

Case Study Report

Study of the Community, Higher Education, and School Partnerships (CHESP)

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Chapter One

Introduction

Overview

In September 2001, the Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) selected Abt Associates Inc. and the Center for Youth and Communities at Brandeis University's Heller Graduate School to conduct a study of the Corporation's Community, Higher Education, and School Partnerships (CHESP) program. The study design had two primary data collection components: (1) site visits leading to the development of six case studies; and (2) grantee and subgrantee telephone surveys.

This document has been prepared to present the *Case Study Reports*, which describe grantee and subgrantee partnerships and project activities at six CHESP grantee programs that were included in the case studies along with key findings and conclusions from the study. **The study concludes that the CHESP experience has demonstrated that three-way partnerships can be created; that considerable time, resources, and skills are needed to do so; and that there is a widespread belief that these kinds of partnerships are leading to more and better service-learning. Additional research is needed to document the differences in service-learning program administration and outcomes that can be attributed to service-learning funded under CHESP as opposed to one or more of the three traditional Learn and Serve funding sectors.**

The purposes of this report are to provide an opportunity for readers to explore the experiences of CHESP grantees and subgrantees and to consider lessons that may be especially helpful to practitioners. This opening chapter is intended to set the case studies in a broader context. It begins with background information on the Corporation, service-learning, and on the CHESP initiative. An introduction to the study and its data collection methods follows along with highlights of the case studies. The chapter concludes with a review of the six broad conclusions that emerged from this research project.

An index of the major themes and program characteristics within each of the case studies is presented in Appendix A.

Introduction and Background

The Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) is a federal agency established by the National Community Trust Act of 1993. As a component of USA Freedom Corps, the mission of the Corporation is to provide opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in service that addresses the nation's educational, public safety, environmental, and homeland security needs. More than two million Americans serve their fellow citizens each year through the Corporation's three main programs: AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America

Learn and Serve America is the Corporation’s service-learning initiative that integrates service into the academic life by providing funding that enables young people to take part in activities that both provide service that meets community needs and advances academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility. These opportunities are provided through grants to state education agencies, State Commissions on National and Community Service, Indian Tribes, U.S. territories, schools, colleges and universities, and non-profit organizations. Grantees occasionally deliver services directly but generally make subgrants to schools, higher education institutions, and community-based organizations to develop and implement local service-learning programs and projects. Each year, these local programs provide opportunities for over one million K-12 and higher education students to engage in service-learning projects.

Prior to the creation of the Community, Higher Education, and School Partnerships (CHESP) program, Learn and Serve America funding was provided through one of three funding sectors, each of which focused upon a single type of lead agency, either an institution of higher learning, the K-12 school system, or a community-based organization. In February of 2000, the Corporation launched CHESP based upon a simple premise: that three-way partnerships, which combine the strengths and insights of all three kinds of organizations, will result in expanded service-learning that is more responsive to the needs of students and communities.

Overview of the Community, Higher Education, and School Partnerships (CHESP) Program

Policy-makers and leading service-learning practitioners have long been aware of the benefits that come from developing, nourishing, and sustaining sophisticated collaborations and partnerships between educators and community leaders. All too often, however, these partner relationships have been limited in scope (e.g., involving only two partners) or have focused on specific projects and activities rather than on developing sustainable relationships. As a result, they may have been short-lived. This, in turn, has meant that educators frequently have to start from scratch each time they plan a new service-learning project, and that school and community partners rarely get to know one another well enough to develop projects that reach the fullest potential of benefiting students and their communities.

In recent years, the Corporation has taken a number of steps to move toward a vision of partnership more likely to achieve its full potential. A collaboration between the Corporation and several foundations enabled the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) to develop and implement the concept of “sustainable partnerships,” three-way relationships among colleges, K-12 school systems, and community groups that transcend individual activities and projects and have the potential to last beyond granting cycles.¹ The Corporation’s Community, Higher Education, and School Partnerships (CHESP) grants to 20 state education agencies, grantmaking entities, and tribal

¹ See, for example, the final report “Evaluation of the National Society for Experiential Education’s National Community Development Program” by Lawrence N. Bailis of Brandeis University’s Center for Youth and Communities (2000).

organizations represented an effort to build upon this experience through a broader demonstration program that is intended to promote development of these three-way partnerships on a wider scale, to document the results and lessons learned, and to use the results to refine future service-learning programming.

According to the Corporation's 2000 Application Guidelines for Learn and Serve America's School-based Programs, the purpose of the CHESP initiative was two-fold:

- 1) to encourage strategic, purposeful collaborations among institutions to improve education and communities; and
- 2) to develop comprehensive demonstration models of service-learning that can be replicated.

Eligible grantee applicants included state education agencies, Indian tribes, U.S. territories, and grantmaking entities. CHESP grantees were funded for three years and received an average annual grant of \$382,900 each year.

More broadly, the intent of the CHESP initiative is to advance the field of quality service-learning practice by funding community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, and K-12 school districts and schools to work together to identify and meet the needs of the community and create valuable learning opportunities for young people. What distinguishes CHESP from other service-learning programs is its emphasis on three-way partnerships among schools, community-based organizations, and institutions of higher education.

Exhibit 1.1 presents an overview of the CHESP program and portrays our understanding of the CHESP system and the links between the different organizations and partners. The exhibit includes the three primary levels of the system: federal funding agency; state-level grantee; and local subgrantee programs. It also reflects the partner organizations at both the grantee and subgrantee levels.

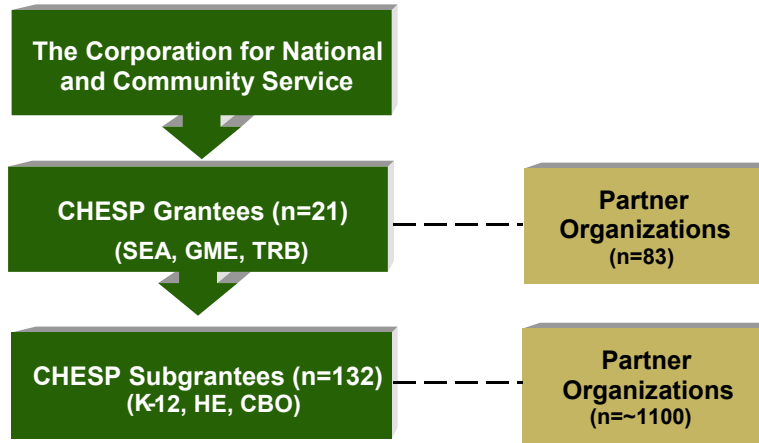
At the grantee level, the lead agencies include state education agencies (SEAs), grantmaking entities (GMEs), and one Tribal organization (TRB). A grantmaking entity is a regional or national nonprofit organization that funds or operates service-learning programs in more than one state. In the case of the CHESP grant, a grantmaking entity (GME) could be a nonprofit organization or a higher education institution. The grantee-level partners include federal and state agencies, higher education institutions, and national and local non-profit groups.² At the subgrantee level, the lead agency was required to be a K-12 school or school district (K-12), a higher education institution (HE), or a community-based organization (CBO). Community-based organizations (CBOs) may include public or private non-profit or for profit organizations such as community coalitions, foundations, social

² The Corporation initially funded twenty grantees. However, one of the CHESP-funded GMEs (Michigan State Commission) funded a GME in another state (Ohio), and the two organizations operated independently. Each funded separate groups of subgrantees in their respective states using different sets of rules and support mechanisms. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, we are considering this GME to be two separate programs.

service agencies, cultural institutions, vocational or adult education centers, community or youth centers, environmental organizations, businesses, faith-based institutions, municipal governments, and other entities. All three kinds of organizations (K-12s, HEs, and CBOs) were required to be incorporated into the subgrantee partnership.

Exhibit 1.1

Overview of the CHESP Program



Note: SEA = state education agency; GME = grantmaking entity; TRB = tribal organization.

Exhibit 1.2 presents the total number and type of CHESP subgrantees funded by type of CHESP grantee (SEA or GME).³

Exhibit 1.2

Distribution of Subgrantees, Total and by Type of Grantee

	Totals by grantee type	Number (% of grantees) by subgrantee type		
		K-12 school/district	Higher education	Community-based organization
State education agencies (n=12)	78	54 (69.2%)	12 (15.4%)	12 (15.4%)
Grantmaking entities (n=7)	54	10 (18.5%)	28 (51.9%)	16 (29.6%)
Totals for subgrantee type: n (% of subgrantees)	132	64 (48.4%)	40 (30.3%)	28 (21.2%)

³ The Tribal grantee implemented local service-learning projects directly and did not fund any subgrantee-level partnerships.

Study Design

The purposes of the study were three-fold: (1) to document the initial experiences of CHESP programs and partnerships at the grantee and subgrantee levels; (2) to identify the facilitators and barriers to the creation and maintenance of effective CHESP partnerships; and (3) to gain insights into the progress of the CHESP partnerships thus far in achieving their goals (e.g., promoting expanded, high quality, community-oriented service-learning) and producing changes in the organizations and communities involved. The study was not intended to be an evaluation of the CHESP program that collected objective information on the outcomes of CHESP-funded service-learning. However, wherever possible, we have tried to use self-reported assessments of progress as a subjective measure of the CHESP programs' success in accomplishing their goals and the extent to which programs have produced the intended changes in the organizations and communities involved.

Data Collection Methods

The study involved a multi-method design that included three data collection activities:

- Focus groups with representatives of CHESP grantee organizations;
- Telephone surveys of the directors of the lead organizations at all CHESP grantees and their subgrantees; and
- Site visits to develop case studies of a small sample of grantees and subgrantees.

In the following sections, we describe each of these data collection activities. The information gathered through focus group discussions and case study interviews with grantee and subgrantee program and partner staff was instrumental in helping to design and implement the grantee and subgrantee surveys.

Focus Groups with CHESP Grantee Organizations

The study design involved meetings with grantees and focus group discussions with representatives from the CHESP grantee partnerships at three national conferences held in 2002 and 2003. Initially, the study team had planned to conduct four focus groups at four national conferences. The first focus group was scheduled for late September 2001 at the 2001 Learn and Serve America Grantees' Meeting, and was intended to bring the study team together with the CHESP grantees to discuss proposed study methodologies with the grantees and, in turn, to learn about their activities and partnerships to inform both the preliminary design of the surveys and the case study site selection. Due to the September 11th tragedy, the 2001 Learn and Serve America Grantees' Meeting was cancelled. To replace the planned meetings, project staff conducted four telephone conference calls with the CHESP grantees in November 2001.

The study team attended the three remaining conferences as planned and conducted focus groups with the CHESP grantees (and a few subgrantee representatives) attending each conference.

CHESP Grantee and Subgrantee Surveys

The major source of information for this study was collected through telephone interviews of the directors of the lead organizations in the 21 CHESP grantee and 128 of the 132 subgrantee

partnerships.⁴ The surveys included five major topic areas and examples of survey questions within each area are presented below:

- **Background of grantee and subgrantee organizations**
 - What type of organization do you work for?
 - What percentage of your organization's overall service-learning funds are received through your CHESP grant in the current fiscal year?
- **Program/partnership characteristics and collaboration**
 - Are youth involved in planning and/or managing your CHESP program in any of the following ways? (list of possible ways youth could be involved)
 - In general, have you communicated with your key CHESP partners during the past school or fiscal year in each of the following ways? (list of communication methods)
- **Replicability and sustainability of the CHESP programs**
 - Have you or your CHESP partnership done any of the following to support program replication? (List of replication activities) IF YES, was it as a result of CHESP?
 - We are interested in whether you have developed a sustainability plan for your CHESP partnership management activities? Would you say the sustainability plan is completed, is still in process, or hasn't been started yet?
- **Progress and changes reported by CHESP grantees and subgrantees**
 - Has service-learning increased in the following ways in your community as a whole as a result of CHESP? (list of community changes)
 - We are interested in learning about the impacts of CHESP on your organization and on at least one or more of your CHESP partners during the period since CHESP. Did any of the following occur as a result of CHESP? (list of organizational changes)
- **Facilitating factors and barriers reported by grantees and subgrantees**
 - In your CHESP partnership, what are the three biggest barriers that have made it difficult to establish and maintain an effective CHESP Partnership? (list of barriers)
 - In your CHESP partnership, what are the three most important factors in promoting the promoting an effective CHESP Partnership? (list of facilitating factors)

The respondent for the grantee survey was the person identified by the grantee fiscal agent as the primary staff member involved in the program management. In some cases, this person was from a partner agency responsible for managing the program. Respondents for the grantee surveys thus included representatives from state education agencies, grantmaking entities, higher education institutions, and one Tribal organization. Respondents for the subgrantee surveys were primarily representatives of the lead agency at the local level. Subgrantee lead agency respondents included representatives from K-12 schools or school districts, higher education institutions (two-year and four-year institutions), and community-based organizations.

⁴ Please see the Final CHESP Study Report for a detailed description of the survey findings.

The surveys were conducted between late January and April 2003. Copies of the surveys were provided to respondents in advance of the telephone interview. Approximately one-third of the subgrantee respondents chose to return the survey by mail or facsimile. About 5 percent of the subgrantee respondents requested an electronic version of the survey that they returned via email. All surveys returned by mail, email, or facsimile were reviewed and respondents were contacted to fill in missing information or to clarify unclear responses. The grantee telephone interview took approximately 20 to 30 minutes and the subgrantee survey approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

Case Studies

The six case study sites were selected using a purposive sampling approach that was designed to provide examples of a range of partnership models, based on information from the initial conference calls with grantees and a review of grantee proposals and other documentation. The primary criteria used to select the sites included: grantee type, diversity of subgrantee settings and programs, partnership dynamics, and subgranting process. The case studies were not intended to provide a comprehensive or even representative sample of the CHESP grantees' activities. Rather, they were intended to provide qualitative and contextual information as well as program design and implementation information that would enable us to develop a richer understanding of the experiences associated with a range of models for implementing partnerships than would have been possible using survey data alone.

We conducted two sets of two- to three-day site visits to each of the six case study grantees and selected subgrantees in each grantee program. The initial visits took place in January through March of 2002 and the follow-up visits took place in October through December of 2002. The visits generally included one day of interviews with staff of the agencies participating in the partnerships at the grantee level and one or two days shared among staff from two or three local subgrantees. When possible, the visits coincided with special grantee or subgrantee activities, such as training events or subgrantee meetings in order to allow us to observe partnership activities and have the opportunity to meet with as many subgrantee representatives as possible.

Case Study Grantees

The six case studies illustrate many different facets of the overall CHESP experience. A brief description of the highlights of the six grantee programs is presented below.

