Matthew Hartley and Ira Harkavy

3

The Civic Engagement Movement and the Democratization of the Academy

The past two and a half decades have seen the emergence of myriad efforts aimed at reclaiming the civic purposes of American colleges and universities (Harkavy and Hartley 2008; Hartley and Hollander 2005). The sheer scope of these efforts—championed by dozens of associations and through the establishment of many new networks—has led some observers to liken them to a movement (Hollander and Hartley 2000; Kezar, Chambers, and Burkhardt 2005). Like a social movement, the civic engagement movement has relied on the talents and energies of many committed people to fulfill its aims. Of particular relevance to this volume is the integral role that students have played by supporting the growth and institutionalization of civic engagement efforts at colleges and universities across this country. For example, students played a key and often leading role in developing community service programs in the 1980s on hundreds of campuses. Service-learning initiatives throughout the 1990s could not have grown as dramatically without the enthusiastic involvement and support of students.

In this chapter we argue that, for the movement to fulfill its original purpose of strengthening communities and democracy, additional approaches need to be available for students to play a leadership role and optimally benefit from civic engagement activities. These approaches need to be part of the core work of the academy (learning and developing new knowledge to improve society) and challenge traditional norms about students as passive learners, the community as a laboratory and passive recipient of assistance, and the faculty member as expert.

The entire civic engagement movement grew out of widespread discontent with the status quo, including the then-dominant role of the academy in society. In the early years, the range of factors contributing to this sense of collective unease included a faltering economy and the prevalence of societal critiques about the fragmentation of American society (Putnam 1995). Critics often directed invective against higher education (A. Bloom 1987; Smith 1990; Sykes 1989). Even friendly

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critics voiced concerns. In an interview in 1986, Ernest Boyer, then the President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, summarized the prevailing mood on campuses that he had visited when researching his book on the undergraduate experience (Boyer 1987): "We didn't find dramatic examples of failure; rather, we found a loss of vision, of vitality, a sense of marking time" (Marchese 1986, p. 10).

This discontent set the stage for a dramatic and important shift in the predominant practices of the academy. Active pedagogies that linked community-based activities with disciplinary learning (service-learning) began to gain ground, along with conceptions of scholarship that were contextually driven and involved collaboration with university colleagues and with members of the community. Such efforts have changed the academy for the better. They have democratized it.

To appreciate the magnitude of the shift, it is instructive to recall the nature of the discourse two decades ago. In 1986, for example, more than one hundred college and university presidents met to establish a new association. Originally called the Coalition of College Presidents for Civic Responsibility, the group's name soon changed to Campus Compact. A comment from one president at that meeting, which was recorded and transcribed, is particularly illustrative: "I'd like to ask a question—and this is probably dangerous—how many in the room either give or think it would be alright to give some form of academic credit for service? [Some hands go up.] How many would be opposed? [Some hands go up.] And the rest are just in the middle waiting for leadership. It looks like a real minority" (Coalition of College Presidents for Civic Responsibility 1986).

In 1991, the first survey of Campus Compact members (at that time there were 235) found that only 16 percent of their students were involved in service efforts of any kind—volunteer or curricular; only 15 percent of Compact institutions had or were considering establishing (which means they did not yet have) offices to support this work; 59 percent of the presidents characterized the extent of their faculty's involvement in this work as "little" or "not at all." By contrast, the most recent survey of Campus Compact members in 2007 (approximately 1,100 members) found:

- A third of all students participate in service and service-learning courses annually
- Eighty percent of member institutions have an office or center coordinating service-learning and/or civic engagement efforts
- Thirty-four percent of institutions take activities such as service-learning and engaged scholarship into account in promotion and tenure decisions for faculty

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- Ninety percent of these institutions' strategic plans specifically mention instilling in students a sense of responsibility to their community as an important student outcome

One would be hard pressed to point to another higher educational reform movement that has had that kind of sweeping impact in so relatively brief a time.

A central concern of this movement has been to cultivate the civic agency of students. Not only have students frequently played a key role in promoting civic engagement on their campuses, the democratic ideals of this movement have opened up new opportunities for students to take on leadership roles: as colearners, coresearchers, and coleaders of their institutions. That said, though important and promising practices have emerged, the truly engaged, democratic university has not yet been fully realized in American higher education.

