could be in the form of sharing students' final reflections or asking students to complete a

questionnaire /survey and sharing the data with the community partners.

> Giving us their feedback never happens. Would they like different kinds of
>
> projects? What did they learn by being here? Our observation of what we think
>
> they are thinking comes from our end. If we knew those answers, we could contact
>
> the colleges and universities when we have those needs. We would also need to
>
> know who to contact. Where is the entrance for community organizations?

190

By closing the communication loop, universities could gain the opportunity to cultivate community partners and service-learning projects with potential gains for all parties.

Summary of Findings by Research Question

The previous section presented findings organized by each of the four research questions. Throughout the discussion the selective codes were featured. In constructivist grounded theory, selective codes are the higher order codes that emerge with the core variable (Holton, 2010). In the case of this study, the core variables for the community partners' experiences of reciprocity were the degrees to which service-learning had been institutionalized at the university and the degrees to which students and faculty collaborate with the community partner to jointly create knowledge. The next section will further analyze the six selective codes and how they fit together with the core variables.

<div align="center">

Findings by Selective Code

</div>

Introduction

Analyzing the data by research question also produced an analysis of several of the selective codes which mapped directly to research questions. This section goes in to more detail about some of the selective codes, but does not address the selective codes that the research questions fully explored. The first research question scrutinized evidence of community partners experiences with higher education service-learning. While that is related to the Discourse of service-learning, it did not fully engage the selective code. This

<div align="center">191</div>

section begins with a Discourse analysis. More data is brought to bear on the importance of reciprocity to community partners as well. The selective codes service-learning outcomes/challenges and community partner contribution of transformative learning were fully described by analysis of research questions three and four. The remaining two selective codes, connection between reciprocity and institutionalization of service-learning and dismantling the ivory tower/jointly creating knowledge both anchor this section and conclude this chapter.

In the data analysis of this study, the primary source documents were coded and then the codes were compared, condensed, and relationships among codes were assigned. The codes that occurred the most and had the greatest number of relationships to other codes were identified as the axial codes. Through a process of memo-writing and analysis, the fourteen axial codes formed in to six selective codes. The table below lists the axial codes and the selective codes. The selective codes are listed down the y axis and the axial codes are listed across the x axis. In the cells of a column, an "x" indicates that an axial code became part of a selective code.

Discourse of Service-Learning

Discourse, with a capital D, takes the concept of language that is connected and stretches across different ideas and expands it. Discourses are "ways of being in the world; they are forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes" (Gee, 1989, p. 6-7). As described in chapter three, each of the concepts discussed by study participants or contained in the supporting documents received a code. The codes were then examined for frequency of use and ways they were inter-related. A common strand of codes that pertained to community partners' experiences of service-learning were related to the Discourse of service-learning.

Table 7

Selective Codes Emerging from Axial Codes

Academics	Careers	Challenges	Characteristics of partnerships	Diversity	Faculty	Forming relationships	Institution-alization	Outcomes	Reciprocity	Service-learning partnerships	Social justice	Solutions/best practices	Student learning	Students	
x	x			x			x	x	x					x	Discourse of service-learning from community partner experiences
		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					Importance of reciprocity to community partners
		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x		Service-learning outcomes and challenges
	x			x			x	x	x		x			x	Community partner contribution of transformative learning for college students
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	The connection between perception of reciprocity and institutionalization of service-learning
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Dismantling the ivory tower/jointly creating knowledge

194

Figure 2

Discourse Analysis
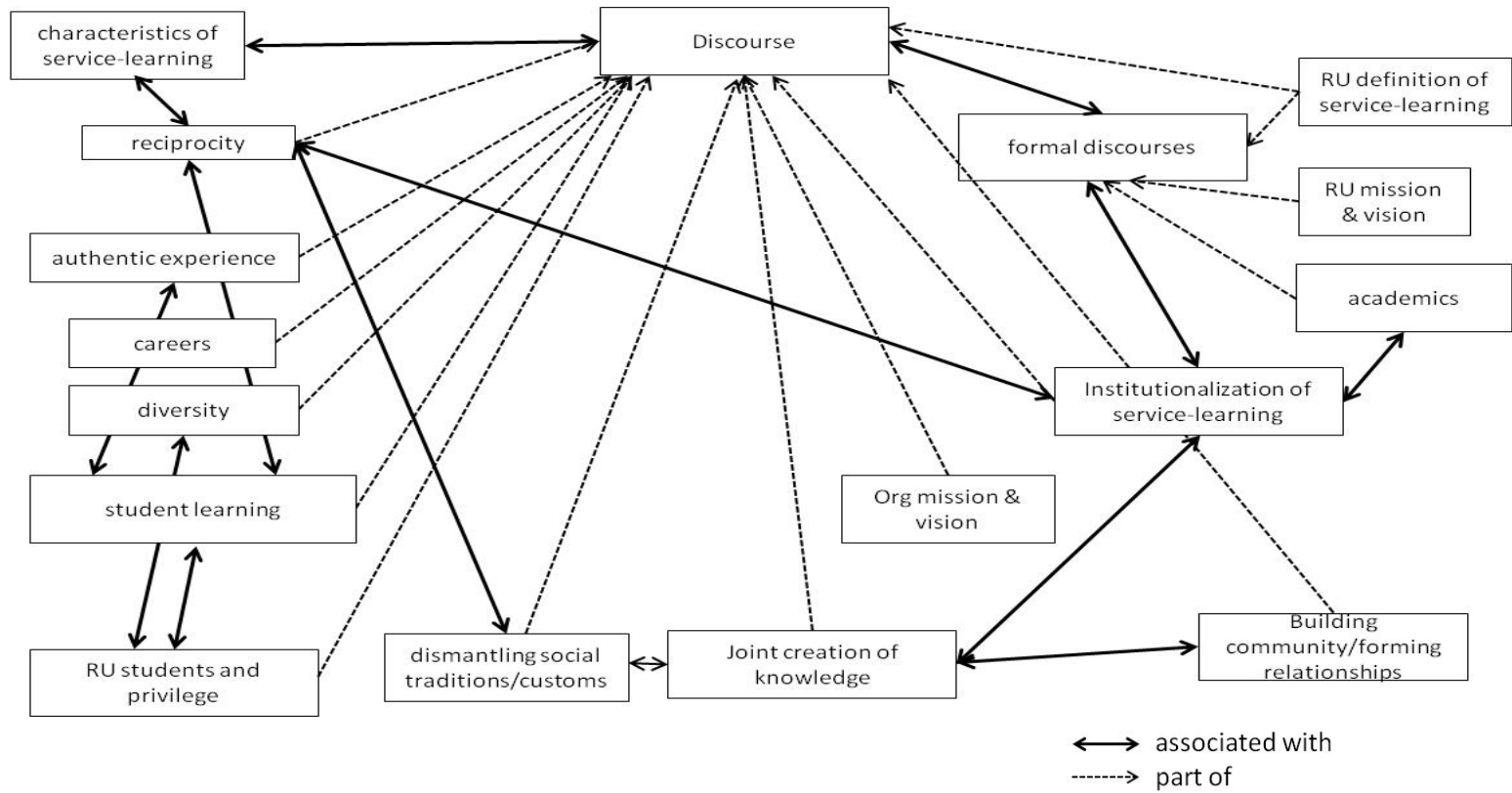
The visual depiction of the Discourse of service-learning shows a strong link network in that all of the boxes connect codes to codes through a given meaning (e.g., is part of, is a, is associated with). A visual examination of the open and axial codes that were related to Discourse (Figure 2, above) shows what composes the Discourse of service-learning from the community partner perspective. Arrows that go one direction show that a code is part of another code. Arrows that go both directions show that a code is associated with another code. For example, Discourse is part of reciprocity, and reciprocity is associated with student learning and characteristics of service-learning. This complex visualization depicts how complex service-learning partnerships are for the community partners. There are many nuances, considerations, and constituencies involved in service-learning. Most notable, Discourse is part of institutionalization of service-learning, and institutionalization of service-learning is associated with the codes associated with joint creation of knowledge. This visual depiction of how Discourse is related to many of the axial and other selective codes helped the researcher continue to hone the codes so that they became denser, more inter-related.

When service-learning is done well and in a way that is meaningful, the community partners express benefits for the organization, the clients, and for themselves personally. All of these defining aspects of service-learning, or what makes service-learning different from other ways of teaching and learning, stem from the community partners' experiences and reflections. Of the elements that most defined service-learning for the community partners—community engagement, resources and structure, issues of

196

leadership, authentic experience, and potential to affect understanding of privilege—all are

related to reciprocity. And reciprocity associated with dismantling traditions/customs and

institutionalization of service-learning. Through considering Discourse of service-learning

from the community partners perspective as a selective code, it became clear that the way

service-learning was operationalized, talked about, not talked about, and its position at the

university mattered to the community partners. For some community partners it even

affected how they felt about the service-learning experience.