- **Colorado Department of Education—Youth As School and Community Organizers.** This state education agency (SEA) grantee has developed an ambitious program model whose key features include: (1) a central role for youth; (2) the use of a six-month planning period; (3) a regional infrastructure; and (4) an emphasis on quality practice in which service-learning is aligned with state academic standards. The three subgrantees that we visited included three distinct CHESP models: one led jointly by an institution of higher education and a CBO; one led by a K-12 school district; and one led by a CBO.
- **Community Chest, Inc.—The Nevada Service-Learning Partnership.** This multi-state CHESP program was led by a grant-making entity with subgrantees in Nevada and California. It sheds useful insights into (1) the key role of nonprofit community-based

organizations as the lead grantee and subgrantee, (2) innovative mechanisms designed to promote an active voice and role for youth participants, and (3) the issues involved in developing and maintaining CHESP partnerships in rural communities. The case study includes descriptions of two rural subgrantees and one urban subgrantee.

- **Florida Department of Education—Florida CHESP Program.** The Florida CHESP program provides an example of the implementation of a CHESP model led by a state education agency and managed by a higher education institution. The program is an example of a locally determined strategy in which the grantee did not impose rigid guidelines for its subgrantees or their service projects. The resultant variation in local subgrantee partnerships and program activities is illustrated by a description of three subgrantees.
- **Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning—Common Links Through Service-Learning.** The Minnesota program is another example of a locally designed model administered by the state education agency. The grantee provides general guidelines for its subgrantees, including an emphasis on teacher education and opportunities for youth leadership but leaves wide discretion in how subgrantees achieve these objectives. Further insight into the Minnesota CHESP program is provided by analyses of two subgrantees and the results of two focus groups held with all subgrantees during the field visits.
- **Mississippi Department of Education—Mississippi Lighthouse Partnerships.** This case study presents the unique Lighthouse initiative in which three Learn and Serve America funded programs have used the same model of three-way partnerships involving K-12 school districts, higher education institutions, and community-based organizations. Two CHESP subgrantees and one higher education Learn and Serve America subgrantee are described to illustrate the differences that result from implementing the same CHESP-type model with different types of lead subgrantee agencies.
- **University of Pennsylvania Center for Community Partnerships—West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC) Replication Project.** The WEPIC Replication Project is unique among CHESP grantees for several reasons. It funds 20 subgrantee sites and it incorporates two distinct grantee-level program models: the University-Assisted Community Schools model with seventeen subgrantees across the United States and the Youth Driven Service Learning Centers model that has been implemented in three school districts in Pennsylvania.

Summary of Major Findings and Conclusions

As previously described, the six case studies and surveys of all CHESP grantee and subgrantee lead agencies have been the primary sources of information that led to six major findings and conclusions in the study. This section presents an overview of the findings and conclusions on the following topics:

- Effects of Different Types of Lead Grantee and Subgrantee Organizations;

- Grantee Strategies for Program Implementation;
- Wide Variation in the Way that Partnerships Function;
- Increases in Collaboration and Three-Way Service-Learning Partnerships;
- Common Barriers to Effective Three-Way Partnerships; and
- Perceived Effects of CHESP on the Quality of Service-Learning.

Effects of Different Types of Lead Grantee and Subgrantee Organizations

The surveys and field visits suggest that the type of organization that led CHESP partnerships has often made a difference in the operation of those partnerships. Perhaps the best example of this is that policy, custom and/or habit led SEA grantees to select K-12 schools or school districts as subgrantee lead agencies much more frequently than other types of lead agencies. At the subgrantee level, service-learning planners at some colleges and universities tended to structure programs with K-12 students as junior partners and/or recipients of service rather than as potential service-givers, a tendency that was not reflected in partnerships led by other types of lead subgrantee agencies.

It is important to note that the different types of lead agencies resulted in differences in tendencies in CHESP programming, but there are also exceptions to these rules and examples of how the tendencies evolved as partners began working together. For example, Temple University's Youth Driven Service-Learning initiative, a subgrantee of the Penn WEPIC Replication Project, demonstrated how college students were encouraged to think about K-12 participants as more than recipients of service. A professor of education described the dynamic between her college students and the high school students in the following way. The college students were older and more knowledgeable about pedagogical theories of service-learning so they were initially expected to dominate discussions. The college students were surprised to learn, however, that the high school students brought their own type expertise to the table; they had more in-depth understanding of the needs of their community and service-learning practice, due in part, to the youth-driven nature of the centers. As a result, this model had a "leveling" effect on the relationship between high school and college students.

The surveys also revealed that fewer higher education subgrantees lead agencies reported CHESP-related changes within their own organizations, their partners, or their communities than did K-12 or CBO subgrantees. K-12 subgrantees also reported changes in the delivery of service learning more frequently than other organizations, while more CBOs reported changes related to the development of service-learning infrastructure.

The Mississippi Department of Education case study provides a unique opportunity to shed light on some of the differences among partnerships led by different organizations. The SEA grantee in Mississippi developed three initiatives concurrently that were all based on the same CHESP model, with each funded by a different Learn and Serve grant from the Corporation. Consequently, one group of partnerships were led by schools, another by higher education institutions, and a third group by CBOs.

Several differences that appear to result from the different kinds of CHESP subgrantee lead organizations are illustrated in the Mississippi Department of Education case study. For example,

staff turnover was seen as a particular challenge for partnerships led by school districts. Eight out of ten school district-led Lighthouse Partnerships experienced a key staff/coordinator change in a two-year span, which the grantee attributed to lower salaries, more limited support, and more assignments, than their counterparts in higher education. Meanwhile, higher education-led partnerships were much more likely to persist than those led by CBOs and school districts. Four of the original five CBO programs have discontinued their Lighthouse Partnership grant; one school district-led partnership opted not to reapply; and two school district-led subgrants were discontinued by the grantee after year one. Only one higher education site did not continue after year one. Grantee leaders attribute some of these differences to the fact that higher education institutions often have an office that deals solely with the fiscal management of grants, while individual K–12 schools and CBOs sometimes do not—a fact that led to increased difficulty with financial reporting and documentation for those schools and CBOs.

The experience of the Colorado Department of Education highlights the often-unrecognized capacity of CBOs to build partnerships because of the linkages that they have *already* made in the course of their efforts to serve the community. Grantee leadership at the Colorado Department of Education came to see community-based organizations as an “untapped resource” for building partnerships and pointed to a number of examples where the CBO helped make the partnership happen. For example, First Call, one of the Colorado subgrantees that we visited, provides an example of a community-based organization with the ability to facilitate relationships between K-12 schools and districts, higher education and other community-based organizations.

Grantee Strategies for Program Implementation

One of the hallmarks of the CHESP program at both the grantee and subgrantee level was the diversity of program models that were planned and implemented. While all grantees began with the broad goals of fostering three-way partnerships to support service-learning, each of the 21 CHESP grantees went about that task in its own way. Within that broad diversity, however, there were several broad patterns of grantee-level implementation, which can be categorized into four broadly defined strategies:

- **Model-driven** strategies in which all subgrantees were expected to carry out the same type of programming;
- **Locally determined** efforts in which grantees gave subgrantees broad discretion as to the focus and design of the local program;
- **Regional center** strategies that supported the development of regional infrastructures as well as local programs; and
- **Cooperative arrangements** in which the grantee and subgrantees/partners worked closely together in an operational partnership rather than a relationship in which there was a clear, hierarchical grantee/subgrantee relationship.

While it is beyond the scope of this study to determine whether (or under what circumstances) one implementation approach is more effective than another in supporting partnerships and improving service-learning, there are clearly strengths and weaknesses to each approach, and different models

appear appropriate to different types of goals, contexts and conditions. As such, the models offer a number of options for consideration by the Corporation and others who are interested in promoting local partnerships. Exhibit 1.1 provides a summary of the four strategies and places each of the CHESP grantees within one or another category.⁵

Exhibit 1.1

Overview of Four Models of Grantee Strategies for Program Implementation Under CHESP

	Model-driven	Locally Determined	Regional Centers	Cooperative Arrangement
Major characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of grant guidelines to shape local project priorities and/or service delivery model(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subgrantees have broad discretion to shape activities to be carried out under the grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants to regional intermediaries. • Intermediaries responsible for providing funding, training, technical assistance to local partners and/or partnerships. • Regional centers may also implement service-learning projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grantee works directly or through intermediary with local partnerships on a more-or-less equal basis. • Grantee can serve as one of local partners.
Method(s) of selecting subgrantees	Mix of competitive RFPs and non-competitive selection of subgrantees	Mix of competitive RFPs and non-competitive selection of subgrantees	Non-competitive selection of regions/ subgrantees	Mix of competitive RFPs and Non-competitive selection of subgrantees
Grantees using approach (<i>represented by state of lead contact</i>)	Mississippi Pennsylvania Texas Ohio/Michigan New Mexico New Hampshire	Florida Minnesota Massachusetts South Carolina Nebraska Nevada*	Colorado Nevada* Oklahoma New York Maine	Alaska Indiana Maryland Pennsylvania* Washington

a The University of Pennsylvania utilized a variety of approaches within two broad models. Nevada combined elements of the locally driven and regional center models.

⁵ It is important to note that the categories and descriptions of these approaches were developed by the study team based on reviews of grantee proposals, the case studies, and discussions with grantees in conjunction with the grantee surveys. As such, they represent our characterization of the various grantee models, which may not necessarily match the ways in which individual grantees would characterize their programs.

While the categories are useful in bringing a degree of order to the diversity of approaches, several of the grantees actually fit into multiple categories. For example, the University of Pennsylvania's efforts to replicate its West Philadelphia Improvement Corps is characterized as a model-driven strategy, in large part because the grantee recruited subgrantee colleges and universities that were interested in working on the University of Pennsylvania WEPIC Replication model. However, the University now works as an active working partner of many of the university subgrantees, and thus has been characterized as utilizing a "cooperative arrangement" strategy as well.

The study demonstrates that the adoption of a particular strategy does not appear to be a function of whether the grantee is a state education agency or a grant-making entity (or Tribal organization). Both SEA and GME/TRB grantees are found among those using three of the four broad approaches outlined in this chapter.

For a number of reasons, it seems unlikely that any one model would work in every situation. Each of the strategies used in CHESP, from direct grant-making to collaborative arrangements, was developed to address a particular context or set of circumstances that the grantee faced, and each involved trade-offs, generally between allowing discretion and exercising control that reflected local ways of doing business and different assessments of need at the grantee level. Thus the diversity of approaches (as opposed to the emergence of a single dominant model) represents an important strength for CHESP and provides a variety of models that future grantees can learn from.

The six grantee case studies provide an excellent opportunity to describe the experiences with the different models in detail, and to consider some of the implementation issues and trade-offs involved in each.⁶

Model-Driven Strategy

One-third (7 of 21) of the grantees developed strategies based on grantee specification of the major types of activities to be carried out by subgrantees. In some cases, grantees specified focus areas for their subgrantees, such as promoting literacy, which represented statewide priorities; in other cases they targeted specific program approaches, such as after-school programming. Grantees used the guidelines in their RFPs or subgrantee selection process to set the terms of the program designs of the local programs they would fund.

Two of the six case study grantees, the Mississippi Department of Education and the University of Pennsylvania, fall within the model-driven strategy, though they represent a mix of approaches. The Mississippi strategy is a relatively straightforward model-driven approach. Mississippi CHESP funding was used to support sites headed by K-12 school districts, with the districts selected initially through an RFP process that specified several required elements for the programs: all were to be after-school and/or out-of-school education and recreation programs. The programs were also required to develop service-learning curricula that had to be certified by the state; the service-learning projects

⁶ The sites for the case studies were selected, in large part, to illustrate some of the different approaches being adopted by grantees under CHESP. However, they were chosen before we had developed our framework of the four models described above.

were designed to promote academic achievement and engagement among participants; and each program was required to establish a local advisory board.

As noted above, the University of Pennsylvania CHESP project combines a model-driven approach for two different models for its subgrantee selection process, but operated more like a cooperative arrangement model once the work began. As a model-driven strategy, the University recruited subgrantees to work on two distinct well-articulated models: the West Philadelphia Improvement Corps replication of the University Assisted Community Schools model (a model of university-community-school partnerships) and the Youth Driven Service-Learning Centers replication that focused on a model incorporating strong provisions for youth voice.

Locally Determined Strategy

Under this approach, just over a quarter (6 of 21) of the grantees left the broad parameters of service delivery to their selected subgrantees who, as they saw it, knew the resources and opportunities for and barriers to successful implementation better than anyone at the statewide or grantee levels. The Florida Department of Education and the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning are good examples of the locally determined strategy, in which programs are largely or entirely locally designed with a core three-way partnership. The *Florida Department of Education's* CHESP program operates within a broadly defined set of grantee guidelines. The guiding assumption behind the program was that Florida communities knew best what issues they needed to address and how best to organize a partnership to address them. As such, the program guidelines identified a broad group of goals for local partnerships and an equally broad set of topics or issues of interest, and allowed its subgrantees to propose their own approaches.⁷ Florida also promoted, but did not require, a “cascading” service approach for the local partnerships, in which college students would work with K-12 school students to deliver services in the community.

Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning CHESP program was similar to the Florida program in its locally determined approach, selecting subgrantees (through a competitive RFP) that were expected to develop their own program models. However, the program also included several specific program guidelines that addressed the process by which the service-learning was to be planned and implemented. Two key elements in the Minnesota approach were a commitment to increasing youth voice in program decision-making and to increasing service-learning in teacher education programs. As such, the grantee’s program guidelines required local partnerships to develop comprehensive plans to “involve youth as decision-makers, [and] increase the role of college and university students, especially pre-service teachers, in service-learning....” Program guidelines required each local partnership to include a steering committee, 25 percent of whose members were young people. Partnerships were also required to have representation of community and higher

⁷ The major goals that each partnership had to address included the following: increase student grades and performance; positively affect student attitudes and behavior; meet the needs of the larger community; increase institutional capacity and infrastructure for service-learning; and build sustainable community/higher education/school partnerships that continue to address these issues in the future. The Florida Department of Education also identified a number of issues of particular interest: environment, intergenerational/oral history, health, conflict resolution, reading, home safety, and teacher education for the grantee but left it to potential subgrantees to decide which of these issues to emphasize.

education institutions on these committees, and to include at least one elementary and one secondary school as implementation sites. However, the RFP did not designate the structure of the local partnership beyond the advisory committee or dictate the kind of program activities that needed to take place. As such, subgrantees were relatively free to determine what they wanted to do and how.

Regional Center Strategy

A third strategy was the funding of a series of regional intermediaries or regional centers to serve both as program hubs and as sources of technical assistance and support for additional local partnerships. This strategy was adopted in 5 of 21 of the grantees. In these states, the goal was to use the CHESP grants to create or support a regional or local infrastructure that would bring K-12 education, community organizations, and higher education together to promote service-learning over the longer term. In some cases, the regional centers themselves operated service-learning programs; in others, they provided grants or mini-grants to local schools and teachers and provided training, materials and technical assistance to support local efforts. This approach was often attempted as a means to help CHESP deal with geographically large rural areas.