One promising strategy is Problem-Solving Learning (PSL). PSL entails bringing faculty, students, and community members together to grapple with complex, real-world problems. Creating sustainable, safe, healthy communities that promote human dignity and offer individuals, in the fullest sense, the inalienable rights of liberty and the pursuit of happiness cannot be achieved through expert advice or technical fixes. To significantly reduce barriers to this goal such as poverty or inadequate schooling requires not only theoretical knowledge but also contextual knowledge—an understanding of what is happening on the ground. It also requires an ability to collaborate and the imagination to devise strategies for meaningful change. For us, PSL is an approach to leadership education that cultivates a sense of civic agency among students and faculty, as well as members of the community. It is leadership education predicated on the idea that solving complex, real-world problems requires individuals to work and learn together in order to make meaningful change.

In the remainder of this chapter, we briefly chronicle the civic engagement movement and note some of the key ways that students have contributed to the movement. We then discuss some of the challenges of creating institutions of higher learning that practice and advance democracy. Finally, we discuss several promising practices, including PSL, and offer suggestions as to how the movement can better realize the goal of creating the democratic, engaged, civic university.

The Civic Legacy of American Higher Education

To understand the reemergence of civic engagement and why the perception of its decline in the early 1980s spurred such a widespread response, it is helpful to recall that America's colleges and universities were established to serve society.

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The earliest colleges were founded to educate successive generations for civic and religious leadership. For example, Benjamin Franklin founded the University of Pennsylvania because he believed that "the great aim and end of all learning" is to help students develop "an inclination joined with the ability to serve Mankind, one's Country, Friends and Family." Variations on Franklin's mission, usually with a religious, as opposed to a secular, orientation, are evident in the founding documents of hundreds of colleges established in the aftermath of the American Revolution (Rudolph 1962). A similar civic impulse led to the creation of the public land grant colleges and universities in the nineteenth century. In 1873, for example, the trustees of the Ohio Agricultural and Mechanical College (now Ohio State) said that they intended to educate students not just as "farmers or mechanics, but as [individuals], fitted by education and attainments for the greater usefulness and higher duties of citizenship" (Pollard 1953, p. 18). However, during the twentieth century, competing commitments began to displace such educational and civic ideals. Formational education — the desire to shape the moral and civic lives of students — began to recede. The ethos of "value freedom," taken from the model of the German research university, heavily influenced academic norms and led to a de-emphasis of higher education's role in shaping students' values (Reuben 1996). As historians Lee Benson and Ira Harkavy explain: "[although] 'value-free' advocates did not completely dominate American universities during the 1914–1989 period . . . they were numerous enough to strongly reinforce traditional academic opposition to real-world problem-solving activity, and they significantly helped bring about the rapid civic disengagement of American universities" (Benson and Harkavy 2002, p. 13). By 1980, many leaders in higher education felt that the historic civic purposes of colleges and universities had been significantly eroded and were even in danger of being lost.

The Emergence of the Civic Engagement Movement

The current civic engagement movement emerged at a time of intense self-reflection within the academy. The early 1980s were characterized by a faltering economy, which fueled anxiety at colleges and universities about the necessity of widespread retrenchment. Some experts predicted that as many as a third of all colleges would merge or close (Keller 1983). This crisis helped spur the management revolution in higher education. Calls for greater efficiency, the conception of "students-as-customers," and a market mentality began to prevail (D. Bloom, Hartley, and Rosovsky 2006). A number of institutions pursued market-driven strategies that resulted in a deviation from their historic missions. For example, a significant proportion of institutions that provided or sought to provide a liberal arts education began to develop new professional programs and majors in an ef-

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fort to appeal to prospective "customers" interested primarily in job preparation (Breneman 1994; Brint 2002; Hartley 2002). Such shifts produced dissonance and questioning on many campuses as to whether higher education should exist primarily to prepare students for jobs or for a broader civic purpose.

Alongside the unease brought about by a hostile economic environment, larger social critiques developed, including Christopher Lasch's claim of a rising "culture of narcissism" (Lasch 1978) and social critic Tom Wolfe's declaring that the 1980s were "the Me Decade." In a more scholarly vein, sociologist Robert Bellah and his colleagues, writing in the bestselling *Habits of the Heart*, argued that although individualism was a distinguishing characteristic of American social thought and behavior, it had now "grown cancerous" (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton 1985).