Importance of Reciprocity

A visual depiction of the codes related to reciprocity in service-learning shows

some intriguing relationships among the data (see Figure 3). The visual depiction of

reciprocity shows a strong link network in that all of the boxes connect codes to codes

through a given meaning (e.g., is part of, is a, is associated with). In the visual diagram of

reciprocity codes, nearly all of the codes connected to the importance of reciprocity had

two-way arrows signifying that they are associated. This is significant because it

illustrates the mutuality of the characteristics of reciprocity coded across all of the

documents. Additionally, another prominent feature surfaced with the visual depiction:

Institutionalization of service-learning figures prominently in the community partners'

view of reciprocity. How the university recognizes and supports service-learning, in the

most official ways, was important to the community partners' sense of an activity being

197

mutually beneficial. The community partners viewed institutionalization of service-learning comprehensively, in that the university learned from experiences in the community and that institutionalization of service-learning helped dismantle the ivory tower. When discussing the importance of reciprocity specifically, the community partners drew connections between their feelings of reciprocity and the hope that the service-learning experience was transformative for students. They also associated reciprocity with jointly creating knowledge with the university and mutual gain. The checks and balances that were part of the best service-learning experiences were important to understanding reciprocity from the community perspectives.

Figure 3

Characteristics of Reciprocity
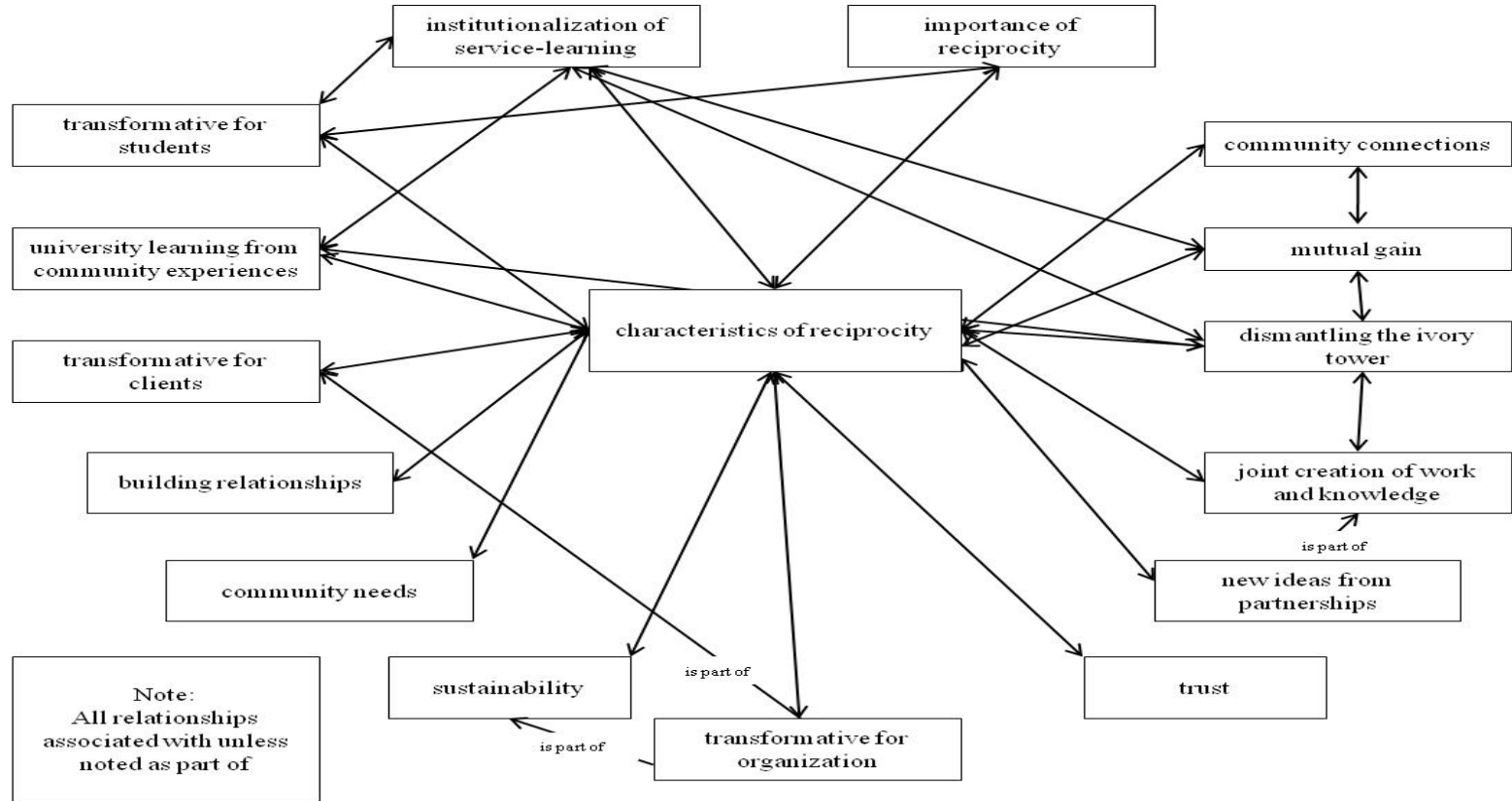
Often the way the community partners described what Rockhurst students gained from the service-learning experience was through the lens of the organization's mission.

It's an eye-opening experience to get up close to some of the things that these children are experiencing and understanding some of the things on their plate. It puts a face to poverty. College students really have to look at what are the challenges facing this population and I think that's very valuable for them.

Community partners believed that service-learning should have both service and learning and resisted ideas of college students visiting their organizations to observe.

We get a lot of inquiry for observation. My view of observation is limited. What you get with observation is really just a snapshot. It is not a complete picture. It is just a teeny snapshot and I think it can be misleading to students. For colleges to recommend observations does the student an injustice.

While resisting the notion of college students having voyeuristic experiences, the community partners looked at this in terms of reciprocity: observations took time away from the clients and did not give the college students a well-rounded sense of the work. Part of the challenge with observations, the community partners expressed, was that students were not privy to the unglamorous times or the stressful times that also characterized community work in a variety of settings: Teachers grade. Staff at food pantries washes vegetables. Staff at hospitals cleans. Through service-learning, the college students were part of the organization and had glimpses of a variety of experiences. They also were more engaged with the context of the work due to their contribution.

200

Interestingly, the community partners wanted to know whether university leadership valued service-learning and what universities gave to their students by way of recognizing the service-learning. The degree to which service-learning was institutionalized mattered to the community partners because they saw that as part of reciprocity. The way it connected for the community partners was that they felt that when a college or university takes steps to ensure sustainability for service-learning, that the college or university was also respecting and investing in its partnerships with community-based organizations as well as officially recognizing the learning opportunities those partnerships afforded college students.

Intersection of Reciprocity and Institutionalization

This selective code has appeared several times throughout the data analysis section, and it is important to revisit. Grounded theory drives toward a theory, a way of understanding and using information. If part of service-learning, by definition, is to build partnerships and projects that are characterized by a high degree of reciprocity, the institutional standing of service-learning matters. If service-learning is marginalized, that marginalization translates to the community partners. If it is celebrated by the mission, but not evenly practiced throughout the institution, that discrepancy is felt by the community organization. The community organizations understand sustainability and have sophisticated operations. They survive in a structured, symbolic, leadership context, and

201

want to feel connected to the leadership of the university. Having service-learning that is fully institutionalized, from the community partners' perspective, seems to be an important way to accomplish reciprocity. Several aspects of institutionalization were discussed during the interviews: student preparation, student recognition, faculty preparation, faculty recognition, and service-learning program support and visibility.

Student learning was a primary focus for the community partners in this study. They wanted to contribute, teach, and foster the students along in learning about building and sustaining communities. The community partners expressed an interest in how the university prepared and recognized the service-learners: *I think letting students know what the requirements are before they sign up for the course would be good. Students need to know it is a service-learning course and will have different expectations.* Another community partner pointed out: *students should be getting some different type of recognition for their service-learning. What do these projects count for in student terms? If the projects mattered more, would the challenges be lessened?* Many universities notate service-learning courses on student transcripts and have structured orientation sessions to prepare students for their community work. The community partners wanted to know more about the academic and institutional context for service-learning for the students and understood the educational opportunities present in the service-learning model.

I remember being almost bored to death of my education classes and I didn't even really know that I wanted to teach. I think that that experience of actually getting

202

out and trying on a potential career could be something that in my mind every

major, every department should be finding out how to do. More and more we have

kids going to college and not knowing what is involved with their major in their

future career. There are kids who really have no idea what they're going to be

doing but they're going to go and pay thousands of dollars or get into debt to do

that. I think universities in some manner have got to be encouraging their students

to understand careers.

Institutionalization of service-learning was more than transcripts and orientation sessions.
It was also how learning experiences such as service-learning were being incorporated in
to the broader context of earning a college degree.

We are hoping what they learn here about healthcare will make a difference for

them. When they have achieved their goals, we hope they will be reflective of our

process here and what they got out of it. Maybe even want to come back to us and

serve our patients. That is our three-way win that we hope will develop. We have a

little tracking mechanism to see who was a youth volunteer, adult volunteer,

geriatric volunteer.