Two case study grantees fit most closely into the regional center model. Both the Colorado Department of Education and the Nevada Service-learning Partnership have attempted to create local structures that can guide and support a wide variety of service-learning activities. For example, the Colorado Department of Education's CHESP initiative was designed to create a regional infrastructure that would make it easier to provide consistent support for service-learning partnerships in the geographically large and mountainous state. At the core of the strategy was state education agency funding and development of regional service-learning partnerships based in four of the state's eight educational services regions. Once selected, the four partnerships were required to participate in a six-month strategic planning process to establish a three-way partnership and create a common vision to guide the regional activities. Key elements of the partnership model included a heavy emphasis on youth voice (through mandated creation of a youth advisory council in each partnership), use of a quality service model (Continuum for Service-Learning Engagement) and assistance to schools in aligning service with state academic standards. The model was selected, in part, as an effort to shift state support for service-learning away from scattered, small grants and more towards an emphasis on developing high quality, sustainable service-learning strategies, which, it was felt, could be most productively carried out on a regional level.

The Nevada Service-Learning Partnership, a grant-making entity, incorporated many elements of the regional grant-making strategy, with grants directed towards five regional subgrantees in Nevada and California. The goal of the initiative was to build on existing community-based partnerships and build new mechanisms for youth involvement and youth voice as key elements in the process of developing and implementing service-learning projects. The Nevada initiative was unusual in its focus on nonprofit organizations as leaders at both the grantee and subgrantee level. At the center of that model was the creation of a youth leadership team in each of the subgrantee partnerships that was staffed and supported by a youth worker. The youth team, in turn, was responsible for working with agency staff to develop projects and to provide service-learning training and education for adults in the participating communities. The local effort was also combined with state-wide advocacy and education aimed at developing a broader statewide infrastructure to support service-learning in Nevada.

Combined Cooperative Arrangement/Model-Driven Strategies

The final group of strategies might best be characterized as “cooperative arrangements,” an approach that was adopted by four of the grantees. In these cases, grantees or a selected intermediary would take an active role not only at the grantee level, but also in the development and operation of the “subgrantee” partnerships, acting in effect, as a local partner as well as a grantee. Examples of these strategies include the University of Indiana subgrantee (funded by the University of Pennsylvania), which served as the higher education partner in a variety of local school/community programs and the University of Pennsylvania that explicitly treated its subgrantees as partners.

As noted in the previous section, the University of Pennsylvania/West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC) Replication Project includes both a model-driven approach and many elements of the cooperative arrangement approach. The University of Pennsylvania is the grant-making entity that developed the model and begun replicating this project long before the CHESP funding became available. The WEPIC “University-Assisted Community Schools”(UACS) model focuses on partnerships among universities, schools, and community agencies designed to help the schools become centers for education, services, and civic participation in urban neighborhoods. The initiative incorporates a model-driven approach in its effort to replicate a specific program approach at all of its seventeen UACS subgrantees using a variety of funding sources. However, it has also operated as a cooperative arrangement in which its existing “subgrantee” university-lead partners and the University of Pennsylvania staff worked together to design the CHESP proposal, select (new) sites, and set directions for the project. In the words of the project director, “The key to our continuing success is the willingness to operate as a partnership. Every site learns from every other site.” Much of this exchange happens through monthly conference calls among the sites where they exchange information and engage in common problem-solving. According to the WEPIC replication manager, the collegial partnership model fits in well with the higher education academic culture: “State departments of education can afford to be more top-down, but if we didn’t do a collegial model it wouldn’t fly. Faculty just wouldn’t respond to it.”

CHESP Program Implementation

How well did the grantees implement their chosen approaches? In the case study sites, the site visit interviews indicate that the grantee strategies were generally implemented as planned. But in many cases that we are aware of, at least some change in strategy was required. Perhaps most strikingly, the Council of Michigan Foundations and the Ohio Grantmakers Forum initially planned to work together and operate as a single multi-state grantee. However, according to program staff, by the mid-point of their second year they realized that such a joint effort was not working. Instead, the two programs shifted toward parallel but separate operations. In the Minnesota program, fewer districts emphasized teacher education than expected; and in the Florida program, a grantee-level focus on youth voice had to be de-emphasized.

As we review the grantee program implementation strategies, it becomes clear that, within the broad CHESP framework of three-way partnerships, a wide variety of useful strategies were tested by grantees and each was met with a substantial amount of success, sometimes after a bit of refocusing or refinement. CHESP was successful in fostering the development or implementation of a variety of grantee and subgrantee program models. While it is too early to tell whether some strategies are more

effective than others, most—if not all—reflected a degree of strategic thinking and an effort to use CHESP resources to achieve well-thought-out programmatic goals.

Wide Variation in the Way that Partnerships Function

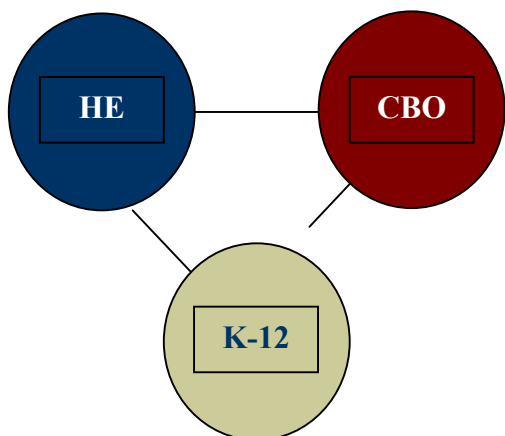
The CHESP experience has illustrated the wide variations in the way that partnerships function at both the grantee and the subgrantee levels and even in the way the term “partnership” is understood by the participants. The central aim of CHESP has been to promote three-way partnerships among K-12, higher education and other community based entities, particularly at the subgrantee level. However, the surveys, case studies, and focus groups all demonstrate that there is a continuum among CHESP partnerships in the degree to which such functions as planning, oversight, and assessment are shared among the organizations known as partners. At one extreme, partnership can exist “on paper,” with one organization making all or almost all of the planning and management decisions. At the other extreme all partners share equally in all of these functions.

Further, we discovered that partnerships vary in depth (degree to which partners worked together on key functions such as planning, management or service-delivery), breadth (number of partners), types of lead organizations (HE, CBO or K-12), and the different roles that partners played in each function (planning, management, evaluation or service-delivery). Perhaps as a reflection of this, there was also wide variation in the extent and type of communication among partners

Based on the case study research, we believe that there are at least five models of partnership that can be used to illustrate CHESP partnerships among K-12 schools or districts, higher education institutions, and community-based entities:

- Balanced partnerships;
- Partnership with a dominant lead;
- Hub and spoke partnerships;
- Cascading model; and
- Centralized in one organization.

These models provide a framework for clarifying how the CHESP partners behave in relationships to each other and were used in each of the case studies to describe the partnerships.



Partnership Model #1: Balanced Partnerships

The first model, the *balanced partnership*, represents a shared leadership structure, with all three types of partners taking part relatively equally in the planning, management and/or service activities of the CHESP initiative. This model is characterized by frequent communication between all partners—and often in a face-to-face setting. Most importantly, all three partners in this model share decision-making.

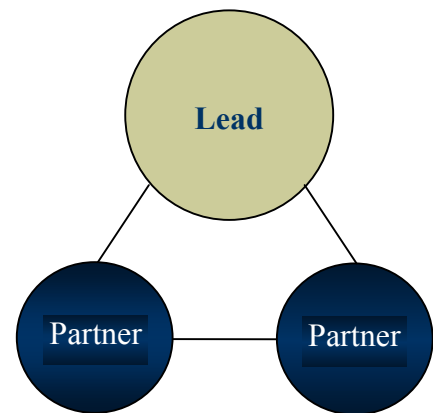
Although several people we spoke with described this as an ideal that they were working towards, we saw only a handful of examples of this model, during the site visits. The first example of a *balanced partnership* was in Miami-Dade County as part of Florida Department of Education’s CHESP. Six partners work closely together in this partnership under a shared vision and common responsibilities for program planning and implementation. The six key partners include the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (lead), the University of Miami Institute for Public History, the Historical Museum of Southern Florida, the Black Archives History and Research Foundation of South Florida, Miami-Dade Community College, the Biscayne National Park, and a local video production company. Although the school district was the lead agency and served as a fiscal agent, all partners shared CHESP planning responsibilities and funding. These six key partners were part of a larger consortium of 20 organizations that meet monthly to plan activities, make decisions and discuss issues related to the project.

The second example of a *balanced partnership* was in Monongalia School District’s Kaleidoscope Project (West Virginia), a subgrantee of the University of Pennsylvania’s WEPIC Replication Project. The lead partner of the Kaleidoscope Project is the Monongalia School District, however, the project has operated through the collective effort with several partner organizations including two key leaders from the West Virginia University Office of Student Service-Learning and the Mon Valley Green Space Coalition.

In order to be “balanced”, a partnership’s leadership responsibilities need to be transferable from one partner to another. In one instance, according to the coordinator of the Kaleidoscope project, the higher education partner could have easily been the fiscal and managing agent, but the position was vacant at the time that CHESP began so the responsibility was given to the school district. Similar to the experience of Miami-Dade, the key partners meet as part of a larger group of organizational partners on a monthly basis.

Partnership Model #2: Partnership with a Dominant Lead

In some cases, subgrantees that we visited collaborated with multiple organizations, but one partner clearly took the lead in the planning, implementation and service delivery for the partnership. In this model, as in the balanced partnership, all partners met together and had opportunities to provide input into decisions, however, in this case, the lead partner maintained a high degree of autonomy and responsibility for the overall direction of the partnership. Furthermore, although partners met and shared resources and information, they did not necessarily do so out of a shared vision. As the coordinator of one of these partnerships explained, “we try to help our partners to see that service-learning is in their own self-interest.” This emphasis on self-interest stands in contrast to the emphasis on developing a common vision seen in those subgrantees that employed a *balanced partnership* model.



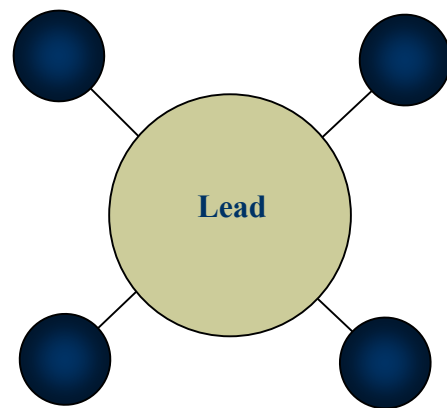
At least six of the subgrantees that we visited demonstrated the model of a partnership with a dominant lead: two in Colorado’s YASCO (Fort Collins/Loveland and Northwest Denver YASCOS);

two in the Nevada Community CHEST, Inc. CHESP (Truckee Tahoe Community Collaborative and the Best Coalition) and two in Minnesota’s CHESP (Cedar Riverside and Duluth).

One of the features of the subgrantees that use this model has been the role of a committee, which serves as an advisory or steering capacity, but allows the lead partner the autonomy to direct the overall operations of the partnership. The Colorado Department of Education, Minnesota Department of Children Families and Learning and Community Chest, Inc. required their subgrantees to create an advisory committee with their key partner organizations. In all of these cases, the committee served to bring the partners together on a regular basis to share information and advice, but the lead organization managed the overall program planning and implementation of CHESP. The lead partner did not (nor was he/she expected to) consult the other partners around all decisions along every step of the way.

Partnership Model #3: Hub-and-Spoke Model

In the *hub-and-spoke model*, one central lead organization makes most of the planning and coordination decisions. Although the leadership of this partnership is centralized, the service-learning activities within the hub and spoke model of partnership are autonomous and decentralized. In a *hub-and-spoke model*, partner organizations relate to the lead organization through one-to-one communications but do not regularly communicate with each other.



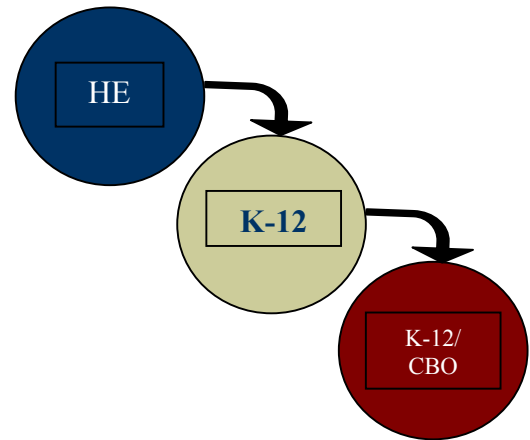
At least five subgrantees among those that we visited employed the *hub-and-spoke model* to plan, manage and/or implement their CHESP partnership and service-learning activities including: Western Regional YASCO (CO), Pine Jog (FL), Jackson State University Lighthouse (MS), Hattiesburg Lighthouse (MS), and Storey-Lyon County (NV).

One example of the *hub-and-spoke model* is the Western Regional YASCO (Colorado) partnership, in which the school district operates as the “hub” of a partnership with one elementary school that serves as a pilot service-learning site; a committee of K-12 school teachers who serve as coordinators for service-learning in their respective schools; Mesa State College; the city and several non-profit organizations. Each of these partners or groups of partners represents “spokes” of the partnership.

In another example of a *hub-and-spoke model*, Jackson State University (JSU) Lighthouse Partnership in Mississippi, a higher education entity leads the partnership in which higher education students serve as tutors and mentors at two K-12 schools and three community based organizations. In this case, the partnership is coordinated between the college and each of the five partners independently of one another. Similarly, the Hattiesburg Lighthouse operates an after school program, and typically schedules activities with its community based and higher education partners on different days and for different times.

Partnership Model #4: Cascading Model

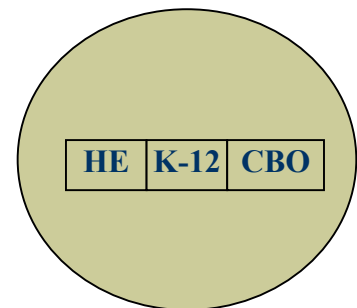
The *cascading model* of partnership seemed to reflect what is sometimes known as the cascading approach to the delivery of service-learning. In this approach to CHESP, a higher education partner typically provided service-learning to a K-12 partner who provided service-learning to either younger K-12 students or a community based organization. In the two examples of this approach that we saw, the partnerships that promoted this service model were coordinated between *serial* partners, whereby the higher education partner coordinated with the K-12 partner, who then coordinated with another K-12 or community based partner. For example, as part of Project Sally in Tallahassee, Florida, college students participate as America Reads tutors with sixth and fourth grade students. These students, then, read with first and second grade students. As one college student we spoke with said, “the students learn to pay it forward.”