There also were concerns about political disengagement and disaffection. By almost any measure—knowledge of political processes, awareness of current events, participation in activities of voluntary associations, trust in government—civic capacity was diminishing to an alarming degree (Putnam 1995). On campuses, the highly visible political activism of the 1960s had seemingly vanished. Calls began for educational institutions to address the situation. For example, the Association of American Colleges (later renamed the Association of American Colleges and Universities) published a special issue of *Liberal Education* in 1982 on the role of colleges and universities in American democracy (Cawalader 1982). The sum total of all these concerns—about the academy and the larger society—created an environment that seemed to demand a response.

Under close scrutiny, the charge that college students were wholly apathetic proves problematic and simplistic. As noted above, American society as a whole was experiencing a decline or at least a shift in traditional civil and civic activities (Putnam 1995). Also, college students in the 1980s focused their attention on societal issues in ways that were quite distinct from (and less obvious than) those of their 1960s counterparts.

The experience of Wayne Meisel, who cofounded the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL), an organization supporting student-led community engagement efforts on college campuses, sheds some light on that shift in student engagement. Meisel was a recent graduate of Harvard who on January 6, 1981, began a "Walk for Action" that took him on foot to sixty-seven colleges and universities in the Northeast. With a letter of introduction from Derek Bok, Harvard's president, Meisel met with administrators and student leaders at these institutions. His aim was simple: to see what was occurring and to encourage more student involvement and leadership in community-based activities. Drawing a parallel with the economic concept of structural unemployment—intentional slack in employment rates—Meisel argued that students were plagued

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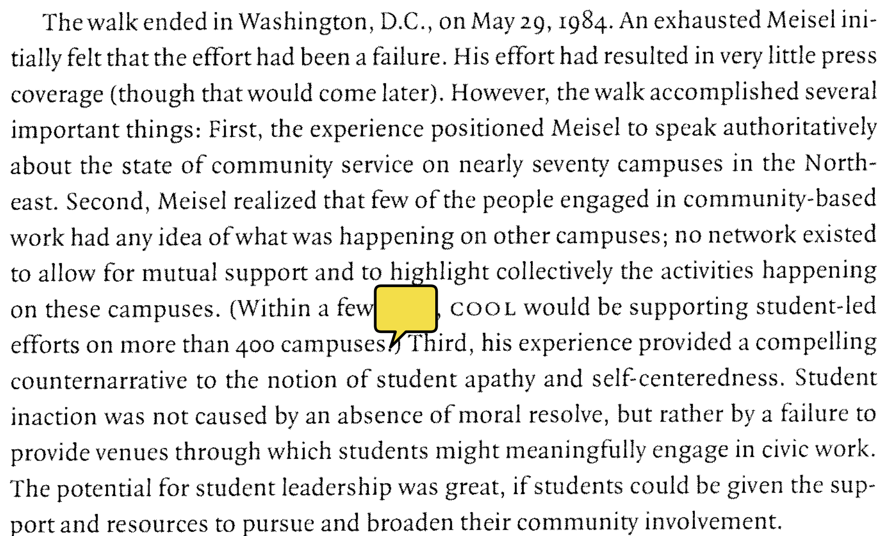
by "structural apathy." They weren't indifferent; rather, their institutions were not organized or structured to provide meaningful community engagement opportunities. "[Students] find themselves in a society which unknowingly and unintentionally fails to inspire, tap, and channel their resources" (Meisel 1984, p. 6). Meisel characterized the majority of service efforts as small and fragmented, consisting of student service clubs and the periodic volunteer or philanthropic activities of fraternities and sororities. Meisel wanted to integrate the piecemeal efforts and broaden the appeal of community service by drawing to it students from a wide variety of backgrounds and interests who could assume leadership of their own important projects.



The walk ended in Washington, D.C., on May 29, 1984. An exhausted Meisel initially felt that the effort had been a failure. His effort had resulted in very little press coverage (though that would come later). However, the walk accomplished several important things: First, the experience positioned Meisel to speak authoritatively about the state of community service on nearly seventy campuses in the Northeast. Second, Meisel realized that few of the people engaged in community-based work had any idea of what was happening on other campuses; no network existed to allow for mutual support and to highlight collectively the activities happening on these campuses. (Within a few , COOL would be supporting student-led efforts on more than 400 campuses.) Third, his experience provided a compelling counternarrative to the notion of student apathy and self-centeredness. Student inaction was not caused by an absence of moral resolve, but rather by a failure to provide venues through which students might meaningfully engage in civic work. The potential for student leadership was great, if students could be given the support and resources to pursue and broaden their community involvement.