The community partners saw a long-term relationship with the college students. The

students would graduate and become leaders and professionals if not here in Kansas City,

than perhaps taking up the cause that the organization addresses whether through

employment, volunteering, or philanthropy.

The community partners did not place the burden of building partnerships between campus and community solely on the university. They repeatedly offered ideas and suggestions. *Yes I think the college faculty members motivate the students. In a perfect world we would have a larger [name of org removed] staff that could focus on colleges and universities. But right now we're in a time of fiscal hardship.* The community partners expressed genuine interest in working on the system of making service-learning part of higher education broadly. They offered ideas for how to efficiently connect organization and faculty.

> I would say for us it would be inviting community partners out for…an institute or consortium of community partners talking about how they can come together and partner together. It worked so successfully at Johnson County Community College. They have one afternoon when all sorts of curriculum chairs come together and describe how they incorporate service learning into the class and community partners go around and talk about how they use volunteers. And the faculty members talk about how they can use that in their class. The community partner talks about how they could use the students in their organization. And that way I can call upon that person at the college to say oh my gosh I have this tremendous fit for a class or a faculty members interest. To me this type of activity suggests that partnership is really important.

This type of connection activity was important to the community partners and they surmised it would appeal to the faculty as well: *I remember from my own college days that faculty members care about efficiency. To me, a forum that brought together community organizations in need of service-learning partnerships with faculty in need of partners would more quickly get at the heart and art of reciprocity.* The community partners also wanted to build more of a relationship with the faculty members around the service-learning: *does this type of activity count as a job duty for the instructors? For me, it is part of my job and my executive director wants me reaching out to college students. So I know it is an accepted use of my time.* Another community partner saw opportunities to build relationships beyond service-learning. *Well the only other thing is we would welcome universities to do research here. I think that would be great. Sometimes there are grants out there that they might have and need to come here and conduct research.* The community partners saw additional opportunities part of institutionalization of not only service-learning but of the community context. *I think universities, generally, should see us as partners in discovery. The nonprofit sector has changed with the times. We are educated and can provide an important stakeholder perspective on research.* Building broader partnerships between community and campus was seen as the ultimate goal, with service-learning playing an important role in the partnership. Community and higher education have needed each other for a while, and that need has been increasing.

Aside from the relationship between reciprocity and institutionalization of service-learning, another selective code prominently appeared. Community partners felt a relationship with a college or university had reciprocity when there was a sense of joint creation of work and knowledge. While the study did not focus on outcomes for college students, the community partners did still mention them. Partly this was because the college students figured in the reciprocity; it mattered to the community partners that the students also benefited from the experience. The community partners discussed this as though they were instructors and collaborators and desired most of all a sense of joint creation of work and knowledge.

Sense of Joint Creation of Knowledge/Dismantling the Ivory Tower

The concept of jointly creating work and knowledge is unique to service-learning because of the tacit understanding that the students will not just give but also learn from the community setting.

> They learn that we don't bite [laughter]. When they first get here they think they've walked into a scary place. But even by the end of their initial visit, they're much more comfortable. It dispels all of those types of fears. Rockhurst students really get more out of it and they've told me that. They came to bring something to our students and wind up walking away with more than they brought.

What they walked away with were precious and unique new learning: knowledge,

206

authentic experience, self-efficacy—all of the incredible outcomes associated with service-learning, but only when it is high-quality service-learning characterized by reciprocity between campus and community. Theoretically, the reason reciprocity and service-learning are linked is because many of the learning outcomes are dependent on the community partners and their willingness to invest in students.

The student learning described by the community partners was a deep and meaningful learning – the type of learning referred to in university terms as transformational learning. The depth of the change and knowledge created separated service-learning from community service for the community partners.

They are college students - as a matter of fact they are white college students and there is an attitude sometimes of "oh you poor pitiful thing." So we've had some of that, but not enough to make an issue of it. For the most part the Rockhurst students are so down to earth.

The opportunity to experience a level of socio-economic, cultural, and racial diversity not present at the campus was an important feature of the experiences of the community partners.

The experience of poverty; the experience of hunger; the experience of being alone. These are all experiences that are everyday occurrences that rarely happen or probably have rarely happened in college students' lives. We also can help college students see they can make a concrete difference. When they come here

207

they think I have a face and a name to seeing the difference that can be made.

Seeing someone bring their kid in and get groceries because their mom is working

but still can't make ends meet. Or seeing the joy when somebody gets a job. Huge.

What the community partners did not have a grasp of was what occurred in the classroom

to also support that level of learning. The unique feature of service-learning is that it calls

upon the community partners and the faculty to work together to build knowledge. One of

the areas where service-learning was fraught with difficulty was with the connection

between the faculty members and the community partners. The community partners who

had strong relationships with the faculty members and a direct connection to the classes

described the stronger outcomes.

That the community partners described the benefits of hosting college students so

explicitly underscores their insight in creating change.

Many college students are future leaders by the fact of where they're going to get a

job on a higher socioeconomic level. And therefore it can actually create real

change if they have community experience now. Meaning if you don't know what

it's like to be poor or don't have the experience of that then you'll never have the

idea of I can give back.

More than having extra hands on deck to address the needs of the community, the

community partners described potential outcomes of service-learning that had the potential

to make lasting and potentially life-changing impression on the students. *We've gotten*

pretty hard in the orientation this time, challenging them to think about themselves and their roles. To think about their futures and maybe we can connect them with other situations. What the community partners described was mentoring that they were willing to give the college students in exchange for recognizing the opportunity and taking it seriously.

The joint creation of work and knowledge, while at the heart of reciprocity, is also provocative because it begins to dismantle the cherished notion of the university as ivory tower. Historically, the university has generated knowledge, been at the nexus of innovation. Increasingly, knowledge and innovation happen in other places besides the university campus. Entrepreneurs innovate. Educators of grade school students produce knowledge about best practices. Quite in keeping with the joint creation of work and knowledge, the dismantling of the ivory tower was, from the community partner perspective, an important approach to building and sustaining service-learning programs that are characterized by high degrees of reciprocity from the community partners' perspectives would be to dismantle the ivory tower notion of higher education.

Whether the ivory tower can be completely deconstructed was not the focus of this study. Rather, when it came to reinforcing boundaries pertaining to who creates knowledge and who does the work, the community partners felt those portions of the ivory tower needed to come down. Colleges and universities sent students in to the community to gain knowledge and apply theory in ways that cannot be constructed in the classroom or

campus environment. Practitioner knowledge was immensely important to post-secondary

education for both practical and theoretical reasons. The community partners expressed

both of those: Practical provides insight and preparation for careers; theoretical application

helps students understand how to use the knowledge they gain from their studies.

> It's a joy for students to be able to see that they can be hands-on and see that they're
>
> making a difference. They are probably our most enthusiastic and passionate
>
> volunteers. Recently we just had a fraternity bring us food. We thought it might be
>
> a trunk load of food. No, it was bin after bin. The college students are great about
>
> off-site activities especially. They're great at things we might need help with
>
> outside of our facility because they have a little bit more flexibility and willingness
>
> to go out and help. And I like to think they are taking up the cause in a way that is
>
> reinforced by their studies.

The community partners in this study called the question regarding whether knowledge

and application should be as separate as they have been. In the current context for higher

education, part of being college educated has been to be able to apply theory. Keeping

knowledge separated from theory kept students and faculty from experiencing what

happened when they have been combined. The community partners greatly valued

Rockhurst University, and higher education in general. They expressed through the

interviews how much they need their partnerships with colleges.

Don't ever stop being our partner; don't ever leave us alone. We really do need

Rockhurst University very, very badly. The experience that the students bring, the

commitment that they've brought over the years has been very important for our

students. Our students here welcome all that attention, they do. It really plants

something in the hearts of our students that says I can, I can do this too.

Because a majority of the community partners are college educated, they have insight in to

the dynamics of higher education. The motivations and inclinations of the sector are not

veiled and yet sometimes a lack of transparency that is caused by the persistent idea of the

ivory tower, and the lack of jointly creating work and knowledge together interferes with

everyone's sense of reciprocity.

Chapter Summary

Chapter four has been a long and pivotal chapter in the dissertation. It began with descriptive data of the community partner organizations, the study participants, and Rockhurst University. The descriptive data was compared with regional data of nonprofit organizations and with academic data from Rockhurst University to see how the study participants and their organizations are representative of the university and the city. The descriptive data presented the variety and breadth of the community partner organizations participating in the study as compared with overviews of Rockhurst University. The data showed that the community partner organizations, the informants of the study, and Rockhurst University have several areas of commonality, but, community partner organizations more closely resembled the university than the city at large.

The second section of the chapter established triangulation of the data by showing consistency across the data gathered for this study, data collected about nonprofits, and data collected about Rockhurst University. An analysis of frequently used words showed the same linear patterning, which established triangulation for purposes of the qualitative study.