One of the risks of the *cascading model* has been the tendency of K-12 participants to be seen as *recipients* of service, rather than *participants* of service-learning. As previously discussed, the experiences of Temple University (within Penn’s WEPIC Replication Project) are particularly instructive in demonstrating ways to overcome this problem.⁸

Partnership Model #5: Centralized in One Organization

A fifth model of “partnership” is one in which all or virtually all operations and decisions are centralized within one organization. In this model, employees of the lead organization coordinate all CHESP activities, without significant consultation with any of the partners. Some of the staff may have responsibilities to recruit other organizations to serve as partners, but for the most part, the focus is inward rather than among different organizations.



There was only one example of this approach at the subgrantee level at the six case study grantees - the Forest Municipal School District in Forest, Mississippi. The Forest Municipal School District hired staff to serve as after-school tutors for K-12 youth on a variety of academic and community service initiatives. On some occasions, volunteers from an institution of higher education and the larger community worked with the K-12 students on community service projects and served on an advisory board, but the board met only sporadically and did not play a major role in either planning or oversight of the program.⁹

⁸ It should be noted that other sites, such as the Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO subgrantee in Colorado incorporated a cascading approach to service-learning within CHESP, but (as previously described) found other ways to develop partnerships between institutions.

⁹ In focus group discussions, some grantees wondered whether this model should be considered a partnership at all and felt that the centralized model of partnership stretches the definition of partnership the furthest.

Uses of the Models

It should be noted, that these partnership models represent “snapshots” taken at particular moments in time, whereas in reality, partnerships evolve and change over time. The case of the Western Regional YASCO subgrantee of Colorado Department of Education is a good example of the changing nature of partnerships. The Western Regional YASCO spent its first year in a centralized model, but evolved to form an effective hub and spoke partnership with a coalition of teachers, community based organizations and a deeper partnership with Mesa State College.

Furthermore, it is important to note that models (by definition) represent simplifications of more complex systems of operation. For instance, in some cases, each “spoke” within a hub-and-spoke partnership may represent a partnership unto itself. (See, for example, Storey-Lyon Service-Learning Partnership subgrantee of the Community Chest, Inc.).

Despite these limitations, we believe these models may provide a visual representation of complex systems for practitioners, a tool for research/evaluation when the level of analysis is a “partnership”, a framework for clarifying definitions of partnerships that involve multiple stakeholders, and a starting place for the development of similar partnerships by future practitioners.

Increases in Collaboration and Three-Way Service-Learning Partnerships

Overall, grantees and subgrantees report that CHESP has resulted in an *increase in three-way service-learning partnerships* among institutions of higher education, K-12 school systems, and community-based organizations, promoting the creation of new partnerships and enhancement of existing ones at both the grantee and subgrantee levels. For example, in telephone surveys, all of the CHESP grantees report that they either had already accomplished this or will be able to do so by the end of the three-year CHESP experience. Similarly, at the 2002 Learn and Serve grantee meeting, both grantees and subgrantees described increased collaboration as the most frequently cited outcome of their efforts.

Based on the telephone surveys, case studies, and focus groups, we learned that the vast majority of CHESP grantee and subgrantee lead agencies report they increased their collaboration, networking and partnerships with other community or educational organizations. In addition, roughly three-quarters of them reported on the survey that they saw similar changes in at least one of their partners.

In many cases, CHESP appears to have brought *new partner agencies* into the planning, delivery, and assessment of service-learning at the grantee and subgrantee levels and led to (or supported) efforts to create new structures to support these partnerships. As the surveys revealed, more than half of the CHESP subgrantee partners were not involved in any prior relationship with the lead agency. In the case of the Mississippi Lighthouse initiative, the Department of Education worked with the University of Southern Mississippi, the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service and the Mississippi Alliance for Community Service-Learning to create a new state-wide center to promote service-learning—the Center for Community and Civic Engagement—in part, as a result of CHESP.

A new partnership was also formed between the Mesa County School District and Mesa State College in the Western Region of Colorado. After two changes in leadership at the college and several unsuccessful attempts to incorporate the higher education institution into the regional CHESP subgrantee, Colorado Campus Compact, one of the grantee-level partners, helped broker a partnership between the college and the school district subgrantee by providing funding for a statewide internship program called *Careers for the Common Good*. The new program, administered by the college, provided training for public service and homeland security-related careers to high school seniors.

Although CHESP resulted in some new partnerships, in most cases, partnerships were *built upon existing relationships*. Typically these partnerships formed around close pre-existing relationships. For example, West Virginia's Monongalia School District's Kaleidoscope Project (a subgrantee of the University of Pennsylvania) is a broad-based partnership that evolved from the After-School Alliance, a group of community-based organizations that provide after-school programs to youth. The Kaleidoscope project represents a broader community-wide coalition with an interest in taking innovative approaches to promoting healthier lifestyles for adolescents and adults, environmental preservation, and education. The director of the project described the informal community relationships that helped build this CHESP partnership as essential. In fact, two of the key partners are a husband and wife team, representing the school district and one of the community based organizations.

The Cedar Riverside School in Minnesota provides another example of a partnership that expanded and transformed existing partnerships. Prior to CHESP, Cedar Riverside school students were primarily recipients of service. The service-learning coordinator credits CHESP with helping them encourage students to be providers of service-learning. As the case study describes, they deepened their pre-existing relationship with Augsburg College, and created new partnerships with several other community organizations.

Another example of an enhancement of an existing partnership can be found in the Intergenerational Community Studies Oral History CHESP project, administered by Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (MDCPS) Intergenerational Programs Division, which built upon a foundation of an existing service-learning partnerships as part of a community-wide effort to record the oral histories of community elders. One of the existing partners was the Historical Museum of Southern Florida, which prior to CHESP has served as a resource for students involved in service-learning activities. However, as a result of CHESP, the Museum director became more involved in the partnership and strengthened their role and capacity through the development of teacher-training materials and the training of additional museum staff to work with K-12 students during their field trips to the museum. The West Palm Beach expansion of the Earth Force environmental education/service learning model is another example of CHESP serving as an impetus to expanding pre-existing partnerships by bringing new agencies, including different parts of a university, into the effort.

Common Barriers to Effective Three-Way Partnerships

In general, the CHESP grantees and subgrantees have tended to perceive a common set of barriers to developing CHESP partnerships. Three factors—time and schedule conflicts, staff turnover or changes in leadership within key partners, and lack of institutional or organizational support within

key partners—ranked in the top four at both the grantee and subgrantee levels when we analyzed the results of the surveys. The fourth factor varied between grantees and subgrantees, with grantees citing “differences among partner organization missions and goals” and subgrantees mentioning inadequate funding. Needless to say, these barriers interact with each other. For example, lack of outside funding would be less of a problem if there were sufficient institutional support to generate local funding. On the other hand, outside funding could ideally help to create structures and local champions that can, in turn, promote the development of institutional support.

It is worth noting that geographical distance and rural settings was not included in the checklist of potential barriers on the survey. However, in both the case studies and focus groups, the issue of proximity was raised as an issue for collaboration and therefore is included in this discussion along with the other three most frequently reported barriers.

Time and Schedule Conflicts

Subgrantees frequently identified time and schedule conflicts to be a barrier—especially when trying to develop service-learning projects in which higher education students and K-12 students participate together. Difficulties in scheduling result, in part, from the fact that college students frequently attend lectures and seminars in the morning and early afternoon, the same time that K-12 students often participate in service-learning as part of their classes. In Florida’s Project Sally, the Florida State University helped overcome this challenge by using work-study and America Reads funding to provide an incentive for college students to participate in the morning and early afternoon tutoring sessions with K-12 students from the Leon County School District.

Staff Turnover or Changes in Leadership within Key Partners

Another barrier has been staff turnover among key leaders in CHESP partnerships. In Mississippi, eight of the ten CHESP subgrantees experienced a change in key leadership/staff within the first two years of CHESP. The grantee attributed this rate of turnover to low salaries in K-12 schools/districts, limited support, and high pressure. The Mississippi Department of Education CHESP grantee illustrates a strategy that was used to respond to these issues. For example, when the director of the Hattiesburg subgrantee left the district to become a superintendent elsewhere, the grantee became deeply involved in the selection of a new program director and helped establish a new Lighthouse coordinator position. The state coordinator believed that the time spent in that process was an important investment in maintaining an effective CHESP program at the local level despite the staff turnover that occurred.

For the Truckee Tahoe Children’s Collaborative subgrantee in Nevada, staff turnover within partner organizations was not a major barrier because the partnerships and communication strategies (monthly management and leadership meetings) between the K-12 school systems and key partner organizations had been institutionalized. Responsibilities to the CHESP project and roles of staff on the project were established early on and when staff changed positions, or staff turnover occurred, the partners, the responsibilities pertaining to CHESP of the old staff members were transferred to the new staff members. The importance of institutional support is further illustrated below.

Lack of Institutional or Organizational Support within Key Partners

The third primary CHESP barrier identified in the telephone survey was a lack of institutional or organizational support within key partners. The Western Regional YASCO subgrantee in Colorado demonstrates the need for institutional and organizational support. In the first year of CHESP, a middle school paid for half of its service-learning coordinator's salary from CHESP funds and the other half from another grant. When the other grant was discontinued, the position and the demonstration project were discontinued. While school officials voiced support for service-learning, the support was not deep enough to be translated into funding when other sources dried up. Based on that experience, the regional coordinators of that subgrantee learned to "not put their eggs in one basket." This kind of issue is becoming particularly important as state education agencies and school districts throughout the United States continue to face funding cuts.

Rural Settings

As stated above, geographical distances between partners faced by lead subgrantee organizations located in rural communities was raised as a barrier in collaboration. This was particularly true in identifying and collaborating with higher education partners in rural areas without any nearby colleges and universities. While some grantees reported that their rural subgrantees were able to develop partnerships with higher education institutions, at the time of the site visits, none of the three rural subgrantees included in our case studies had successfully established a partnership with a higher education institution. The rural location of the subgrantees and the large distances from universities and community colleges was reported to be a challenge by staff in several of these subgrantees.

One of the subgrantees of the Community Chest Inc.'s program in Nevada also faced rural challenges and dealt with the large geographical distance between partners by creating small task forces in each of the rural communities included in counties served by the lead organization. This subgrantee also offered mini-grants to encourage university participation across greater distances. Subgrantees funded by the Mississippi Department of Education found that financial incentives of the kind provided by CampusLink Americorps and VISTA were useful in getting college students to work with K-12 and CBO partners. These approaches may prove to be good ways to promote collaboration and partnerships where agencies and young people are dispersed geographically, but it is too soon to know how effective these strategies ultimately will be.

In essence, the CHESP experience has reinforced the long-held belief that development of three-way sustainable partnerships faces barriers that take a good deal of time, resources, and skill to overcome. In particular, in at least some contexts, full attainment of the CHESP ideal of sustainable, fully-functioning, three-way partnerships may require more time, more resources, and more training and technical assistance than were available under the initial round of CHESP funding.¹⁰ While grantees and subgrantees felt having a three-year grant was vastly superior to year-to-year funding, there was widespread support for the idea of extending grants for longer periods of time. One grantee estimated that bringing about meaningful, institutionalized change in schools and school districts could take as long as seven years.

¹⁰ For example, see *Forest Municipal School District* subgrantee within Mississippi Department of Education case study.

Along these same lines, the study has illustrated that efforts to bring agencies that have not worked together in past work best when there is time for the key staff to get to know each other and better understand each other's perspectives and the incentives that they operated under. Moreover, joint planning often requires staff support that hard-pressed administrators find difficult to provide. Thus, as was demonstrated in the case of all of the Colorado subgrantees and six of the nine K-12 led Lighthouses in Mississippi, the availability of VISTA volunteers can be a crucial element in making planning process work smoothly. Similarly, efforts to develop and sustain structure to provide youth voice in partnership structures also benefit from the kind of staff support that is often difficult to afford. Finally, the experience of one of the Colorado subgrantees suggests that the site was not able to develop a fully-representative three way partnership until a full-time person was hired to manage the effort. Similar conclusions can be reached from review of the Mississippi experience, in which subgrantees sometimes felt that part-time coordinators simply did not have the time to devote to promotion of partnerships and integration of service-learning into academic curricula.

Perceived Effects of CHESP on the Scope and Quality of Service-Learning

The vast majority of CHESP grantees and subgrantees believed that their CHESP-funded efforts have already had an impact on the scope and quality of service-learning programs and the capacity to support quality service-learning. In particular, grantee and subgrantee survey respondents reported three general ways that they improved their capacity to support upgrading the quality of service-learning and hence improve the impact of service-learning: (1) provision of staff development for current educators; (2) expansion of teacher education and/or certification for service-learning work, and (3) efforts to link service-learning outcomes with state standards.¹¹ All of these efforts are widely believed to be increasing the quality of current and future service-learning programming and the ultimate sustainability of these efforts, a belief that is consistent with the findings of service-learning research and evaluations.¹²

Over 80 percent of the lead grantee organizations reported that CHESP had led to increases in professional development for current or future educators on service-learning. Mandatory meetings for CHESP subgrantees to share experiences and learn from each other) have been a key element of the Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning CHESP program's effort to build capacity at the school district level. The Minnesota CHESP school district coordinators have, in turn, played critical roles in developing different models of in-service training for school-building coordinators and individual teachers who are engaging in service-learning or considering such involvement. For example, the Duluth school district offered a "Service-Learning 101" course for teachers that was designed and led by two University of Minnesota at Duluth students, the school

¹¹ During the three years since CHESP began, educational institutions have been influenced by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, a major national educational policy initiative that seeks to focus educators on teacher education/certification and standards based education. These CHESP grantees responses to our surveys were consistent with this overall trend.

¹² See, for example, the discussions of the key role of professional development in promoting institutionalization of service learning in the reports being produced by the Brandeis University evaluation of the Kellogg Foundation's Learning In Deed initiative.

district service-learning coordinator, and two VISTA volunteers. Another Minnesota subgrantee, the Saint Peter school district, utilized support from CHESP and other sources to develop ongoing service-learning study groups for its teachers. The Pine to Prairie Cooperative in Red Lake Falls, Minnesota has focused its training around a newly developed curriculum, Models of Service Learning, that stresses the roles of higher education and community partners in the schools.

Pre-service training in service-learning has also been a critical element of several of the CHESP grantee program designs. For example, the Florida Department of Education, Minnesota Department of Children Families and Learning and the Youth Driven Service-Learning Centers (YDSLCS) model of the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) CHESP initiative all gave preference to subgrantee applications that emphasized teacher education. The Minnesota grantee explicitly utilized one of its partners, Campus Compact, to promote service-learning courses for future teachers at the subgrantee university partners. The Temple University (Penn) subgrantee case provides a detailed example of how teacher education programs in colleges and universities may benefit from (and contribute to) a service-learning approach.