Shortly after Meisel's odyssey ended, Frank Newman, director of the Education Commission of the States, wrote an influential book, *Higher Education and the American Resurgence* (1985). In it he outlined the significant challenges facing American higher education. A central theme of the book was civic disengagement. Newman argued: "If there is a crisis in education in the United States today, it is less that test scores have declined than it is that we have failed to provide the education for citizenship that is still the most significant responsibility of the nation's schools and colleges" (Newman 1985, p. 31). It was a message echoed by the American Political Science Association's Task Force on Civic Education for the 21st Century: "We take as axiomatic that current levels of political knowledge, political engagement, and political enthusiasm are so low as to threaten the vitality and stability of democratic politics in the United States" (American Political Science Association Task Force on Civic Education in the 21st Century 1998, p. 636). Among the hundreds of thousands of college freshmen surveyed by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA, the percentage who agreed that it is "important for me

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to keep up to date with political affairs" sharply declined from 58 percent in 1966 to 26 percent by 1998 (Sax, Astin, Korn, and Mahoney 1999). The question that concerned Newman and others was how best to recapture the historic imperative of cultivating an enlightened citizenry.

From Volunteerism to Service-Learning

Newman's report caught the attention of the presidents of Brown, Georgetown, and Stanford Universities. They too were concerned about the failure of colleges and universities to instill in students a sense of social and civic responsibility. In 1986 these individuals founded Campus Compact, a presidential organization aimed at helping students express "civic responsibility." It was an organization whose time had clearly come. Within one year the network had 113 members, and less than a decade later its membership had swelled to 520.

At the group's first meeting in 1986 Newman argued: "There is a need for community service to become more widespread and the idea of civic responsibility to be widespread—there needs to be in the country a sort of clear statement of that to students." Though some of the presidential members bemoaned student apathy, Newman and others pointed to efforts on their campuses and Meisel's walk as evidence of a nascent desire on the part of some students to become more meaningfully engaged. Very quickly the group decided to focus its attention on promoting community service, which members of the organization often referred to as "public service."

Two things are notable about these early efforts to advance civic engagement. First, the discourse at the time framed the role of students as recipients of support and guidance rather than as leaders and agents of change. Second, there was a conscious effort to avoid the appearance of supporting overt political activism. In fact, student activism remained very much alive on many campuses (though certainly less visible than during the 1960s) (Rhoads 1998). In the 1980s, such efforts included students' encouraging their institutions to divest themselves of stock in companies doing business with the apartheid-backed regime in South Africa. In the 1990s, they included the queer student movement, multicultural movements, and the Free Burma Coalition (Rhodes 2009). However, these activities remained separate from institutionally sanctioned civic engagement efforts. In part this was because, at the time, politics had come to be viewed with suspicion. As Robert Bellah and his colleagues put it: "For a good number of those we talked to, politics connotes something morally unsavory, as though voluntary involvement were commendable and fulfilling up to the point at which it enters the realm of office holding, campaigning, and organized negotiating. Their judgments of public involvement and responsibility turn negative when they extend beyond the bounds

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of their local concerns" (Bellah et al. 1985, p. 199). Campus Compact understandably also cast its work as nonpartisan. In the 1980s, one of the main goals of the group was to advance state and federal legislation supporting community service among college students. Both Republicans and Democrats supported such legislation. (Indeed a bipartisan coalition in the Senate and House was required for the legislation to pass).

Although a nonpartisan approach made good sense and helped the movement to grow, the narrow focus on volunteerism and community service had significant drawbacks. Early on some members of Campus Compact argued for efforts to move beyond volunteerism to linking service with the academic core. They were, in effect, arguing for a move from community service to credit-bearing service-learning. This agenda was contested (as the divided straw vote of Campus Compact members in our introductory section underscores). Many member presidents raised concerns about the propriety and rigor of allowing students to engage with community members without the firm guiding hand of a faculty member. Nevertheless, advocates of connecting service with academic study made their case with increasing effect.