The third section of the chapter presented findings from the community conversation. The opportunity for community partners to discuss among themselves their experiences with service-learning and with reciprocity provided additional insight to how

the concepts are related. The fourth section of the chapter summarized each community partner interview. The summaries were written to present the context of the interview and to highlight the community partners experiences with service-learning and thoughts pertaining to reciprocity.

The final two sections analyzed the data by research questions and by selective code. The discussion of how the research questions drove data collection and examination to lead to selective codes and ultimately to the core variables of reciprocity in service-learning: of the connection between perception of reciprocity and institutionalization of service-learning, and association of jointly creating knowledge with dismantling the ivory tower.

The next chapter will present how this analysis comes together in to a set of recommendations for higher education, generally, and for Rockhurst specifically, to help increase the reciprocity experienced by community partners when they host student service-learners.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

How does reciprocity work? Is it as simple as the golden rule? If a college does

unto the community as the college would want done unto itself, in the case of service-

learning, is that reciprocity? This study sought to understand how the concept of

reciprocity is operationalized in service-learning. Although there are many types of

community engagement, I selected service-learning because reciprocity is a central,

important construct of service-learning. The literature clearly shows that reciprocity is a

necessary factor for students to have the type of transformational learning experience

necessary to be inspired (and perhaps feel empowered) to take action toward social

change. Given the strong participation by colleges and universities across the country,

service-learning has become a force for social change.

Discussion

This study used the following definition of reciprocity which is based on the

researcher's interpretation and synthesis of Henry's and Breyfogle's call for enriched

reciprocity: Reciprocity is when two or more parties take collective action toward a

common purpose. Through the process of coming together, the parties are transformed by

214

the collective action in a way that allows for increased understanding of a full variety of life experiences (Henry & Bryfogle, 2006). In the article written by Henry and Breyfogle, they do not forward a new definition of reciprocity, but rather describe all of the points a more complicated understanding of reciprocity that service-learning should especially for partnerships where education is the primary goal of all parties. There is a hope that through reciprocity, the actions may even alter rigid social systems.

Reciprocity is more than a measurable exchange: it is an elusive but utilitarian craving for something beyond a transaction. Something that is durable, trustworthy, and valuable. Service-learning is a transformative teaching methodology because it has the potential, when set up with reciprocity in mind, to connect classroom and community, to open up the learning environment to the challenges and chaos of the real world. When that happens, the social system of ivory tower is confronted and so are many of the preconceived notions and stereotypes of the college student service-learners. But that is only when a service-learning project is planned and implemented in such a way that meets all definitional characteristics, especially reciprocity.

Scholarship on service-learning tends to present a much more structured picture of service-learning than service-learning typically has in the college classroom. There is a great deal of unpredictability in service-learning. Part of the reason it may hold so much promise is because, like reciprocity, it is untidy.

215

This study was not intended to be an evaluation of Rockhurst University's service-learning; this study focuses on Rockhurst University's community partners because Rockhurst has a long-standing service-learning program and developed relationships with their community partners. The real focus of this study is reciprocity between campus and community from the unique point of view of the community partners. I set out to understand how reciprocity works in service-learning for community partners, because I believe as an intellectual movement, service-learning does not listen closely enough to the communities who are equal players in the process. The present research focuses on community partners of Rockhurst University's longstanding service-learning program. There were three parts to the study: An initial community conversation expanded the definition of service-learning to include the community partner perspective and identified ways in which service-learning is a worthwhile enterprise. The results of the community conversation were brought forward to substantive interviews with twenty-three representatives from eighteen community-based organizations. The interviews were conducted until reaching saturation of themes across the various types of nonprofit organizations. Because the nonprofit sector is diverse and significant in Kansas City, saturation of themes needed to be achieved across a variety of organization types. The third part was gathering profiles of each nonprofit organization that participated from the DonorEdge database maintained by the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, as well as gathering profiles from the Donor Edge database of the Greater Kansas City

216

Community Foundation of each nonprofit organization that participated in the study. This documentation was used for purposes of classification (type, size, age, and mission of the nonprofit organizations) as well as discussion of service-learning from Rockhurst's perspective.

Using constructivist grounded theory, this study examines how reciprocity works and the features of reciprocity that shape how communities feel about service-learning. Reciprocity works through relationships and the relationships among all the stakeholders in service-learning can shape how community partners feel about service-learning. <u>Based on data analysis, this study arrives at the following, interconnected findings:</u>

- The Discourse of service-learning rattles the foundations of the traditional notion of the ivory tower where knowledge is created, stored, and carefully deposited in students, to a community comprised of students, faculty, alumni, the nonprofit sector, and their clients who want to take action based on knowledge.

- Community partners feel reciprocity is important to their feeling of whether or not a service-learning project was worthwhile or successful.

- Community partners value what they offer students by way of transformational learning.

- Community partners want to jointly build work and knowledge and in so doing, dismantle the ivory tower.

217

- The degree of institutionalization of service-learning at the university is an important factor in reciprocity from the community partners perspectives.

This study was, in part, inspired by the scholarship of Randy Stoecker and Elizabeth Tryon who sought to "amplify the unheard voices of community organization staff in the service-learning relationship" (Stoecker & Tryon, 2009, p.vii). Stoecker and Tryon noted that the students and the service-learning faculty hear what their community partners have to say, but too often this knowledge and insight does not travel beyond the service-learning network at the college level. More than just listening to the community partners, this study attempted to understand why, even with being unheard and even with the challenges, do community partners continue to be community partners. The reason why is because of reciprocity: the community partners are getting something they value, or giving something they value. This study corroborates the findings of Stoecker and Tryon in that service-learning is not always beneficial for community partners and that too often the outcomes hinge on students and a small group of faculty. Many of the relationships described by the community partners in this study were transactional. This means, according to Enos and Morton (Jacoby, 2003) that they are focused on an exchange of some sort: dinner needs to be served at a community kitchen and college students come serve it. When and if the partnerships develop over time, the relationship becomes transformational. This study found that some community partners prefer the transactional relationship and have been sustaining it for years. Still other community partners would be

218

open to expanding and building on their existing partnerships. This study affirmed the findings of Dorado and Giles (2004) that organizations will fall along of spectrum of types of partnerships, but what matters most is whether or not the students doing the service-learning meet real community needs. However, there are large decisions for the community partners to make. Often their budgets are tight and their staff overworked just meeting the needs of clients. Bushouse (2005) positions the ultimate challenge for community partners is to decide whether the benefits of service-learning are worth the cost. In this study, most of the community partners felt the benefits were worth the associated costs. Admittedly, this study had a number of youth-serving organizations and schools because most of Rockhurst's service-learning seems to be related to schools and youth. Perhaps there are areas where the service-learning model works well because the partnership comes with greater ease and benefits and less cost.

This study found that community partners' experiences form a Discourse of service-learning that is shared across the sites. The Discourse was partially shaped by the direct experience with students and faculty coming on site, but also shaped by concepts such as sustainability, recognition/reward, and institutionalization; and by symbolic images that are shared nationally, such as the ivory tower, and those shared locally, such as Troost Avenue. While most studies corroborate the Boyer Model of higher education (1990, 1994), this study found shared Discourse between the ways Boyer presents the New American College and the ways many of the community partners desired deeper, more

meaningful partnerships with area colleges and universities.

Butin (2005) argued that service-learning must be examined as a narrative if it hopes for reciprocity because there are assumptions about identity, power, and a strong historical inclination to reduce service-learning to the haves doing for the have-nots. The first research question sought to learn about the community partners' experiences with service-learning as a route to hearing and understanding their narratives. This study's first finding is that the Discourse of service-learning rattles the foundations of the traditional notion of the ivory tower where knowledge is created, stored, and carefully deposited in students, to a community comprised of students, faculty, alumni, the nonprofit sector, and their clients who want to take action based on knowledge. It is a Romantic notion but also a deeply democratic ideal that the New American College is part of the community, and the community is part of the institution.

The community partners in this study described service-learning as having the potential to exemplify the search for truth, a pillar of higher education. Butin (2010) claimed this for service-learning because it shakes up the grand narratives that play in many students' minds, reinforced by society, parents, schooling, and in many ways higher education. This study found that the community partners valued their role in helping to implode these grand narratives. The second finding of this study is that community partners desire, and see it as an accomplishment, to provide a context for transformative learning for college students. Community partners do this out of a sense of seeing it as part

220

of their organization's mission, wanting to groom the next generation of leaders for their particular issue, or for social justice reasons – often a complicated combination of those three already intertwined motivations. Gilbert, Johnson, and Plaut (2009) assert that it is increasingly important that higher education find a way to understand the dynamic, systemic work of community-based organizations as an integral part of the service-learning project. McKnight (2003) recommends that institutions of higher education appoint a system of community connectors who have liaison roles between campus and community and steward the institution's relationship with a set group of community partners. This type of innovation would answer the community partners questions about how to connect with colleges and universities, and how to invite others besides the students to see what the students are learning and experiencing on-site. Moving in this direction would support the community partners' hopes (and possibly expectations) to jointly create work and knowledge with higher education.