The Colorado Department of Education case study describes the key role of professional development activities as part of its CHESP initiative in which teachers received credits that meet the state requirements for teacher re-certification for attendance at these kinds of sessions. The Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO subgrantee (also part of the Colorado case) provides an example of a partnership that included a university teacher education department as a partner.

In terms of links to standards, all four CHESP grantees led by state education agencies (SEAs) that were included in the case studies engaged in activities to link service-learning activities and outcomes to achievement of state standards. For example, the service-learning coordinator at Minnesota's Department of Children Families and Learning provided training to coordinators of Minnesota Educational Effectiveness Program (MEEP), the state's major academic standards initiative, that stressed the role that service-learning could play in meeting specific standards. The MEEP coordinators, in turn, then took on the job of promoting service-learning as part of their broader responsibilities to train and support local school districts. Thus, the integration of service-learning into efforts to promote MEEP resulted in a win-win situation. It enabled school districts to see the links between service-learning and attainment of academic standards at the same time that it provided service-learning with additional "ambassadors" and promoters. In addition, the Minnesota grantee developed a service-learning curriculum around civic outcomes and provided training to help teachers incorporate service-learning into MEEP-endorsed civics curriculum.

In Colorado, the grantee *required* regional coordinators to tie CHESP service-learning outcomes to state standards. Also in Colorado, youth action councils translated the technical language of state standards into language that their peers could understand in order to find ways to meet those stated objectives. In Florida, one of the specific goals of the CHESP program was to help increase student academic performance, and Florida's program director developed lists of explicit ways that CHESP could target schools that had performed poorly on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test

(FCAT).¹³ Finally, in Mississippi, the grantee developed a curriculum certification process for service-learning curricula through the University of Southern Mississippi. In addition, Mississippi measures the impacts on academic achievement outcomes defined in conjunction with state standards through a comprehensive approach to program evaluation.

It is perhaps noteworthy that neither of the partnerships led by grant-making entities (GMEs) discussed specific initiatives to influence state educational standards. According to interviews with the University of Pennsylvania grantee, this was, in part, because GME-led CHESP grantees represent initiatives that extend beyond the boundaries of any one state. Still they recognize the importance of this issue and report that some of their subgrantees have been working to show the impact of service-learning on the standards-based testing in their state.

The study did not incorporate objective measures of the quality of service-learning offered by CHESP grantees. However, at the *subgrantee* level, the majority of subgrantee lead organizations in the survey reported increases in the quality and scope of service-learning in their communities as a result of their participation in CHESP. Among the case study sites, these perceptions were supported by a third-party evaluation of Colorado's service-learning initiative (the evaluation included CHESP sites but was not restricted to CHESP) that revealed statistically significant differences between service-learning and comparison groups in overall grade point average (GPA), changes in GPA, and scores on standardized tests in reading, writing, and math.¹⁴

Conclusions and Research Recommendations

Overall, the study has provided support for the CHESP approach of linking funding to requirements that involve three-way partnerships and the CHESP program design in which different kinds of organizations are allowed to serve as lead grantees and subgrantees. CHESP grantees and subgrantees have created new partnerships and enhanced existing ones, creating what is widely believed to be expanded and/or enhanced opportunities for providing quality service-learning that meets the needs of students and communities. All of the three types of subgrantee lead organizations—K-12 schools or districts, institutions of higher education, and community-based organizations—and both types of grantee level lead agencies—SEAs and GMEs/TRBs—have demonstrated that they can lead well-functioning three-way service-learning partnerships.

The case studies highlighted some issues relating to the longer-term staying power of service-learning, such as: (a) the financial pressures that threaten the ability of subgrantees to maintain staff coordinator positions and provide transportation for students to service sites, and (b) the challenges that come from increased school district emphasis on standardized testing as a measure of accountability. To a large extent, these issues affect all service-learning efforts and not simply those supported by the CHESP model, and thus, they do not appear to reflect a particular weakness or

¹³ One of the stated aims of the Florida CHESP project is “to increase student knowledge and performance (e.g., improved reading and writing skills; higher grades and FCAT scores, meeting Sunshine State Standards).” (Florida CHESP brochure, January 2002)

¹⁴ RMC Research Corporation, *Colorado Department of Education Service-Learning Evaluation Report*. November 2002.

vulnerability of CHESP. But these two issues must be dealt with as efforts to sustain and replicate the CHESP approach are put in place.

It should be remembered that the creation of flourishing three-way partnerships is a means towards the end of promoting more and better service-learning rather than an end in itself. This study relies only upon self-reports by the grantees and subgrantees to assess information about implementation and outcomes. Therefore, further research is needed to document the extent (and the ways in which) implementing CHESP's three-way partnerships leads to demonstrably more and/or better service-learning, i.e., better quality service-learning, service-learning with stronger impacts upon student participants, and service-learning with more powerful impacts upon the communities in which students serve. If such benefits are demonstrable, it may prove useful to integrate many of the CHESP concepts into the three major service-learning funding sectors, i.e., K-12, higher education, and community-based.

The grantees and subgrantees that we contacted in our surveys and case study site visits are convinced that CHESP is indeed leading to solid service-learning efforts that are increasing the overall supply of service-learning; both the self-report survey data and our site visits tend to support this conclusion. However, we believe that comparisons of service-learning offered under the Corporation's two funding areas (CHESP and regular Learn and Serve) would be helpful in distinguishing the impact of the CHESP three-way partnership model of implementing service-learning on participants through such indicators as student academics; social and developmental skills; and civic knowledge and skills. In the same vein, such a comparative study can address the question of whether a collaboration of all three partners (schools, higher education institutions, and community-based organizations) is effective in implementing service-learning projects that are more responsive to community needs than the traditional Learn and Serve-funded projects.

This research could involve implementation of an experimental design in which programs were randomly assigned to CHESP or traditional Learn and Serve funding. Such a study would look at possible differences in administrative and planning provisions, such as those to promote "youth voice", as well as differences in outcomes and cost-effectiveness.

Only when the advantages of CHESP's three-way partnerships are clearly demonstrated can the Corporation begin to explore how to best move CHESP from the status of a demonstration project to that of a regular service-learning program model.

Outline of Case Study Reports

The six case study reports that follow were developed using the same general outline. Each begins with an introduction, followed by a grantee level discussion and summary. Each report also contains discussions of the experiences of two or more subgrantees and a summary of the CHESP experience at the subgrantee level. The cases then conclude with a summary analysis that incorporates lessons

learned at both grantee and subgrantee levels and a general analysis from the perspective of the research team.¹⁵

¹⁵ In two cases, our research team deviated somewhat from this pattern. First, in the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning CHESP case study, we present two subgrantees and a combined subgrantee perspective drawn from two focus groups in which all subgrantees participated. Second, in the University of Pennsylvania's WEPIC Replication Project case study, we present each of the two models employed by the grantee in a separate section that encompasses both grantee and subgrantee level experiences.

Chapter Two

Colorado Department of Education: Youth As School and Community Organizers (YASCO)

Introduction

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<i>Website:</i>	http://www.cde.state.co.us/servicelearning/
<i>Grantee:</i>	Colorado Department of Education (SEA)
<i>Subgrantees:</i>	Four Regional Centers (two community based organizations, one local school district, one jointly managed HE/CBO)
<i>Initial CHESP funding:</i>	November, 2000
<i>Funding levels:</i>	Year one: \$450,000; year two: \$400,000; year three: \$400,000

This case study report describes the Youth As School and Community Organizers (YASCO) program, which is supported by a Community, Higher Education, and School Partnership (CHESP) grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service. YASCO is managed by Service-Learning Colorado, a unit of the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The program provides approximately \$70,000 per year in funds to each of four regional subgrantees: one is a K-12 school district in Grand Mesa County, two are led by community-based organizations in Fort Collins/Loveland and Durango, and one is jointly managed by a state Campus Compact and a community-based organization in Northwest Denver.

The Colorado CHESP program provides an example of a state education agency grantee that has developed a highly structured regional approach to CHESP. Colorado CHESP is distinguished by several key features: (1) sizeable subgrants to four regional partnerships in an effort to build a geographically-based infrastructure for service-learning across the state of Colorado; (2) an emphasis on youth voice through the mandatory development of youth advisory councils at the subgrantee level; (3) the use of a six month planning period through which subgrantees establish broad-based partnerships which can then engaged in more sophisticated planning and service delivery efforts; (4) training and technical assistance for subgrantees to promote increased breadth and depth of service-learning, alignment with state academic achievement standards and professional development for teachers; and (5) an impact evaluation of all federally-funded service-learning in the state, using experimental and comparison groups, conducted by a nationally-known, third-party professional evaluator.

This report presents a description and analysis of the planning and operation of CHESP in Colorado, first at the grantee level and then at the level of three regional subgrantees. The case study concludes with an analysis of the YASCO program including lessons learned.

Grantee-Level Discussion

This section of the case study report presents an overview of the background of the CHESP program in Colorado, describes grantee-level activities, and summarizes the key features of the grantee-level initiative.

Overview

Grantee Lead Organization: Colorado Department of Education

The Colorado CHESP initiative—Youth as School and Community Organizers (YASCO)—is managed by Service-Learning Colorado, a two-person office within the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Service-Learning Colorado also manages the Learn and Serve America K–12 programs, Learn and Serve community-based programs, and Colorado’s AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps*VISTA programs.

The two current staff members inherited a Colorado service-learning office that, in their opinion, was overwhelmed by practices that emphasized short-term activities and small gains. These included: (1) lack of clear vision and goals; (2) little to no state, district, or school level support for service-learning; and (3) an approach that centered on awarding small grants to individual teachers rather than supporting school-wide or district wide activities. According to the director, Service-Learning Colorado has used funding from a number of sources, including CHESP, to respond to the challenges of the past and present, transforming itself into a program focused on long-range systemic change toward a clear, thoughtful vision for a better future.

In 1999, CDE initiated a strategic planning process to articulate that vision and to increase the quality, impact, and sustainability for service-learning in the state. One result of that process was a new mission statement. Service-Learning Colorado’s revised mission is *to promote Service-Learning as a teaching method and school reform strategy that fosters academic learning and citizenship development in our youths while renewing Colorado’s communities.*¹ As part of the planning process, a broad coalition of representatives from higher education, K–12, the larger community, and statewide service partners met to develop a three-year strategic plan for service-learning in Colorado. This “vision team” identified and focused on the priorities of Service-Learning Colorado and laid the groundwork for YASCO. The vision team was discontinued in the fall of 2000 due to administrative restrictions within the Department of Education that prohibit units from developing outside advisory organizations.

¹ Service-Learning Colorado website. <http://www.cde.state.co.us/servicelearning/>

In January 2000, the Colorado service-learning director and a consultant colleague jointly prepared the state's CHESP grant application, which was funded in the summer of 2000.² Today, the two program staff and the consultant share core responsibilities for the YASCO program: the director provides overall leadership and helps link CHESP priorities and activities with the Service-Learning Colorado organization's broader goals and objectives; the service-learning consultant provides broad vision as well as day-to-day support; and the program coordinator works to build relationships between CHESP and other CDE activities and programs.

Goals

According to CDE staff, YASCO's overall purpose is to increase the *breadth of service-learning*, defined as the amount of service-learning across the state, and *depth of service-learning*, defined as the quality of service-learning, through the development of four large regional centers. It should be noted that the term "region" was not always interpreted to mean an entire geographic area that was pre-defined by the CDE. In order to accommodate the size and far-flung population centers of Colorado, the CHESP "regions" vary in size and scope. For instance, the Northwest portion of Denver was designated as a region. In the North and Southwest parts of the state, multiple counties were included in a region.

The strategic planning process developed a set of principles that were translated into four primary goals for YASCO:

- (1) Increasing the amount of quality service-learning programs for youth, communities and schools;
- (2) Increasing the impact of service-learning programs on youth;
- (3) Increasing the impact of service-learning programs on communities; and
- (4) Developing a regional infrastructure, including active three-way partnerships and regional youth advisory councils, to support service-learning efforts in four regions of the state.

In order to implement and accomplish these goals, CDE also saw the development of youth voice as a central strategy to their initiative.³

Grantee Partnership

At the grantee level Colorado has developed a "hub and spoke" model of partnership in which the three core CDE staff act as the "hub" and coordinate work with each of the partners, primarily on a one-on-one basis (rather than a process in which all partners meet and plan together). These partners are:

² At about the same time, Colorado was chosen to host the 2001 National Service-Learning Conference, and embarked on a planning process marked by an intense period of reflection, assessment, and planning for Service-Learning Colorado. Nearly one hundred practitioners and others, including 45 youth, joined together to plan the conference and improve local programs and their institutional supports.

³ As will be discussed later in this report, YASCO seeks to establish regional youth councils to promote quality service-learning.

- *Higher Education: Colorado Campus Compact.* This organization provides technical assistance, supports the development of higher education partners at local levels, and manages a statewide higher education AmeriCorps program that partners with YASCO sites.
- *Education Commission of the States (ECS).* This Denver-based national organization supports the development of state education policy and houses the National Center for Learning and Citizenship. ECS hosts CHESP advisory group meetings, develops resources for Service-Learning Colorado sites, and helped recruit local superintendents into the regional YASCO programs.
- *RMC Research.* A private research company that conducted an impact evaluation of YASCO and other service-learning efforts in the state, and presented findings to the subgrantees in the fall of 2002.

These grantee-level partners attend project events, participate in semi-annual strategic planning sessions, and meet frequently with CDE staff.

Program Management Structure

As mentioned earlier, CDE took a regional approach to the program structure of CHESP through the creation of service-learning infrastructure in four regions. This approach allowed Colorado CHESP to provide relatively large grants (just under \$70,000 per year) to a relatively small number of subgrantees⁴. One reason for taking this approach is that the large geographic size and difficult mountainous terrain in the state of Colorado make travel difficult, and henceforth program management a challenge.

Another reason for a regional approach is that it allowed CDE to take a “hands-on” approach to managing their subgrantees. According to the grantee leadership, they have been able to closely monitor the activities of the subgrantees because of the small number of subgrantees. CDE staff report that they and some of their grantee partners play the role of “critical friends” to the regional subgrantee coordinators through intensive (some times daily) telephone calls, site visits, e-mails, and regular mailings. In addition, grantee partner organizations have provided training, helped manage crises, and leveraged resources for subgrantees.⁵

The Colorado CHESP grantee has also managed its subgrantees with explicit standards and requirements. CDE requires its four subgrantees to provide monthly and year-end progress reports using a pre-established format/template and to revise mission statements and goals on an annual basis. In addition, the grantee asks to be kept informed of all regional events, activities and accomplishments by requiring each regional center director to document all aspects of the regional

⁴ Colorado had the largest subgrantee grants to the fewest number of subgrantees of any of the six case study sites that we visited.