The first Campus Compact newsletter, published in April 1987, reported on a session organized by Campus Compact at the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) conference, at which Tim Stanton from Stanford spoke of the negative impacts of volunteering with inadequate preparation, including "drawing unwarranted conclusions from the experience" and "a general decline in commitment that developed into cynicism" (Campus Compact 1987). He argued that curricular efforts could significantly improve the learning from these experiences. Soon thereafter, Campus Compact sponsored a seminal study that Stanton led and whose findings were conveyed in "Integrating Public Service with Academic Study: The Faculty Role, A report of Campus Compact." Published in 1990, the report noted the various ways in which service was being linked to the curriculum. It also pointed to the important work at hand: "There appears to be developing, at least among Campus Compact institutions, a growing sense that the faculty role in the public service initiative is critical to its success. However, much work remains to be done to address structural issues such as rewards and incentives for faculty involvement or the intellectual questions related to problem-oriented inquiry and knowledge development. . . . With few exceptions, Campus Compact institutions have yet to involve faculty on a broad scale in ensuring that students both serve well and learn effectively from the experience" (Stanton 1990, p. 21).

A range of groups soon began to address these important issues. In 1990, the National Society of Internships and Experiential Education (NSIEE) published *Combining Service and Learning: A Resource Book for Community and Public Service*, edited by Jane Kendall. The book offered readings that pragmatically explained how

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service might be incorporated into the curriculum and why such work was consonant with academic work. It also reflected the consensus that had emerged among practitioners of service-learning (which is what the pedagogy came to be called), as codified in the "Principles of Best Practices for Combining Service and Learning in 1989." Some of these shared principles were:

- Service-learning is a legitimate pedagogical strategy and is as effective as traditional methods (such as lectures) for imparting knowledge and promoting learning
- Service-learning enables students to grapple with complex, messy, real-world problems; it shifts the emphasis of service from personal charitable acts (community service) to efforts aimed at understanding root causes of social problems
- Service-learning helps people learn to engage in collective problem solving, in which problem definition and development of solutions occur as joint acts rather than as expressions of technocratic expertise; therefore, projects must be developed through the formation of reciprocal and committed university-community partnerships

Clearly implied in the emergent consensus about these activities are the highly democratic underpinnings of the work. Service-learning is not merely another learning strategy, for it has an expressly civic intent. It is collaborative and collective work that addresses pressing problems by understanding the complex contextual environments in which they occur. Service-learning also explodes the notion of students as empty vessels that need to be filled with knowledge, or where deposits of information need to be placed (Freire 1970). It turns passive learners into active civic agents.

In addition to a proliferation of how-to materials, various initiatives aimed at promoting institutional change were launched. In 1991, Campus Compact created the Integrating Service with Academic Study (ISAS) initiative, which was funded by the Ford Foundation. Over the next three summers, ISAS worked with teams from more than sixty institutions, helping them integrate service-learning into their curricula. The initiative also funded 130 service-learning workshops nationwide and developed a host of written materials and sample syllabi from a wide range of disciplines. Perhaps service-learning was most significantly advanced by the creation of the Corporation for National and Community Service in 1993. Learn and Serve America, the service-learning and higher education component of the corporation, became one of the most important funding sources for "enhanc[ing] students' civic skills through service-learning." A 1999 RAND report indicates that: "LSAHE awarded approximately $10 million in direct grants to about 100

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higher education institutions and community organizations for each of the three years from Fiscal Year 1995 through Fiscal Year 1997. Through subgranting, these funds reached close to 500 higher education institutions—nearly one of every eight colleges and universities nationwide" (Gray et al. 1999).

These funds were an extremely important lever for securing the support of senior administrators for community and civic engagement initiatives on many campuses. The growth of service-learning as a pedagogy is reflected in part in Campus Compact's rising membership, from 305 in 1992 (the year before the corporation was established) to 650 in 1999, since service-learning was the principal thrust of the organization's work during the 1990s.

Democratizing Scholarship

Other changes were stirring in the academy as well. Specifically, there were efforts aimed at reconceptualizing the core work of faculty. In 1990, Ernest Boyer offered a broader conception of faculty work in *Scholarship Reconsidered*, one of the most influential higher education texts of the twentieth century (Braxton, Luckey, and Holland 2002). According to Boyer's close collaborator, Eugene Rice, the book "reframed the issues so that we could get beyond the old teaching-versus-research debate, rise above the theory/practice hierarchy plaguing the discussion of scholarship, and begin to think in new ways about the alignment of faculty priorities and institutional mission" (Rice 2005, p. 17).