According to Holland (2006), high-quality service-learning depends on two things: faculty interest in teaching and learning through this methodology, and involved, committed community partners who are collaborators and co-teachers. Holland also states that weak service-learning projects do not work collaboratively with community partners and students find their own ways to connect experience and course content (or most likely, they do not). This study corroborates Holland's discussion about quality. The community partners all expressed that they either were part of the planning, teaching, and learning of

221

the service-learning project, or if they were not, that they would like to be. They also valued the faculty members expertise and willingness to open up their class to service-learning. When asked directly if they saw themselves as co-teachers, the community partners were uncertain what that meant. But they all provided evidence of supervising students, wanting students to experience and learn particular things, and offered assessments of how well, or not, it works.

Gelmon, Holland, and Shinnamon (1998) note that faculty pursue service-learning for student outcomes but also for the benefits of increased classroom engagement. McKay and Estrella describe service-learning as having a "highly personalized curriculum" that enhances the relationship among faculty and students (McKay & Estrella, 2008, p. 359). From the community partner perspective there was an assumption that the focus of service-learning is on the community experience and not on the relationship between faculty and student. While this study neither affirms nor refutes McKay and Estrella and Gelmon et al, it does highlight the gulf between the perspectives of service-learning. On campuses, retention and persistence is such a prevailing issue, that colleges and universities focus on service-learning for things like strengthening teacher/student relationships. Service-learning may not be as community-based from the higher education perspective as it would appear to community partners.

Perspectives on the motivation for faculty to teach service-learning courses are complex. Astin and Vogelgesang (2006) found that 81 percent of faculty believe that

222

institutions of higher education are obligated to partner with community-based

organizations to address the region's pressing needs. Many of the community partners

participating in this study noted that they are more successful in addressing their mission

of the contributions higher education makes through time and talent. The same Astin and

Vogelgesang study (2006) noted that 31 percent of the faculty stated that their colleges

make community-based work a priority. It may be out of a genuine sense of caring that the

community partners questioned how the universities recognize students and faculty for

their service-learning accomplishments.

Regardless of the how the connection was made, this study found a strong

connection between reciprocity and institutionalization. The community partners did not

point to specific learning outcomes that the students gained from service-learning. Most

community partners, when discussing what their organizations contribute to college

students, pointed at the opportunity for real-world experiences. Colleges and universities

send students to the community to gain knowledge and apply theory in ways that cannot

be constructed in the classroom or campus environment. Practitioner knowledge is

immensely important to post-secondary education for both practical and theoretical

reasons. The community partners expressed both of those: Practical provides insight and

preparation for careers; theoretical application helps students understand how to use the

knowledge they gain from their studies. Possibly from this broad view of the outcomes of

campus-community partnerships for learning, the community partners all expressed a

223

sincere interest in feedback on the students' experiences.

Jacoby (1996) identified reciprocity as a central, important construct of service-learning that is the foundation for the transformational learning experience necessary for students to be inspired (and perhaps feel empowered) to take action toward social change. Coming from the community partner perspective, this study did find the same connection between transformational learning and reciprocity as Jacoby described. However, as discussed above, the community partners were not being asked about their views on educational theory. Much of the discussion of service-learning and reciprocity is situated within the academy. In other words, it looks at the community from within the campus boundaries. This study situated the discussion of service-learning and reciprocity within the community. Too quickly the community partners found portions of service-learning exposed and unsupported and other portions draped behind opaque curtains. It seemed to the community partners that it was up to individual students and faculty members to pull back the curtains or bolster the service-learning they most cherished. The study participants wanted to know whether service-learning mattered to the university, as evidenced by how service-learning is sustained and promoted within the university. The community partners saw a direct connection between perception of reciprocity and institutionalization of service-learning.

For the community partners in this study, reciprocity in service-learning was much more than a perception that the outcomes are proportionate to their investment. Some

224

community partners have developed strategies for managing shorter-term service-learning, while other community partners were critical of the effort and resources invested in shorter-term projects compared with the gains for the organization. Interestingly, all community partners felt that they were making an investment in the students and the shared future of Kansas City communities. The community partners discussed a desire to groom the next generation of leaders. Their thoughts affirmed that the issues of service-learning and institutionalization are connected to whether a particular college or university is accessible and relevant to people in the surrounding communities. They described this in terms of an institutional front porch, access point, or portal that served as a point of departure for all forms of community engagement.

Gilbert, Johnson and Plaut (2009) asserted the practical purpose of connection between campus and community because campus and community share a common fate. They described the value of building deeply embedded partnerships between campus and community because both sectors share a responsibility for creating and changing the social conditions that permit persistent social problems. This study upheld Gilbert, Johnson and Plaut's view of the necessary partnership between campus and community. Many partners described how student involvement at their organization provides college students with a name and face for long-standing societal problems such as poverty, hunger, or low literacy achievement. This shared future is a serious one and if a college or university should be compelled to dismantle the ivory tower and jointly create work and knowledge, there

225

needs to be durable institutional supports in place.

As a public good, higher education does hold a stake in building a better, more just future. Strong (2009) describes what it takes to host a viable, effective service-learning program. At a minimum, there should be one, full-time, professional director of service-learning who connects with the various constituents to support building relationships and partnerships. This service-learning program should be housed centrally and be paid for with institutional funding. This level of commitment, Strong argues, is an important part of symbolic reciprocity and cues community partners that other resources and collaborations are possible. This study supports this assertion of Strong's based on years as a professional, full-time, service-learning director.

Because Rockhurst University has earned the Carnegie Foundation elective classification in Community Engagement, has an established Center for Service-Learning with a full-time, professional director who reports to the top academic official, their community partners understand the level of investment given to service-learning. The community partners also valued participating in the annual faculty workshop on service-learning and being part of the design process for service-learning. Often institutionalization of service-learning is focused on legitimizing service-learning for faculty, when it comes to community engaged scholarship viability for achieving tenure and promotion (Strong, 2009: Bringle & Hatcher, 2002); as well as for students, when it comes to noting service-learning on academic transcripts and recognition for their

226

community engagement achievements. With respect to reciprocity and the community partner perspective, the institutionalization of service-learning should also strive to legitimize service-learning for the community partners. Coming together for shared workshops and collaborative discussions helps community partners take part in the joint creation of work and knowledge. Ways to achieve this identified by this research include shared collaborative time and space as well as sharing student reflection and assessment of service-learning. Many of the community partners shared that their organizations were interested in continuous improvement, and with a lack of feedback about their role in the service-learning enterprise, they had difficulty building it into their organizational context and culture.

The importance of institutionalization of service-learning to reciprocity supports previous research on service-learning and community partnerships. When looking at institutionalization, the community partners discussed the ways the university weaves its commitment to the communities into the fibers of its teaching, research, and service. It makes sense that institutionalization and reciprocity are connected from the perspective of community partners. Institutionalization makes available resources and status to promote service-learning and the partnerships in which the community organizations are investing their resources. When an institution of higher education invests in service-learning, it acts in ways that are innovative, share power, and resources (Ostrander, 2004). With proper institutionalization of service-learning, a college or university should include the

community partners in the process of building partnerships, identifying priorities, and assessing needs (Driscoll, 2008). Community partners understand sustainability and making operations decisions in times of scarce resources. By expressing concern in whether service-learning is institutionalized, the community partners are coming from a perspective that recognizes that campus and community share a common fate, especially when it comes to social justice and persistent social problems (Gilbert, Johnson, & Plaut, 2009). Both higher education and the nonprofit sector are part of the public good and hold a stake in building a better, more just future. When a college or university invests in community engagement, it becomes involved in the actual building, one brick at a time, of this shared future.

Recommendations

Based on the community conversation and the interviews, a number of recommendations emerge for higher education service-learning. This section will address each of the recommendations with community insight in to process.

Recommendation #1: Relationships Matter; Take Time to Build Them

Nonprofit organizations and schools exist in cultures that are mission-focused and often have a tiered organizational structure. Higher education has a similar organizational context. Service-learning directors, coordinators, and faculty have important positions as

bridge-builders between university and community. Service-learning naturally appeals to faculty members who value learning in the community context, or they may not go to the time to teach service-learning courses. It is important for service-learning personnel to realize the important role they play in bridging campus and community. An important strategy for service-learning professionals is to provide continuity for the community partners as different classes and students rotate through in different semesters. Another strategy that community partners would value is having a liaison assigned to sustaining the relationship between campus and community, perhaps even a faculty member who has a research interest closely associated with the organization, or a graduate student. Because service-learning is a teaching methodology, it belongs closely associated with academic affairs. However, the service-learning personnel should also be connected to student affairs and be able to address how service-learning is connected to the mission of the college or university, as well as being able to discuss the ways the college or university supports and recognizes service-learning academically. This could be accomplished through intentional relationship building on the part of the service-learning personnel with other student affairs personnel who work with outreach. If a database of service opportunities is kept, it should unite all of the ways that students connect with community organizations, i.e. internships, community service, practicum, and service-learning.