⁵ For more detail, see Western Regional YASCO and Northwest Denver YASCO subgrantee cases later in this report.

YASCO center in a portfolio. As discussed elsewhere in this report, all subgrantees are also required to participate in the evaluation research with RMC.

Role of Other CNCS Programs (AmeriCorps*VISTA and AmeriCorps)

AmeriCorps*VISTA members play a critical role in both the state and regional YASCO program operations. A VISTA leader works in the Service-Learning Colorado office to support training and development for youth advisory councils in the four YASCO regions. In addition, each regional subgrantee is assigned two or three AmeriCorps*VISTA members, who support planning and operations. Locally, VISTA members work with youth advisory councils, help with evaluation, provide support to teachers, and facilitate the CHESP planning process at the regional level. In addition, Colorado Campus Compact links its AmeriCorps Careers for the Common Good program to YASCO in the Western Regional YASCO and Denver regions, providing opportunities for college and high school youth to explore careers through service-learning internships.

Grantee-Level Program Activities

Subgrantee Selection and Initial Planning Processes

Using an RFP process restricted to a small group of applicants, Service-Learning Colorado selected four subgrantee partners to participate in its CHESP program. One of the selection criteria was that sites already had to have well-established service-learning programs. Three of the selected sites—Mesa County (Western Region), Durango, and Fort Collins/Loveland—met this criterion. Denver was selected as the fourth site to represent the largest metropolitan region in the state, although it did not fully meet the criterion.

A unique feature of Colorado CHESP was the requirement that subgrantees complete a six-month strategic planning process (with a \$2500 mini-grant from CHESP) prior to receiving full funding. The goal of the planning process was to build a broad-based regional partnership within each region, prior to beginning implementation of the YASCO service-learning initiative. CHESP leaders at the subgrantee level agreed to participate in the process; after the six-month period all four regional centers were deemed to have succeeded in their regional planning efforts and were allowed to proceed to implementing their plans.⁶

CDE officials believe that this initial planning period was a worthwhile investment for YASCO subgrantees because it allowed them to conduct the kind of in-depth planning and partnership development activities that would not have been possible under other circumstances, yielding better thought-out programming. In addition, they note another benefit of including an upfront six-month planning process in their CHESP proposal was that the first full year of CHESP funding for Colorado

⁶ It is important to note that due to implementation of a six-month planning period at the grantee level, Colorado's CHESP program developed an extended funding cycle for subgrantees that began the six-month planning period under of renewal and CNCS funding in January 2001 and funding continued in-line with the July-June Fiscal year of Colorado state government for three years. *Given this extended funding cycle, YASCO subgrantee programs were still in year two at the time of the site visits with funding already committed for year three.*

CHESP subgrantees began July 2001, and year three of CHESP funding will end in June 2004. This enabled them to extend their YASCO subgrantee funding for three and a half years and aligned the YASCO funding cycle with the fiscal year of the Colorado Department of Education.

Technical Assistance and Training

CDE provided intensive technical assistance and training to the four regional coordinators, with the belief that the regional coordinators would then conduct similar support efforts for their partners within their regions. YASCO grantee and partners work with subgrantees through frequent communication and in-person events such as semi-annual directors meetings, annual regional service-learning institutes, and periodic state service-learning conferences. In addition, CDE staff and grantee-level partners attended regional training events such as annual community organization summits in each region, “youth summits” and retreats, and specialized workshops to provide training at each of the four regional centers.

YASCO’s technical assistance and training strategy includes three primary areas: (1) providing a conceptual framework for subgrantees to understand progress in increasing the breadth and depth of service-learning; (2) promoting an alignment with state academic standards; and (3) maintaining an emphasis on professional development for teachers.⁷

As staff of an office within the Colorado Department of Education, Service-Learning Colorado leadership recognized the importance of the educational standards movement in reshaping Colorado schools.⁸ As such, in the second year of CHESP, the grantee worked with subgrantees to align their service-learning work to state standards in two ways. First, Colorado CHESP leaders provided training to regional directors around Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) standards, the high-stakes academic test administered to all schools in Colorado. The grantee requires YASCO regional directors to demonstrate how local service-learning efforts will produce positive academic results as measured by the CSAP test. In some cases, youth advisory councils have taken the lead by linking their service-learning work to CSAP standards. Second, in 2002, Service-Learning Colorado collaborated with the Education Commission of the States (ECS) to produce a publication entitled, *Creating High Performing Schools through Service-Learning: A Trail Guide to High Performance by Service-Learning Colorado*. This publication helps sites link their ongoing service-learning initiatives to Colorado academic standards.

Finally, CDE awards professional development credit for K–12 teachers who attend statewide service-learning conferences or directors meetings. Such activities apply toward the 90 hours required for teachers’ license renewal in Colorado.

⁷ CDE’s technical assistance and training begins with the conceptualization of the breadth and depth of service-learning in two one-page documents: (1) *Breadth* of service-learning is illustrated through a graphic of three interlocking “circles of influence” Community Partnership, Organizational Factors, and Quality Practice and Implementation, with youth at the center and (2) *Depth* is illustrated through the *Continuum of Service-Learning* engagement, including awareness, understanding, commitment, and investment.

⁸ The educational standards movement has become policy in forty nine states since President Bush signed into law the *No Child Left Behind* Act in 2001.

Promoting Youth Voice

As mentioned above, YASCO seeks to “put youth at the center” of their programs. They have primarily attempted to do this through the development of regional youth advisory councils. Youth advisory councils, based in schools, provide an opportunity for youth to play a central role in managing service-learning projects and advocating for service-learning in more classes and as part of school policies. These school-based youth advisory councils organize regional summits, align service-learning outcomes to statewide academic standards, and advocate with teachers, administrators, and school boards on behalf of service-learning.

CDE staff members provide training and support to develop youth leadership through statewide youth summits and summer retreats as well as opportunities to attend national and statewide conferences and meetings with adult partners. Through the development of regional youth advisory councils on service-learning, YASCO hopes to build a statewide infrastructure to empower youth to influence their schools and communities.

At this point, youth advisory councils have primarily operated at the local school level in all four regions. The plans for youth advisory councils representing entire regions have only taken hold in the Fort Collins/Loveland and Southwest Colorado regional subgrantees.⁹

Internal Evaluation Activities

Service-Learning Colorado staff report that they have embraced the idea of rigorous evaluations as an important element of CHESP. In 2001, Service-Learning Colorado contracted with RMC Research Corporation to evaluate its three major grant programs of which CHESP is one. As part of this process, researchers compared classrooms where service-learning was part of the curriculum with “traditional” classrooms without service-learning, and administered pre- and post surveys to students in both. Researchers also gathered other performance data including student attendance, discipline referrals, grade point average (GPA), and CSAP scores for both groups.¹⁰

Grantee-Level Discussion Summary

The Colorado CHESP initiative, YASCO, demonstrates a highly structured regional approach to CHESP led by an office within a state education agency, Colorado Department of Education’s Service-Learning Colorado. The goals and approach that CDE took to CHESP emerged from a broader strategic planning process that addressed the future of service-learning in Colorado. Primary among these goals has been to increase the breadth and depth of service-learning within the state.

At the grantee level, CDE has formed a “hub-and-spoke” partnership with the Colorado Campus Compact, Education Commission of the States, and RMC Research—each of whom carries out a discrete role and defined function within the overall CHESP initiative.

⁹ Examples are discussed later in this report as part of subgrantee discussions.

¹⁰ See “Overall Reported Progress” later in this case study for a discussion of the results of this evaluation.

YASCO employs a regional approach to CHESP that has helped create a sub-state infrastructure in a state where the geography poses an obstacle to frequent travel and in-person meetings. This also allowed Colorado to divide their CHESP grant into larger funding amounts among fewer subgrantees—while still covering a significant portion of the population for the state of Colorado and maintaining a hands-on approach to monitoring subgrantees.

Grantee leadership points to several other important innovations to the CHESP model that characterize YASCO:

- A six-month planning period for subgrantees partner development, prior to the awarding of full funding.
- Training and technical assistance to conceptualize the breadth and depth of service-learning and help subgrantees strategize around how to move youth, educators, administrators, community members or policymakers through a “continuum of service-learning engagement.”
- Linking service-learning efforts in each region to state academic standards through training and technical assistance.
- Professional development training for teachers in service-learning.
- The development of youth advisory councils to promote youth voice.
- The intentional incorporation of AmeriCorps*VISTA members to help staff the CHESP program at the grantee level and within each regional subgrantee.
- A commitment to continuous improvement through impact evaluation activities by external evaluators.

Subgrantee-Level Descriptions

The following section describes three of the four YASCO subgrantees. Data were collected during two sets of site visits in the spring and the fall of 2002, and is supplemented both by conversations with grantee-level contacts and reviews of written reports and portfolios.

Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO Subgrantee

Overview

This case study describes a youth-initiated CHESP subgrantee program that is led by a community-based organization, First Call. First Call is an information and referral center with reported access to about 1,000 community organizations within Larimer County, and over 10,000 agencies across the state of Colorado. First Call also hosts Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO partnership, the CHESP subgrantee that encompasses most of Larimer County, a large (2,640 square mile) region approximately sixty miles north of Denver.

Background, and Implementation

The Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO program was initiated by a spontaneous request from a group of youth at a 1999 community forum: they wanted to be more involved with the community. The adult community responded when teachers, administrators, higher education representatives, and staff from several community-based organizations collaborated with the youth on a service-learning initiative. The group was delighted to learn about the opportunity to apply for CHESP funding, which they hoped would provide training, support, and infrastructure to the emerging vision.

In their application to YASCO, First Call emerged as the lead partner for the initiative. Indeed, as a CBO that hosts an information center where citizens can access more than one thousand social service agencies—with plans to expand its service area to include ten thousand agencies—First Call seems to be an ideal organization to lead the community-wide partnership and link students to service-learning needs. According to several key partners, “First Call is in the position of using its database of intake calls to provide a barometer of community needs.”

Subgrantee Partnership

The Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO Partnership represents a model of a three-way partnership with a strong lead. The partners meet at monthly YASCO advisory council meetings and have been involved with drafting the proposal and planning the overall subgrantee initiative. The key subgrantee partners are:

- *CBO lead partner:* First Call’s Youth Service-Learning and Volunteer Program is the lead community-based partner.
- *Higher education partner:* Colorado State University Center for Service-Learning and College of Education are the higher education partners.
- *K-12 partners:* Lincoln Junior High School and the Poudre School District are the *K–12* school partners.
- *Other community partners:* The City of Fort Collins and Trees, Water, and People are CBO partners that are most involved in the local YASCO. Other community organizations also participate as service-learning sites.

Local Management Structures

Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO has grown since it began in Spring 2001 from seven schools, five partners, and one and one-half staff, to eight schools, seven partners (listed above) and three and one-half staff (including two AmeriCorps*VISTA members). This regional YASCO partnership is largely run by the First Call staff, with an advisory council made up of its partners.

During its six-month planning period, the advisory council worked with the regional youth advisory council—the Student Community Involvement Team (SCIT)—to develop a comprehensive strategic plan. The SCIT ensures that youth leadership remains a central component to the program. Twenty-five SCIT members from schools throughout the region meet weekly to increase service-learning participation through community presentations, training, youth-led community projects, and

recognition events. AmeriCorps*VISTAs provide central support in the Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO in several ways, including identifying curriculum for middle schools and providing support, guidance, and training to both regional and school-based youth councils. SCIT members also attended statewide and national conferences with program leadership.

Project Descriptions

The purpose of Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO is to promote an ethic of service, foster youth leadership, build community, and enhance education through service-learning pedagogy in Larimer County. The Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO Partnership has organized much of its service delivery through a “cascading” model of partnership in which more than sixty higher education pre-service teachers work with K–12 students on service-learning projects in the community to deepen the practice of service and learning for participants at all levels. Activities include the following:

- *Coordinating projects.* Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO coordinates joint service projects between higher education, K–12 schools, and community organizations. First Call’s close partnership with the College of Education and the Center for Service-Learning at Colorado State University (CSU) provides opportunities for university students to partner with K–12 teachers on specific service-learning projects. For example, over 60 CSU pre-service teachers served in the region’s K–12 schools with AmeriCorps support and received course credit for doing so. Through this community led partnership, Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO works with Lincoln Junior High School and the Poudre School District to engage more than eight hundred K–12 students per year in service-learning activities.
- *Training.* Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO training initiatives target youth, educators, and agencies. Youth training takes place through the youth advisory councils and focuses on service-learning, mentoring, leadership, and organizational skills. First Call and Colorado State University worked together to provide *joint* training for K–12 teachers and higher education faculty. As of November 2002, more than 100 K–12 teachers and higher education faculty have been trained in service-learning methods. Program organizers report that joint training helps to build connections between higher education faculty and K-12 teachers
- *Providing resources.* Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO provides both in-kind and financial resources to support service-learning. For example, trained teachers receive mini-grants from CHESP. One mini-grant supported a ninth-grade biology class’s efforts to educate elementary students about endangered species. In another example, high school students were “buddies” with local senior citizens. The results of all mini-grants were documented as part of class projects.
- *Supporting curriculum.* First Call staff and VISTA members provide information and curricular support in classroom projects. One such project was the “Hunger Math Curriculum,” which connected middle school math students with hunger-based service projects. For example, a junior high math class graphed hunger statistics for a local food bank, then volunteered throughout the year to help the food bank meet the needs identified through the students’ research. After September 11, another school worked with the United Way to create peace bracelets for children in New York City. As part of

this project, students wrote reflections that met language arts, social studies, and cultural diversity standards.

- *Increasing quality and quantity of service-learning in Larimer County.* The Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO coordinator encourages K–12 teachers, principals, and superintendents in the region to incorporate service-learning into their operations and policies. She regularly met with teachers and superintendents to “help them see [that] service-learning is in their own self-interest.”

Western Regional YASCO (in Mesa County) Subgrantee

Overview

Western Regional YASCO, led by the Grand Junction School district, serves a broad rural district in Mesa County. After struggling to form a broad-based partnership in its first year, Western Regional YASCO developed a new strategic plan in its second year (summer 2002)—this time with better results. Under the supportive eye of the grantee, Western Regional YASCO established a broad-based network of school coordinators, developed a vital partnership with Mesa College, and strengthened ties to several community-based organizations to form a three-way service-learning partnership. From these improvements emerged an experienced service-learning model school—Grand Junction High School (GJHS)—that is using the YASCO model to replicate service-learning in schools across the region.