Boyer's ideas were significantly advanced by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching's partnership with the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE), and by the launching in 1991 of an annual Forum on Faculty Roles and Rewards, which drew thousands of administrators and faculty from across the country to rethink faculty roles (Miller 2005) and to reconsider which practices ought to count as scholarly activities and products. Such efforts had considerable effects over time. One idea that achieved particular salience was the need to move beyond a model that excessively privileged expert knowledge and that recognized only disciplinary venues (peer-reviewed journals) as arbiters of what constituted a scholarly product. Faculty members increasingly worked in concert with community partners. New methodologies, such as participatory action research, gained ground and established their legitimacy as useful means of generating new knowledge.

Institutional structures, such as centers aimed at promoting university-community partnerships, developed to encourage such reciprocal arrangements (Harkavy and Wiewel 1995). These activities resulted in significant shifts in institutional behavior. In one recent survey of 729 chief academic officers (provosts and vice presidents for academic affairs), two thirds (68 percent) said that their

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institutions had developed policies or engaged in efforts to encourage and reward a broader definition of scholarship (O'Meara and Rice 2005). The general direction of these changes was toward teaching, research, and learning that was more democratic.

It is important to underscore the role that students played as partners in advancing these various efforts. Without the passionate interest of many students in becoming involved in their communities, institutional initiatives would have lacked a vital energy necessary for growth and success. A significant motivation for faculty involvement in service-learning (especially important because community-based teaching and learning take far more preparation time than conventional, lecture-based teaching) has been the enthusiastic response of students to this pedagogy. As one early study found, a major reason why faculty chose to teach service-learning courses was that those courses "[improve] student satisfaction with education" (Hammond 1994). Given the limited resources of professional staff that institutions generally contribute to promoting community-based activities, students have played a key role by serving as point persons for various university-community partnerships.

A Higher, Democratic Aim

As we have written about elsewhere, a significant limiting factor for civic engagement efforts on campuses has been what we call "disciplinary ethnocentrism, tribalism, and guildism" (Benson, Harkavy, and Hartley 2005). Colleges and universities are bound by powerful norms as to what sorts of activities are appropriate expressions of scholarship. In an effort to produce "new" scholarship, disciplinary specialists find themselves mining ever more obscure and esoteric veins of knowledge. The question, of course, is whether scholarship of this sort is primarily what the world needs. A report that elegantly employs disciplinary expertise to analyze a situation in the community often falls under the rubric of "service" when faculty productivity is being evaluated. Peer-reviewed articles in top-tier journals remain the coin of the realm at the majority of institutions. Happily, there are efforts being made in some disciplines to counter this trend. (The work of Michael Burroway and others in advancing the concept of "public sociology" is illustrative.) These efforts attempt to return the disciplines to their initial purpose of producing knowledge to improve human life, thereby rejecting the current solipsistic approach of knowledge of the discipline, by the discipline, and for the discipline.

In more recent years that movement has broadened its efforts and sought to advance a larger agenda aimed at strengthening democracy. Such a goal cannot be achieved without the full partnership of students. On hundreds of campuses across thirty states, students were leaders in the "Raise Your Voice" campaign, an

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effort sponsored by Campus Compact and the Pew Charitable Trusts (Cone, Kiesa, and Longo 2006). Students engaged in a range of activities such as asset-mapping on their campuses and in their communities, organizing public dialogues on a host of societal and community issues, including literacy, hunger, child care, and the war in Iraq.

When the efforts of the academy shift away from a disciplinary emphasis toward one that seeks to grapple with pressing and significant real-world problems, new and powerful possibilities for learning and change emerge. Our own experience at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) offers one example in which the leadership of students redirected the attention of a number of individuals toward something of great importance to West Philadelphia, the community in which the university is located. In the spring and summer of 2002, a group of undergraduates at the university, who were participating in an academically based community service seminar offered by one of us (Ira Harkavy), decided to focus their research and service on one of the most important issues identified by members of the West Philadelphia community—the issue of health. The students' work with the community ultimately led them to propose establishing a center focused on health promotion and disease prevention at a public school in West Philadelphia, the Sayre Middle School. The public school is in many respects the ideal location for health-care programs, as well as other programs that serve the neighborhood: it is not only where children learn but also where community residents gather and participate in a variety of activities.