Recommendation #2: Incorporate Technology

It would be great to have an online, secure space where community partners could have easy access to information about their service-learning project or service-learning generally. This could incorporate online orientation to service-learning, easy sharing of course syllabi, student reflections, and assessment. One way to establish this would be to have a community partners online resource hub in Moodle or Blackboard. Faculty may want to consider adding a representative from the community organizations to their Blackboard class to interact with discussion boards and assignments, as appropriate.

The community partners often want to be more connected to the courses themselves, while the faculty members want to be conscientious of the community partners' time, as well as their own. It seems that having a robust online portal where a resource for community partners would be access to information about their service-learning project as well as service-learning in general. The portal would be more focused on the bridge between campus and community than having a community partners section in Blackboard or Moodle. This would help the community partners with grant proposals, annual report and website articles, and other types of visibility for the project, but would not be a time drain or use scarce resources if appropriate levels of community access were considered in the mapping and design of online systems. Additionally, feedback mechanisms for the community partners about their experiences could be built into such

230

an online management system. This way, community partners could give and receive feedback. Even if a college or university does not make an investment in an online system, community partners need feedback and information. At the very least, this could be as simple as sharing students' final reflections or asking students to complete a questionnaire/survey about their experiences and sharing the data with the community partners.

Recommendation #3: Host Orientation and Make Visible Community Partner Expertise

Long-term community partners have a lot of knowledge and insight to share with other community partners about strategies for being a community partner, coordinating college students as volunteers, how to structure project oversight, and other best practices. Several of the organizations have developed specific policies and on-site curricula for college student service-learners. It would be an excellent investment for an institution of higher education to work with a community partner to provide orientation to other community partners and to help determine content and focus of any sort of portal resource. To recognize the community partners as important consultants and give them a stipend for their time in faculty and/or student workshops would be an additional step toward reciprocity and legitimizing the very important role communities have in rounding out the education of post-secondary students.

231

Recommendation #4: Institutionalize Service-Learning

As addressed earlier in this section, institutionalization of service-learning matters to community partners because they care about sustainability, do not have the same perception of the boundaries of the campus ending at the physical campus. Particularly with urban-serving universities and community colleges, community partners are often graduates of the college or university. Their donors and board members, as well as local government officials, also may be alumni of the partnering college. They know that the students will go on to graduate and be leaders. Through hosting service-learning, many community partners are making an investment in the next generation of employees, leaders, donors, and public officials. As a public good, higher education needs to innovate the ways it institutionalizes service-learning to legitimize, fund, and sustain it for students, faculty, and community partners.

The most important aspects of institutionalizing service-learning are different across the roles. For students, recognizing service-learning courses in the schedule of classes as well as on official transcripts is important. For this to occur, there needs to be a faculty committee or process for institutions to identify which courses or sections are service-learning courses. For faculty, finding a way to recognize service-learning in the promotion and tenure process would be the most significant form of institutionalization. Because faculty own the curriculum and pedagogy they develop, recognizing faculty work

232

in service-learning is a complex aspect of institutionalization. Additional factors to support

faculty work are to have resources available to help support service-learning such as

graduate research assistants to assist with the community-based aspects of service-

learning. For community partners, having avenues for regular input and feedback are

important. Also important would be to include community partners in professional

development opportunities relating to campus-community partnerships.

Future Research

There is much work to be done in building sustainable campus-community

partnerships for service-learning that are characterized by reciprocity, are institutionalized,

and are sustained over time. Because resources are scarce, it is important to make wise

choices that lead to improved relationships between academe and community

organizations as well as enhanced efficiency and more knowledge about how service-

learning affects all of its stakeholders. Developing a self-study or assessment that colleges,

universities, students and community partners can use for purposes of being transparent

and intentional about reciprocity would be an important tool for the service-learning

intellectual movement. After all, community partners are one-third of the equation of this

teaching methodology that is so important to building strong communities and future

leaders who are prepared to address our most entrenched problems and inequities.

233

There is a real need for colleges and universities to be intentional about building partnerships for service-learning. An important next step is to develop a series of articles or how-to guides for colleges and universities, for students, and for community partners to build sustainable relationships for service-learning. It is important that more research be focused on the community partners experience and that best practices for promoting reciprocity become documented and shared. The how-to guides would attempt to do just that. Because reciprocity works through relationships, an additional next step is to extend the how-to guide to the clients and students served by the community organizations. The community partners' primary relationships will be with their clients and possible their funders. Having information created explicitly for these audiences is an important part of institutionalizing service-learning at the community organization. This information must be practical and usable for the community partners, their clients, and perhaps their funders. The content surfaced by this study that ought to be included in further study for any audience includes strategies for closing the feedback loop between campus and community and strategies for bridging campus and community for the joint creation of knowledge.

Conclusion

As colleges and universities turn to service-learning as a solution to rejuvenate the teaching and learning at the postsecondary level, it is vital that they do so by listening to community partners and through building partnerships strong enough to inspire change and collective action – two pillars of enriched reciprocity. The ideal of service-learning is that it rebuilds higher education and helps foster vital, healthy communities. Meaningful, high-quality service-learning that teaches students to be agents of social change is not accidental. Quality service-learning comes through seeking reciprocity in all aspects of the project. Interestingly, the community partners want to see that their investment in the service-learning partnership, students, and faculty, is valued by the college/university. A clear indicator for community partners of that value is the amount of institutional resources a university invests in service-learning. If it is an unfunded mandate for a few faculty, the community partner experience is likely to not be characterized by high degrees of reciprocity. On the other hand, if the college/university has a visible center service-learning or some sort of portal for the community partner to connect with faculty and students, and if the faculty and students contributions to the community are valued by the college/university, then the community partners have a heightened sense of reciprocity. Because enriched reciprocity requires change, having service-learning that is deeply and meaningfully embedded in the structure of the university's academic core and is

235

supported, is important. Otherwise, the relationship is skewed between college/university and community partner.

As colleges and universities continue to embrace service-learning, finding ways to promote reciprocity in the campus-community partnerships will continue to be challenging. One way to promote reciprocity that higher education can control is how the practice is structured. Beyond the typical practices of aligning service-learning with the provost's office, noting service-learning on the transcript, and examining promotion and tenure policies for opportunities to increase faculty reward, some institutions are looking to service-learning as an intellectual movement. As such, service-learning becomes a field of inquiry in which students can minor or earn a certificate, and faculty can have joint appointments. This type of highly visible structuring on the part of the college or university sends a clear and direct message to community partners that service-learning is a worthwhile endeavor. Community partners can building long-term relationships that are sustained through shifts in course offerings, students, and faculty interest. The community partners would know where to call and how to get started discussing the next innovative idea. In turn, this relationship is strong enough to deliver all that service-learning promises: meaningful, transformative learning experiences for students, innovation and context for faculty, and assistance addressing real needs for community partners.

APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear Prospective Participant,

My name is Alexis Petri; I am a student at the University of Missouri-Kansas City
working on a Doctor of Education degree. I am conducting a research study entitled
Reciprocal Exchange: Understanding the Community Partner Perspective in Higher
Education Service-Learning. Your participation in the study would be appreciated.

I received your name from Rockhurst University Center for Service Learning as a current
or recent community partner where Rockhurst students completed service-learning
projects. The study will focus on your perspective on service-learning as a representative
of a community partner organization. The study will focus on reciprocity, or the benefits
and costs of your participation in service-learning. Please note that any information that
you provide will be confidential. Rockhurst University will receive information in
aggregate form only and you and your organization will not be identifiable. There are four
parts to the study:
- Participate in a community conversation on community partner benefits of service-
  learning (1.5 hours).
- Review information gathered from that process to make certain you feel your
  perspective was accurately represented.
- Participate in a twenty-minute interview at a time and location convenient to you.
  During the interview you will be asked a couple follow-up questions from the
  community conversation as well as questions about your experiences with service-
  learning.
- Review information gathered from your interview and authenticate that your
  perspective/thoughts were accurately represented (this will be completed online)

If the results of the study are published, no information from you will be revealed. Your
records will be kept as confidential as possible under local, state and federal law, but
absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The Institutional Review Board (a
committee that reviews and approves research studies), or other regulatory agencies may
be given access to research study records which contain your identity. The consent form
signed by you will be reviewed to verify the study procedures that were performed and the
data reported about you.

As the research study may not benefit you, the possible benefit of your participation is to society in that it may add new information regarding the community partner's perspective in higher education service-learning. Your participation may potentially ensure that community-based nonprofit organizations and schools benefit from stronger and more sustainable partnerships with colleges and universities.

If you decide to participate in the study, please send an email to petria@umkc.edu or call me at 816.809.6877. Similarly if you have any questions concerning the study, or would like to receive a summary of the findings of the study, please feel free to contact me. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant please contact the IRB administrator at 816-235-6150. Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

Alexis Petri, M.A.

APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT EMAIL FLYER

Dear Prospective Participant,

This email is in follow-up to a letter mailed to you last week. My name is Alexis Petri; I am a student at the University of Missouri-Kansas City working on a Doctor of Education degree. I am conducting a research study entitled Reciprocal Exchange: Understanding the Community Partner Perspective in Higher Education Service-Learning. Your participation in the study would be appreciated.

I received your name from Rockhurst University Center for Service Learning as a current or recent community partner where Rockhurst students completed service-learning projects. The study will focus on your perspective on service-learning as a representative of a community partner organization. The study will focus on reciprocity, or the benefits and costs of your participation in service-learning. Please note that any information that you provide will be confidential. Rockhurst University will receive information in aggregate form only and you and your organization will not be identifiable. There are four parts to the study:

- Participate in a community conversation on community partner benefits of service-learning (1.5 hours).
- Review information gathered from that process to make certain you feel your perspective was accurately represented.
- Participate in a twenty-minute interview at a time and location convenient to you. During the interview you will be asked a couple follow-up questions from the community conversation as well as questions about your experiences with service-learning.
- Review information gathered from your interview and authenticate that your perspective/thoughts were accurately represented (this will be completed online)

If the results of the study are published, no information from you will be revealed. Your records will be kept as confidential as possible under local, state and federal law, but absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies), or other regulatory agencies may be given access to research study records which contain your identity. The consent form signed by you will be reviewed to verify the study procedures that were performed and the data reported about you.

As the research study may not benefit you, the possible benefit of your participation is to society in that it may add new information regarding the community partner's perspective in higher education service-learning. Your participation may potentially ensure that community-based nonprofit organizations and schools benefit from stronger and more sustainable partnerships with colleges and universities.

If you decide to participate in the study, please send an email to petria@umkc.edu or call me at 816.809.6877. Similarly if you have any questions concerning the study, or would like to receive a summary of the findings of the study, please feel free to contact me. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant please contact the IRB administrator at 816-235-6150. Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

Alexis Petri, M.A.

APPENDIX C

RECRUITMENT TELEPHONE SCRIPT

Hello. My name is Alexis Petri; I am a student at the University of Missouri-Kansas City working on a Doctor of Education degree. I am conducting a research study entitled Reciprocal Exchange: Understanding the Community Partner Perspective in Higher Education Service-Learning. This telephone call is in follow up to a letter and email I recently sent. Is now a convenient time to discuss your participation in a research study on service-learning?

[*If yes, continue below*]

[*If no, ask for a time when it is convenient to talk. Or if not interested thank him or her for time and remove name from list*.]

I received your name from Rockhurst University Center for Service Learning as a current or recent community partner where Rockhurst students completed service-learning projects. The study will focus on your perspective on service-learning as a representative of a community partner organization. The study will focus on reciprocity, or the benefits and costs of your participation in service-learning. Please note that any information that

you provide will be confidential. Rockhurst University will receive information in aggregate form only and you and your organization will not be identifiable. There are four parts to the study:

- Participate in a community conversation on community partner benefits of service-learning (1.5 hours).

- Review information gathered from that process to make certain you feel your perspective was accurately represented.

- Participate in a twenty-minute interview at a time and location convenient to you. During the interview you will be asked a couple follow-up questions from the community conversation as well as questions about your experiences with service-learning.

- Review information gathered from your interview and authenticate that your perspective/thoughts were accurately represented (this will be completed online)

If the results of the study are published, no information from you will be revealed. Your records will be kept as confidential as possible under local, state and federal law, but absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies), or other regulatory agencies may be given access to research study records which contain your identity. The consent form

signed by you will be reviewed to verify the study procedures that were performed and the data reported about you.

As the research study may not benefit you, the possible benefit of your participation is to society in that it may add new information regarding the community partner's perspective in higher education service-learning. Your participation may potentially ensure that community-based nonprofit organizations and schools benefit from stronger and more sustainable partnerships with colleges and universities.

Are you interested in participating in the study?

[If yes] May I ask you a few questions to enroll as a participant now? [*If yes, ask questions in the Study Registration Form; If no, send study registration form by email*] I will send you a copy of the consent form [*and if answered no above, the registration form*] and will contact you soon regarding scheduling the community conversation and the interview.

[*If no*] Thank you for taking the time to talk with me. I will not contact you regarding the study in the future.

APPENDIX D

REGISTRATION FORM

Study Registration Form
Reciprocal Exchange:
Understanding the Community Partner Perspective
in Higher Education Service-Learning
Alexis Petri

Please answer all questions as best as you can. Please print in ink.

1. YOUR INFORMATION
Name: _____

2. CONTACT INFORMATION
Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

3. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
The following information is **optional** for you to complete. It will be kept private. It will help ensure diversity of study participants.

A. Gender: ☐ Male   ☐ Female   ☐ Prefer not to respond

B. What is your race/ethnicity? [Please check all that apply]
   ☐ African American   ☐ Latino/Latina   ☐ White/Caucasian
   ☐ Asian   ☐ Native American/Alaska Native
   ☐ Pacific Islander   ☐ Other   ☐ Bi-racial
   ☐ Prefer not to respond

C. What is your highest level of education completed?
   ☐ High school diploma/GED   ☐ Bachelor's degree
   ☐ Some college   ☐ Master's degree and above
   ☐ Associate's degree

4. INTERVIEW
Part of the study is a twenty-minute interview. Please write down the best day of the week, time, and method of contact for scheduling the interview.

A. Days of the week available: _____

B. Time of day available: _____

C. Preferred method of contact: _____

Thank you for completing the registration form and for agreeing to be part of the study!

CONSENT FORM

Consent for Participation in a Research Study

Reciprocal Exchange:
Understanding the Community Partner Perspective
in Higher Education Service-Learning
Alexis Petri

Investigator
This study will be conducted by Ms. Alexis Petri, a doctoral student of the School of
Education at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and Bonita Butner, PhD.

Invitation to Participate
You are invited to participate in a research study about campus-community partnerships
for service-learning. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to consider
participation.

Who will Participate
The participants are representatives from 30-40 community nonprofit organizations and
local governments who work with or have recently worked with students volunteering for
service-learning.

Purpose
The purpose of this study is to understand better the community partner perspective of
service-learning in higher education and to discover how reciprocity works between
campus and community in service-learning. For purposes of this research, reciprocity will
be generally defined as two or more parties that come together to take collective action
toward a common purpose and in the process the parties are transformed by this collective
action in a way that allows for increased understanding of a full variety of life experiences
and over time works to alter rigid social systems.

Description of Procedures
The methods of data collection for this study will be community conversation and
individual interviews. The community conversation will be similar to a focus group with
the exception that there will be five tables with questions and the participants may choose
which three tables to participate at for ten minute segments. The entire community
conversation will last 90 minutes. Following the community conversation, participants

246

will participate in a thirty interview either at their place of work or a public place of their choosing. Upon completion of the research participants will be invited to a presentation of the results. Attendance at this presentation is not mandatory to be a full participant in the study.

The sessions will be audio-taped, and the audio-tapes transcribed, to ensure accurate reporting of the information that you provide. The investigator will transcribe the audiotapes and will not discuss any item on the tape with anyone else. No one's name will be asked or revealed during the community conversation or individual interviews. However, should another participant call you by name, the investigator will remove all names from the transcription. The audio recordings will be stored on an external hard drive not attached to a computer or the internet and in locked files before and after being transcribed. The recording will be destroyed within 2 weeks of completing the transcriptions and the transcriptions will be destroyed 3 years after the completion of this dissertation project.

Voluntary Participation
 Participation in this study is voluntary at all times. You may choose to not participate or to withdraw your participation at any time. Deciding not to participate or choosing to leave the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. During your participation you may choose to not answer any question. Not answering questions is not the same as leaving the study. If you do decide to leave the study the information you have already provided will be deleted from the findings.

Fees and Expenses
There are no monetary costs to participate in this study.

Compensation
There is no compensation for study participation.

Risks and Inconveniences
There are no anticipated physical risks to participants. Community conversation members will be asked to keep the information provided in the groups confidential; however, a potential risk that might exist for some would be that information about your workplace might be discussed outside the group by other participants and be traced back to you. If this is a potential issue for you, you are encouraged to ask to participate only in the individual interview with the investigator who is knowledgeable of and bound by confidentiality.

Benefits

A potential benefit of participating in this study for you could be having an opportunity to describe your experience with service-learning with others who have shared the experience. Additionally the opportunity to connect with others and share similar and divergent experiences may help clarify and validate your experiences with being a service-learning community site. This study seeks to improve reciprocity in service-learning partnerships between colleges/universities and organizations who allow students to volunteer on site as part of a class. It is anticipated that by improving reciprocity that community partners have increased satisfaction in their experiences and find that working with college students on service-learning is more beneficial for the organization. This information can help the current partnerships for service-learning be more effective, and may provide guidance through lessons learned for future partnerships.