Background, and Implementation

Prior to CHESP, GJHS has received national attention and recognition as a pioneer in service-learning practice, in part because of the work of a single teacher who has helped numerous students develop as service-learning leaders. When that teacher was promoted to direct a community partnership initiative for the school district, she recruited a broad range of community organizations to participate in the shared vision process. However, the process seemed to stall and was abandoned by the director. According to the director, “We had the wrong people at our initial strategic planning meetings. We brought together the queen bees and should have invited the worker bees. Now, it feels like we need to start the process all over again.”

After this rocky strategic planning process, Western YASCO struggled to implement the CHESP model of a three-way partnership, and instead, focused on developing the service-learning and youth council activity in two schools (Grand Mesa Middle School and Dos Rios Elementary) to serve as models. At the end of year one, due to unrelated and unforeseen budget problems, Grand Mesa discontinued its involvement as a model school.

In the summer of 2002, Western YASCO leadership, with the guidance and intensive support of the grantee, developed a new strategic plan emphasizing a network of coordinators at local schools. Also, they reallocated funding to provide small financial support for coordinator/teachers to infuse service-learning in nine schools of different grade levels. They also offered a free credit-bearing graduate service-learning course for K–12 teachers. After the course, the newly-trained teachers continued to meet monthly as a council—receiving additional re-certification credit for their attendance—to share

resources, provide peer mentoring around using service-learning in their classes, and to plan a service-learning advisory board of students, community partners, higher education and teachers.

Meanwhile, the school district director of community partnerships and the leader of Colorado Campus Compact initiated meetings with the Mesa College president whom they convinced to join Campus Compact and participate in the AmeriCorps Careers for the Common Good program. According to the regional YASCO coordinator, this invigorated the higher education role in the regional partnership.

Subgrantee Partnership

In its second year, the Western Regional YASCO partnership functions as a “hub and spoke” partnership. The partners include:

- *Lead K–12 district:* Mesa County school district serves as the “hub” of the partnership. The Western Regional YASCO coordinator provides support to each of the other partners, as separate “spokes.”
- *K–12 schools:* One pilot site, Dos Rios, continues to receive intensive support for its service-learning efforts. In addition, nine K–12 schools—two high schools, two middle schools, and five elementary schools in the Grand Junction district—have a teacher or staff person who receives a small stipend as a service-learning coordinator. VISTA members provide support at each school.
- *Higher education partner:* Mesa State College is involved with Western Regional YASCO through participation in the Careers for the Common Good Program which brings high school students into training programs for public service with special attention to the needs of homeland security (nursing, fire management, etc.).
- *Community partners:* City Manager of Grand Junction, United Way, Rotary Club, and local businesses provide financial support and participate in youth programs with Western Regional YASCO such as Youth on Board.
- *Youth:* Regional youth council has organized around district-wide initiatives, service projects, and events including a youth summit and an advisory group to the city manager.

During its second year, Western Regional YASCO has deepened the role of its community partners, such as the United Way, the Rotary Club, and local businesses. In particular, the subgrantee is working with the United Way to support service-learning in neighborhoods by establishing a local non-profit organization. While these plans are still in the early stage of development, the organization hopes to have an independent board of directors and seeks to leverage the support of local groups and businesses on behalf of the Western YASCO partnership.

Local Management Structures

As described above, in its second year, Western YASCO adopted a new management structure with the four key features: (1) a district-wide incorporation of service-learning as the mission of the school district; (2) the full-time presence of a Western YASCO coordinator; (3) the emergence of a broad-

base coalition of teachers with an interest in service-learning; and (4) the formation of an active three-way network of partners who contribute to the new strategic plan for the region.

Western YASCO has recently created a service-learning advisory board for Mesa County comprised of practitioners, administrators, local business people, a lawyer, and a CPA. This group will create a long-term vision and strategic plan for the next three years of service-learning in their region. In addition, the school district has allocated funds to support the district service-learning coordinator position, a significant accomplishment in a time of massive budget cuts.

Western Regional YASCO developed a regional youth advisory council that began organizing around a youth summit and a multicultural dinner. The youth developed and presented the plans to the district, but an administrator from the district reviewed their plans and did not consider them to be feasible. According to the coordinator, the group lost momentum after that experience. In Year Three, the coordinator has re-initiated the regional youth advisory council with training for youth to serve on the boards of organizations (Youth On Board) and an emerging partnership with the city manager to involve youth in local government.

Project Descriptions

The Western Regional partnership seeks to develop a culture of service-learning in area schools through activities with each set of partners, including the following activities.

- *Providing resources.* In the Dos Rios Elementary School, 60 percent of teachers were engaged in service-learning activities in the fall of 2002. The school's family resource center secured health and educational resources for 150 students who were engaged in service-learning projects related to the service the students themselves had received. For example, one student who received glasses from the center created a brochure highlighting easy ways to detect vision problems in younger siblings and children.
- *Training.* The Western Regional YASCO provided a free summer training institute for teachers who received re-certification credits for attending. These teachers formed the network of service-learning coordinators at 13 of the district's 40 schools.
- *Coordinating projects.* Twenty-three youth advisory council members created five service-learning projects, all of which incorporated reflection, were student-led, and were connected to academic class work and curriculum. One such project, led by Operation P.A.C.T. (Perceptions Actively Changed by Teens), involved a conference focusing on how teens and adults perceive each other. In another project, AmeriCorps members who were also Mesa State College students worked with high school students to translate Colorado standards into a "common language" that both youth and adults could understand.

After an initial stumble, Western Regional YASCO was able to recover and initiate positive changes. The willingness of both grantee and subgrantee leadership to recognize problems and adapt as needed was instrumental to achieving these changes.

Northwest Denver YASCO

Overview, Background, and Implementation

The Northwest Denver YASCO is jointly managed by a state Campus Compact and a CBO called EarthForce. Campus Compact provides the fiscal oversight while EarthForce provides daily management and office space to the initiative. The subgrantee seeks to promote youth voice and action through service-learning programs in the Northwest Denver region schools. Unlike the other three regional centers, Northwest Denver's YASCO started without the benefit of an existing infrastructure; it was launched through the initiative of the Colorado Service-Learning vision team in 2001. This section provides a description of a newly-formed CHESP initiative that operates in a major metropolitan region.

When it was formed, Northwest Denver YASCO pulled together a broad advisory group to develop a regional strategic plan for service-learning in the Denver Region. During the six-month planning period, subgrantee leadership determined that the Denver Public School System was too large to accomplish this purpose, especially given the resources available to the YASCO initiative. As a result, the advisory group targeted the northwest quadrant of Denver Public Schools: an area that consists of 28 schools with both a strong history of service-learning and a high level of community activism. Given this new focus, the partnership moved from the University of Denver's service-learning program (located in Southeast Denver) to EarthForce (located in Northwest Denver)—a community-based environment education/service-learning organization long known for its commitment to school involvement.

Subgrantee Partnership

Northwest Denver YASCO is still evolving, but appears to be moving toward a partnership demonstrating close relationships among CBOs, higher education, and K–12 schools. Campus Compact (through the University of Denver) provides the fiscal and managerial oversight to Northwest Denver YASCO. With a mission that encourages a model of strong school and community collaboration Earth Force is the Denver YASCO's key day-to-day partner. Earth Force provides technical support, project management, leadership, and office space for the YASCO coordinator. Other regional partners include:

- *K–12 schools.* Nine out of 28 schools in the northwest quadrant of the Denver public school system actively participate in this partnership.
- *Higher education partners.* University of Denver service-learning program, Regis College, and Metropolitan State College of Denver.
- *Community partners:* Metro-Volunteers of Denver United Way and Northwest Coalition 4 Better Schools.

Local Management Structure

During its six-month planning period, Northwest Denver YASCO developed a thriving advisory committee, through which a balanced three-way partnership seems to be emerging. The advisory

committee—the YASCO Council for Northwest Denver—meets monthly and brings together representatives of higher education (Campus Compact, University of Denver, and Regis College); several community organizations; and students and staff from several K–12 schools. The council has developed a committee structure that addresses regional Colorado’s high stakes test, organizes spring training, and builds stronger partnerships between schools, community groups, and higher education.

Nine K-12 schools have signed contracts as partners with the Northwest Denver YASCO program; in return, they will receive support from three YASCO AmeriCorps*VISTA members to support the relationships with these schools and help develop the school-based youth councils. In each of these schools, Youth councils have initiated service-learning activities and advocated for the adoption of service-learning in classrooms.

Project Description

In the 2002–2003 school year, Northwest Denver YASCO has strengthened its partnerships with K–12 schools and with higher education. YASCO staff conducted a service-learning regional inventory of the 28 schools in the region. The Northwest Denver YASCO program has collaborated with both higher education and K–12 on a number of projects, including:

- *Training.* Two teacher training sessions with over 35 teachers were conducted with faculty from Regis College School of Education.
- *Advancing service-learning.* In collaboration with the University of Denver, Northwest Denver YASCO participates in a Public Achievement Grant, the purpose of which is to apply a model developed by Harry Boyte to infuse civic education and service-learning pedagogy in teacher preparation programs. Eighteen University of Denver students and four community volunteers work weekly with 140 sixth graders from Cole Middle School to conduct a community inventory of needs and assets and to plan and implement service-learning projects.
- *Working with K–12 schools.* Northwest Denver YASCO has established partnerships with nine local schools, providing mini-grants for school-wide service-learning activities that are linked to state academic standards. In one example, the Denver YASCO coordinator and a team of youth organized a party for more than one hundred teachers, in appreciation for their work administering state standardized tests in their schools. According to the coordinator, this event strengthened the bonds between Northwest Denver YASCO and teachers in the schools and led to three of the nine schools that established partnerships with Northwest Denver YASCO.

Subgrantee-Level Discussion

All three YASCO subgrantees that we visited for this study spoke enthusiastically about the success of CHESP in their state. They identified numerous positive aspects of CHESP - - especially CHESP’s commitment to three years of funding, development of three-way partnerships, and support and training from Service-Learning Colorado and its partners (particularly Colorado Campus Compact).

Subgrantees highlight several accomplishments:

- Developing effective three-way partnerships that meet regularly and often work collaboratively on developing youth voice and/or service-learning projects (*all subgrantees*).
- Deepening and expanding service-learning practices through youth council leadership (*select schools*).
- Encouraging service-learning youth advisory councils at the regional level to work together on specific projects such as organizing youth summits or conferences. However, in several instances, adults have noted a decline in regional youth advisory council attendance unless there is a clear reason to meet.
- Staffing YASCO programs with AmeriCorps*VISTA members who provide an important source of support and development to youth advisory councils in the schools of all four regions.

As the Western Regional YASCO and Denver sites demonstrate especially well, projects may face unexpected challenges and require leadership and adaptability. Grantee leaders identified a number of elements that helped these partnerships thrive: the good will of partners who contributed more time and energy than is apparent on paper, sharing common ground, developing trust and patience, developing a clear vision, and having the funds to pay a staff person to develop and coordinate regional activities.

Summary Analysis

Grantee and Subgrantee Perspectives

Overall Reported Progress

The Colorado CHESP grantee reports significant progress on all of its four primary goals—i.e., increasing the amount of quality service-learning programs for youth, communities, and schools; increasing the impact of service-learning programs on youth; increasing the impact of service-learning programs on communities; and developing a regional infrastructure to support service-learning efforts in four regions of the state.

Reports from the grantee and subgrantees, supported by the RMC research described in this case study, lead Colorado CHESP leadership to conclude that YASCO and Colorado's other service-learning efforts are indeed beginning to have an impact on youth.¹¹ In year one (2001–2002),

¹¹ RMC methods included a combination of focus groups with YASCO CHESP subgrantee coordinators and partners, teacher surveys, service-learning student surveys and a comparison group survey. A pool of service-learning classrooms and comparison classrooms were provided by the subgrantee based on a set of criteria developed by the researchers. A copy of the full evaluation report is available on the Service-Learning Colorado website: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/servicelearning>

statistically significant differences between the service-learning and comparison groups were reported in the following areas:

- *Overall GPA.* Service-learning students reported higher grade-point averages than their peers in comparison groups.
- *Change in GPA over time.* Service-learning students' GPAs increased, while comparison group students' GPAs in comparison groups decreased over time.
- *CSAP scores in reading, writing, and math.* Similarly, service-learning students fared better in this category than did their peers in the comparison groups.

This initial RMC research report suggests that YASCO has made significant progress toward its goal of impacting youth. For the sake of this case study report, however, we note two areas of caution in the interpretation of these conclusions: (1) the published data includes only the first year of the CHESP program; and (2) youth impact results were not disaggregated by type of service-learning program, but rather, included service-learning funded from several funding sectors, including both CHESP and regular Learn and Serve America.

Both grantees and subgrantees report successful development of four active and dynamic regional partnerships as well as the initiation of numerous activities that promote service-learning in those regions.

In addition, YASCO appears to have established ongoing regional youth councils in Fort Collins/Loveland and Durango (Southwestern Colorado)¹². On the other hand, while more than fifteen school-level youth councils were created in all four regions, it was more difficult to sustain regional councils in the other two YASCO regions. The reasons for this appear to vary from region to region. In the case of Northwest Denver YASCO, the subgrantee leaders attribute the problem to the fact that they were starting from scratch as an initiative and were just developing solid relationships with schools. In the case of Western Regional YASCO, the regional group began strong, but faltered due to a question about the appropriateness of the young people's plan by a district administrator. As noted earlier, in its third year, Western Regional YASCO is developing new structures to support the development of a regional youth advisory council.

Replication and Sustainability

Although the YASCO programs are only in the second year of their grant period, Colorado service-learning leaders believe that all four CHESP-initiated regional centers will find enough diversified institutional support to sustain their structures and programs beyond the period of the grant. In year three, Service-Learning Colorado plans to work with sites to develop detailed sustainability plans. Progress toward sustainability is already being reported in Fort Collins/Loveland YASCO where the school district has committed funds to support regional service-learning efforts in the future.

¹² Although Southwest YASCO was not among the case study sites, this data is based on a brief interview with that regional coordinator during the November 2003 Regional Directors meeting.

YASCO leadership also sees potential for replication of its programs. If selected for another round of CHESP funding CDE plans to replicate YASCO’s success in new regions across the state. In addition, CHESP-related research and evaluation tools, models and lessons learned have been presented at several national service-learning conferences and the Service-Learning Colorado provides lessons, tools and information available for replication.

Recommendations for Improving the CHESP Model

Despite having high praise for both CHESP as a program and CNCS as a funder, CDE staff and partners have offered several suggestions for further program improvement, including:

- (1) Align the funding cycle of the CHESP grants and subgrants with school district planning and operation cycles. It is not optimal to release funding mid-year.
- (2) Provide incentives for state department of education staff beyond the service-learning specialists to support and participate in service-learning activities.
- (3) Emphasize youth voice and capacity building throughout Learn and Serve America.
- (4) Fund programs for more than three years. While three years are better than one, developing and implementing effective and sustainable partnerships that result in meaningful school change may take longer.
- (5) Pay more attention to evaluation results for future funding and program decisions.
- (6) Maintain the “goals and objectives” worksheets to focus on measurable activities.