From their research, the students learned that community-oriented projects of this sort often founder because of their inability to secure stable resources. They postulated that a powerful way of accomplishing their goal would be to devise meaningful ways to integrate issues of health into the curricula at schools at Penn and at the Sayre School itself. They argued that the health promotion and disease prevention center at the school could serve as a learning venue for medical, dental, nursing, arts and sciences, social work, education, design, and business students. Their proposal proved to be so compelling that it led to the development of a school-based Community Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Center at Sayre Middle School. The center was formally launched in January of 2003. It functions as the central component of a university-assisted community school designed both to advance student learning and democratic development and to help strengthen families and institutions within the community. Penn faculty and students in medicine, nursing, dentistry, social work, arts and sciences, and design, as well as, to a lesser extent, other schools, now work at Sayre, which became a high school in 2007, through new and existing courses, internships, and research projects. Health promotion and service activities are also integrated into the Sayre students' curriculum. In effect, Sayre students serve as agents of health-

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care change in the Sayre neighborhood (Benson, Harkavy, and Puckett 2007). (It is worth noting that one of the undergraduates who developed the Sayre project, Mei Elansary, received the 2003 Howard R. Swearer Humanit[illegible]Award, given by Campus Compact to students for outstanding public service.)

This example of student leadership underscores how working to solve real-world problems can serve as the organizing principle of university-community partnerships. This approach, Problem-Solving Learning (PSL), is conceptually close to Problem-Based Learning (PBL), which has been employed in professional schools for three decades, having originated at the medical school at Canada's McMaster University. But Problem-Solving Learning is different in that the focus is on *solving* a pressing problem in the real world. It invites people with various kinds of knowledge and expertise (disciplinary and practical), including faculty, students, and community members, to work together on societally significant issues, such as poverty, inadequate healthcare, substandard housing, and hunger, as those issues are manifested locally. Such an approach, which is embedded in many service-learning courses at Penn, derives from John Dewey's theory of learning, summarized in the following quotation: "Thinking begins in . . . a forked road situation, a situation which is ambiguous, which presents a dilemma, which poses alternatives" (Dewey 1910/1990, p. 11). In our judgment, focusing on the local manifestations of important real-world community problems is the best way to apply Dewey's proposition in practice.

Academically based community service courses (the term used at Penn to describe problem-solving service-learning) do more than provide hands-on experience for students and an opportunity for them to apply disciplinary knowledge, though they certainly do provide those benefits. These courses enable all of the partners—community members, faculty, staff, students, and children—to participate actively in solving real-world problems in all their social, cultural, and political complexity. Problem-solving learning encourages participants to respond to problems democratically, since the ideas, insights, and knowledge of academics, students (at all levels of schooling), teachers, and community members are needed if genuine solutions are to be found and implemented.

In spite of what we judge to be its obvious benefits, problem-solving learning is not widely practiced. Among other things, it is difficult to change longstanding, if dysfunctional, approaches, which Benjamin Franklin critically characterized in 1789 as "ancient Customs and Habitudes" (Best 1962, p. 173). To reduce obstacles to change and to stimulate discussion and debate, we propose that higher education institutions take the following step to advance problem-solving learning and the education of students for democratic, collaborative leadership: *act locally and democratically*. This proposal is derived from one of John Dewey's most significant propositions: "Democracy must begin at home, and its home is the neighborly

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community" (Dewey 1927/1954, p. 213). Democracy, Dewey emphasized, has to be built on face-to-face interactions in which human beings work together cooperatively to solve the ongoing problems of life. In effect, we are updating Dewey and advocating this proposition: democracy must begin at home, and its home is the engaged, neighborly college or university and its local community partner.

We have found the benefits of a local focus for college and university civic engagement programs to be manifold. Ongoing, continuous interaction is facilitated by working in an easily accessible local setting. Relationships of trust, so essential for effective partnerships and effective learning, are also built through day-to-day work on problems and issues of mutual concern. In addition, the local community also provides a convenient setting in which service-learning courses, Problem Solving Learning courses, and community-based research courses in different disciplines can work together to solve a complex problem and produce substantive results. Work in a college or university's local community, by facilitating interaction across schools and disciplines, can create interdisciplinary learning opportunities. And finally, the local community is a democratic, real-world learning site in which community members, faculty members, and students can pragmatically determine whether their work is making a real difference, whether both the neighborhood and the institution are better off as a result of common efforts.

The above recommendation provides a strategy for putting into practice the primary argument of this chapter: democratic, problem-solving service-learning, focused on specific, universal problems that are manifested in a university's locality, is a promising approach for developing effective civic leadership and for realizing the democratic purposes of the civic engagement movement. PSL underscores the idea that solving important problems requires democratic collaboration. And, as we see it, collaborative, democratic leadership is the kind of leadership needed to create a better society and world.

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