Confidentiality
If you choose to participate, you will not be asked your name at the focus group or individual interview. You will not need to use your name in the community conversation or individual interviews. If by chance, you or someone you know addresses you by name in the sessions, the investigator/transcriber will delete all names from the transcription. Organizational identity will also be confidential. All interview notes, recordings, and transcripts will be housed on an external drive and kept in a locking cabinet. Information will be destroyed three years after completion of and defense of the investigator's dissertation. Your actual identity and that of your organization will not be known or available from the transcripts. While every effort will be made to keep confidential all of the information you complete and share, it cannot be absolutely guaranteed. Individuals from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies), Research Protections Program, and Federal regulatory agencies may look at records related to this study for quality improvement and regulatory functions. There will however be no names attached to the tapes or transcriptions, and there will be no identifying information or names used in any written reports or publications which result from this evaluation project. Your participation will be strictly confidential.

All findings used in any written reports or publications which result from this research project will be reported in aggregate form with no identifying information. It is, however useful to use direct quotes to more clearly capture the meanings in reporting the findings from this form of research. You will be asked at the end of the interview if there is anything you said which you do not want included as a quote, and the investigator will ensure that they are not used.

In Case of Injury
The University of Missouri-Kansas City appreciates the participation of people who help it carry out its function of developing knowledge through research. If you have any

questions about the study that you are participating in you are encouraged to call **Alexis Petri,** the investigator, at **816.235.5872.**

Although it is not the University's policy to compensate or provide medical treatment for persons who participate in studies, if you think you have been injured as a result of participating in this study, please call the IRB Administrator of UMKC's Social Sciences Institutional Review Board at 816-235-1764.

Questions
If you have questions about this research study, please contact Alexis Petri, UMKC Institute for Human Development, 215 W. Pershing Road, 6th Floor, Kansas City, MO 64108; 816.235.5872; petria@umkc.edu

Authorization
You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your records.

Once again, we thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in this process.

_____   _____

Participant's printed name   Investigator's printed name

_____   _____

Participant's signature   Investigator's signature

_____   _____

Date   Date

APPENDIX F

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION PROTOCOL

Community Conversation Protocol
Reciprocal Exchange:
Understanding the Community Partner Perspective
in Higher Education Service-Learning

Alexis Petri

The community conversation on reciprocity will be convened by Alexis Petri at the Rockhurst University Community Center and will last 90 minutes in length. The room will be set up in clusters of tables so that approximately 6 to 8 people can sit around them. The tables will have large sheets of paper, index cards, and markers at them. The front of the room will have a graphic recorder station and audio recording materials. There will be five tables in total and five volunteer table hosts who are not taking part in the study and who have had prior experience in World Café Conversations and have been trained by the investigator on the protocols and procedures of this study and how to maintain confidentiality of participants.

When participants arrive they will complete the consent form for participation in the study and will have a chance to get refreshments and settle in at a table of their choosing. The informed consent process will take place at the very beginning.

The investigator will welcome everyone and will provide a brief description of the study and of the process for the time together. The investigator will also review confidentiality (such as not using each others names) and lead a quick process to establish group norms for the conversation.

The conversation will be progressive and will go for three rounds of about fifteen minutes each. Each table has a different question which is displayed in the center:

- Table 1: What is service-learning from your perspective as a community partner? What is your organization's role in service-learning? How does service-learning relate to your organization's mission?
- Table 2: What does reciprocity mean to your organization? What does reciprocity mean to you and your organization in the context of service-learning?
- Table 3: Why does your organization host college students in the service-learning context? In what ways, if any, do you see yourself as an instructor when students are learning at your organization?

- Table 4: What are the challenges and potential solutions for partnering with colleges and universities? What can colleges and universities do better to alleviate or help alleviate challenges or barriers?
- Table 5: Why is service-learning an important endeavor? How might it have the potential to be transformative for students? How might it have the potential to be transformative for your organization? How might it have the potential to be transformative for your clients?

Table members and hosts are encouraged to write, doodle and draw key ideas on the large sheets of paper or index cards. At the end of fifteen minutes, participants may select a different table. At the end of the third round of conversation, people can return to their original table to synthesize ideas with the table hosts/facilitators or they may continue traveling to a new table. After about ten minutes of synthesis, table hosts will be invited to share out with the entire group the synthesis of what was developed. The graphic recorder will chart this discussion. All participants will be invited to chime in with additional insights and perspectives, making this a large group discussion.

Table hosts will have the responsibility of leading the conversation at their table. They will remind people to jot down key connections, ideas, discoveries, and deeper questions as they emerge. Table hosts remain at the table for all of the rounds. At the beginning of the next round, they briefly share key insights from the prior conversation so others can link and build using ideas from their respective tables. During the fourth round, table hosts synthesize the ideas to present them to the large group for additional discussion.

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol
Reciprocal Exchange:
Understanding the Community Partner Perspective
in Higher Education Service-Learning

Alexis Petri

As part of my dissertation, I will be conducting interviews with representatives of community organizations. The purpose is to learn more about the community partners' perspectives on service-learning, especially when it comes to reciprocity. I hope this study has a pragmatic outcome of presenting campus-community partnerships for service-learning in real terms of costs, benefits, and transformation so that our region will better understand where we are missing opportunities and how to focus our limited resources for mutual gain.

The interview will last about 30 minutes. The interview will be taped and a transcript of the interview will be produced and included in my dissertation appendix. All information from the interview will be confidential. Your name will not be used, rather, you can choose a "pretend" name for yourself, or I will use a code. There are no anticipated risks to the interview, but if you wish to stop at any time, you can.

Interview questions

1. Did you receive the summary report from the community conversation and did you have a chance to review it?

2. Do you feel it is representative of your recollection of the conversation? Is there anything that surprised you? Do you agree with the conclusions? Is there anything you would like to add to that data?

3. Please provide an overview of the volunteer force at your organization. Could you tell me what portion of your volunteers are students in college?

4. What are some of the things that students typically learn at your organization as a result of their service-learning? Do you see the personnel at your organization as instructors to the students when they are on site?

What does having college students as volunteers add to your organization? For example, does the volunteerism of college students help your organization extend its mission? If so, could you give an example?

5. How do you think the students' projects help your clients, or do they?

6. Tell me about cost factors involved – do students as volunteers save money, cost money, or does it come out about even?

7. What are some of the challenges?

8. How could colleges be better partners or collaborators? What are some of the things, large or small, that colleges do that facilitate students getting involved with your organization?

9. How does your organization make working with college students productive?

10. Tell me about your thoughts pertaining to reciprocity and college students – do you think there is mutual gain for both your organization and for the college by collaborating for student learning / volunteering? Have you observed any changes in yourself, your colleagues, or your clients due to having college students as service-learners?

11. Is there anything you said in the process of this interview that you would not like to be used as an individual quote in any publication based on this research? *If a direct quote is used, your identity will be kept confidential.*

APPENDIX H

TRANSCRIPT REVIEW FORM

Coded Transcript Review Form
Reciprocal Exchange:
Understanding the Community Partner Perspective
in Higher Education Service-Learning

Alexis Petri

1. Name: _____

2. I received a copy of the transcript from my interview with Alexis Petri about being a community partner of Rockhurst University's service-learning department and find it is an accurate depiction of our conversation.

    ☐ Yes, I am comfortable with the transcript and coding
    ☐ Yes, after making changes, I am comfortable with the transcript and coding
    ☐ No

3. Comments:

Signature: _____   Date: _____

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VITA

Alexis Nicolle Petri was born on July 4, 1969, in Columbia, Missouri. As a child she lived in New Jersey and Arizona before her family moved to Kansas City. She graduated from St. Teresa's Academy in 1987. She moved to Boston, Massachusetts after high school and attended University of Massachusetts-Boston while working as a buyer for a retail shop. She moved back to Kansas City and completed her education at the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 1992. Her degree was in English. In 2002, Alexis received a master's in English, and in 2008 she began work on her Ed.D. in Education at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

After owning and operating a vintage clothing store, Ms. Petri decided to pursue a new career in higher education and accepted a position in the Registrar's Office at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and sold the clothing store. Ms. Petri accepted a position at the Mid-America Regional Council where she served as a program analyst and coordinated a scholarship fund as well as two multi-institution communities of faculty initiatives funded by the Kauffman Foundation. At the end of the grant, Ms. Petri accepted a position at The Center for the City at UMKC, where she served as program director of Students in the City, the university's campus-wide service-learning support program. Ms. Petri worked with faculty, students, and community partners to design and build the service-learning program in line with grant funding. Her next position was as director of

271

the Center for Service Learning at Rockhurst University, where she expanded the service-learning program and the faculty support program. Alexis returned to UMKC to pursue her doctorate as a member of the new cohort program for the Ed,D, at the School of Education in higher education administration. While working as a research associate at the UMKC Institute for Human Development, Alexis has served as project director on a number of federal grants pertaining to access to higher education and also has overseen leadership programs for teens and young adults with developmental disabilities. Her current projects include serving as co-director of service-learning for UMKC, project director for Building an Alliance for New Careers in STEM funded by the National Science Foundation, youth curriculum specialist for Kansas City Add Us In funded by the Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy, and curriculum designer and evaluator for Creative Connections, funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.