Implications and Lessons

As noted throughout this case study report, several elements and approaches taken in the YASCO model appear to provide benefits that might be useful to other programs, including:

- *Employment of a six-month strategic planning process.* A broad-based six-month planning process was credited with helping to solidify a common vision among the subgrantee partners that would not have been possible without this six-month period before implementation was to begin.¹³
- *Strategies to Promote Youth Voice.* As noted throughout this report, YASCO has put youth at the center of their program. The cases of Northwest Denver YASCO and Western Regional YASCO show that it can be difficult to both create and sustain structures to support youth voice that represent regions beyond local school settings. The YASCO experience thus far seems to show that youth from different schools and grades work together most effectively when they have a clear, achievable, common objective such as developing a youth summit.

¹³ It should be noted that the process initially fell short in the Western Regional YASCO subgrantee site, causing them to struggle in their first year of full CHESP funding. But, with help from the grantee and a grantee partner to develop a new strategic plan and recruit a higher education partner, the site developed a more fully representative three-way partnership in its third year.

- *Value of regional approach.* Grantees and subgrantees generally praised the regional approach of the YASCO model. It has provided higher levels of funding to these sites than would otherwise have been possible and allowed the grantee to focus on the needs of only four subgrantees. It should be noted, however, that defining a “region” is by no means a simple task. For example, none of the three regional partnership subgrantees in these case studies represented their *entire* geographic region as the terms are often used in Colorado. Colorado CHESP participants take different lessons from this experience. Some believe that it requires more time to build comprehensive infrastructures in the large regions originally defined than has been possible under CHESP. However, others question the feasibility of regional infrastructures over so large a geographic region and recommend focusing on smaller, more compact regions.
- *A Multi-Strategy Training and Technical Assistance Approach to a Target Audience.* YASCO emphasizes a “multi-strategy approach to training and technical assistance”. Most training is provided from the grantee to the regional coordinators, who in turn, help educate their partners about service-learning (K-12, HE, and CBO). The grantee also works with regional coordinators to organize trainings to a broader group of students, teachers, and policy makers through statewide and regional conferences and events. In addition, complex topics are presented in a simple easy to understand manner, as suggested by the two page handouts that conceptualize the breadth and depth of service-learning. Training topics respond to the demands that teachers already recognize—namely—high stakes academic testing and professional development.

Taken as a whole, the Colorado case reinforces an important lesson: creation of meaningful partnerships takes work, time, and commitment, but there are clear benefits to those who succeed. The recent RMC research evaluation conducted in Colorado supports the program’s belief that the service-learning strategies undertaken by Colorado CHESP is leading to the intended expansions in breadth and depth of service-learning.

Chapter Three

Community Chest, Inc.: Nevada Service-Learning Partnership

Introduction

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<i>Website:</i>	http://www.nevadaservicelearning.org/Projects.html
<i>Organization (Type):</i>	Community Chest, Inc. (GME)
<i>Subgrantees:</i>	Five community-based organizations
<i>Initial CHESP funding:</i>	October 2000, (<i>Subgrantees: February 2001</i>)
<i>Funding levels:</i>	Year one: \$500,000; year two: \$500,000; year three: \$450,000

This case study report describes the Nevada Service-Learning Partnership (NSLP), a CHESP program funded in October 2000 by the Corporation for National and Community Service. The grantee, the Community Chest, Inc. (CCI), is a private, nonprofit, grantmaking entity based in Virginia City, Nevada. The Nevada CHESP project currently has five subgrantees: four that are community-based organizations and one that is a school-based partnership. Each subgrantee program is unique in its service-learning activities and program goals.

The report begins with a description of the grantee program background and implementation and then moves on to descriptions of three subgrantees—the Storey-Lyon Service-Learning Program, the Truckee-Tahoe CHESP Service-Learning Program, and BEST Coalition for a Safe and Drug Free Nevada, a nonprofit community service agency located in Las Vegas. It ends with analyses of the CHESP experiences from various perspectives.

The case study sheds particular insights into the design and implementation of the CHESP program in relation to two key factors: (1) the role of nonprofit community-based organizations in both the lead grantee and lead subgrantee roles; and (2) the use of innovative mechanisms designed to promote an active voice and role for young people.

Grantee-Level Discussion

Overview

Lead Grantee Organization: Community Chest, Inc.

Community Chest, Inc. (CCI) is a nonprofit, community-based, grantmaking entity based in Virginia City. CCI has a long history of service-learning, having been in operation since 1990 and has an annual operating budget of approximately \$1.2 million. Since 1994, CCI has served as the fiscal agent and lead coordinating and training center for service-learning in Nevada in partnership with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). CCI has also been the subcontractor for the Nevada Department of Education's K–12 Learn and Serve programs since 1996.

In 1997, CCI and its community, school, and higher education partners established the Nevada Service-Learning Partnership (NSLP), a loosely structured collaboration of people interested in service-learning. The NSLP grew out of the Pinion Service Project—a Higher Education Learn and Serve/AmeriCorps demonstration project funded in 1994. The NSLP meets twice a year to develop and coordinate service-learning efforts across the state of Nevada and in California's Lake Tahoe Basin. The NSLP was the guiding force in creating the Nevada CHESP project and the CHESP project has retained its name.

Community Chest, Inc. currently contracts with the Center for Partnership Evaluation at UNR to provide overall CHESP program administration and management and to conduct the local evaluation of the CHESP initiative. The Center is part of the University's Department of Human and Community Services. The CHESP program director, the former director of NDE's Learn and Serve program, manages the day-to-day operations and implementation of the project. Two other CCI staff, the business manager and the youth facilitator, together with the project facilitator and director, form the project management team. The NSLP collaboration currently serves as the CHESP project advisory group.

Goals

The NSLP CHESP program proposed two major strategies aimed at expanding and strengthening service-learning and addressing compelling needs across the state:

- State-wide public advocacy, education, and outreach to increase general support for service-learning as an educational reform strategy with the ultimate goal of creating a sustainable and cohesive infrastructure to support local partnerships during and after the three-year CHESP grant; and

- Getting things done in local communities across Nevada and the Lake Tahoe basin while strengthening existing and developing new community, higher education, and school partnerships (through subgrants to five existing partnerships).¹

Initially, based on reported statewide needs, the grantee recommended that the subgrantees focus on three community issues: homelessness, literacy, and the environment. As the grant got underway, however, the grantee revised these recommendations to include the major priorities determined by the youth leadership teams, specifically, reducing substance abuse and alcohol use, creating safe spaces for youth, and increasing involvement of youth as decision makers.

Grantee Partnership

The Nevada Service-Learning Partnership operates as a centrally managed effort in which a higher education entity, the Center for Partnership Evaluation at the University of Nevada, Reno takes the lead in program design and development, working with other key partners on an as-needed basis. The primary grantee-level partners for the NSLP CHESP are:

- *The Center for Partnership Evaluation at UNR.* The Center provides technical assistance and evaluation services to local service-learning and other community partnership programs. Administrative functions include employing the CHESP project director and an administrative assistant for the project; coordinating and disseminating curriculum development, partnership training, and other project-related materials and publications; and maintaining records of in-kind contributions.
- *Volunteerism in Progress (VIP) program at UNR --* VIP promotes volunteerism and community service among students and faculty at the University. Prior to its participation in the CHESP program, VIP had not been involved in service-learning. Now, VIP collaborates with the CHESP program to increase awareness of service-learning among students and faculty across all six campuses that constitute the University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN). In collaboration with CHESP, VIP coordinates presentations and training activities for UCCSN faculty and workshops for community-based organizations. In the first year of CHESP, VIP received a \$10,000 grant from the UNR Office of Academic Careers to mentor several UNR faculty to incorporate service-learning into their classes. Their professional mentoring activities have continued in the program's second year with two new faculty members.
- *The Volunteer Center of Southern Nevada.* The Volunteer Center of Southern Nevada, located in Las Vegas, is one of three volunteer centers in the state. Prior to CHESP, the Volunteer Center had not been involved with either CCI or with service-learning. As a CHESP partner, the Center's initial role was to help identify potential subgrantees and conduct outreach to the communities. Once the subgrantees were selected, the Center's role shifted to support the Bringing Everybody's Strengths Together (BEST) CHESP subgrantee in Las Vegas in their attempts to connect community-based organizations with teachers and schools. Unfortunately this has not worked out as planned, possibly due

¹ Community Chest, Inc., Nevada Service-Learning Partnership, Learn and Serve America CHESP Grant Application, March 2000.

to miscommunication between the two agencies, and consequently the Volunteer Center has taken on other initiatives to promote service-learning (for example, establishing a youth council to develop and implement service-learning activities within the Las Vegas community).

- *Nevada Commission for National and Community Service (NCNCS)*. The NCNCS, along with the Points of Light Foundation, jointly sponsor a “Yes Ambassador” to work in the CHESP program. The Yes Ambassador has a dual role: to promote service-learning among youth and to facilitate CHESP grantee program activities.
- *Nevada State Office of the Corporation for National and Community Service*. The Corporation’s state office supports the CHESP program by providing VISTA members.

The CHESP program also collaborates with other organizations on its youth summit program, including: Stand Tall, Don’t Fall, a community organization that focuses on underage drinking; Raising Nevada, a statewide organization that promotes a model of developmental assets for youth; and the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension program that works with the community on a wide range of projects. The CHESP program does not currently have a strong K–12 partner at the grantee level since the Nevada Department of Education subgrants all of its service-learning functions to other entities and no longer has staff responsible for service-learning programs. The CHESP program’s collaboration with K–12 education is primarily through NDE’s regional center staff, who promote service-learning by training and mentoring teachers within their regions.

Program Management Structure

The CHESP management team consists of the partnership facilitator, the project director, and CCI’s business manager and youth facilitator. The team meets regularly for project planning and management functions. Representatives of the Volunteer Center and the VIP program meet only with the team when needed and are more likely to meet with project staff for assistance or planning for particular activities. As noted above, the NSLP serves as the advisory board for the CHESP project and meets biannually to share information, brainstorm on service-learning issues, and learn about progress on the CHESP project.

Role of Other CNCS Programs

As previously mentioned, The Corporation’s state office provides eight VISTA members to CHESP: one at each of the five subgrantees, two at the Nevada Department of Education Regional Centers, and one in the CHESP grantee office.

Grantee-Level Program Activities

Subgrantee Selection

As a grantmaking entity, program staff reported a great deal of flexibility in selecting subgrantees and therefore were able to design a process that best met their needs. The strategy of the NSLP CHESP program was to offer subgrants to five existing partnerships of CBOs, higher education institutions, and K–12 school districts in order to build upon the alliances and experiences already formed by

these programs. Specific selection criteria included: an established partnership; involvement in a community needs assessment; a defined role for youth; outside funding or resources beyond Learn and Serve funds; a history of service-learning; and an affiliation with a higher education institution. Approximately 13 partnerships expressed interest and the project director and partnership facilitator then selected seven of these for the initial screening process. By February 2001, five subgrantees had been approved and received funding.

While the grantee was successful in recruiting five subgrantees that met most if not all of the established criteria, the subgrantees still needed help developing into an integrated and functioning CHESP partnership with the active involvement of all three key partners (K–12, CBO, and higher education). For example, the three subgrantees profiled in the case study all had existing partnerships, all had been involved in a community needs assessment, most had developed a role for youth in their partnerships, and most had outside funding or resources in addition to Learn and Serve funds. However, only two of these subgrantee partnerships had a history of service-learning. In addition, only one of the three subgrantees in our study had an affiliation with a higher education institution.

Training and Technical Assistance

Grantee-level CHESP training activities and/or technical assistance have focused on the following two areas:

- *Technical assistance and guidance to subgrantees.* The grantee provides support and technical assistance to the subgrantees through regular telephone communication, site visits, quarterly meetings, and periodic conferences held for subgrantee staff and their partners. The CCI youth trainer also provides technical assistance to the subgrantees and works with the youth advisors in each subgrantee.
- *Training and promotion of service-learning in higher education.* Together with the VIP office at UNR, the project director conducts presentations, brown-bag lunches, and training sessions for UNR faculty to learn about opportunities to incorporate service-learning options within their classes. The project director also conducts similar training at the Community College of Southern Nevada and other local community colleges.

Promoting Youth Voice

Youth involvement in program development is a critical component of the NSLP CHESP program. To this end, the grantee requires each subgrantee to form a youth leadership team with five to eight youth members and to hire a youth advisor to work with the youth team. Members of the youth teams are involved in individual service-learning projects and they also collaborate with subgrantee staff to provide service-learning training and education for youth and adults in their communities and help set the direction of subgrantee projects.

In August 2001, the CHESP program completed two phases of a youth leadership training. Approximately 50 youth and adult mentors from the five CHESP subgrantees attended the training that incorporated a youth leadership model and also focused on the priorities and needs of each subgrantee. In February 2002, the Nevada Service Learning Partnership CHESP held a Youth and Adult Service-Learning Partnership training, a three-day conference in Las Vegas that brought

together youth and adults involved with all five CHESP subgrantees. Conference activities included team-building, partnership presentations, youth role development, asset building, development of statewide themes, and a general group discussion of project goals and strategies to facilitate youth and adults leadership. A statewide youth summit for approximately 150 students and 50 adults from the CHESP subgrantees and partner organizations was scheduled for March 2003.

Internal Evaluation

The Center for Partnership Evaluation at UNR was in the process of conducting the internal evaluation for the Nevada CHESP program and results were not yet available during the time of the second site visit. According to staff, the evaluation focused on the program's partnership development, teacher development, youth development and youth leadership activities.

Grantee-Level Discussion Summary

At the grantee level, the Nevada's CHESP program case study illustrates two strategies: (1) a nonprofit community-based organization subcontracting CHESP management to a center located at an institution of higher education, and (2) youth voice and leadership as central elements in designing and implementing CHESP programs. These themes are further explored in the following discussions of three subgrantee cases.

Subgrantee-Level Descriptions

This section describes the partnerships and activities developed by three of the five NSLP subgrantees: the Storey-Lyon Service-Learning Program; the Truckee Tahoe CHESP Service-Learning Program; and the BEST Coalition for a Safe and Drug Free Nevada.

Storey-Lyon Service-Learning Program Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

The subgrantee, the Healthy Communities Coalition of Lyon and Storey Counties, has more than a decade of experience collaborating with educational institutions and other community organizations in Lyon and Storey Counties and is the parent organization for NSLP. The Central Lyon Youth Connection, a nonprofit community service provider located in Dayton, Nevada, is the fiscal agent for the Storey-Lyon Service-Learning Program (the CHESP subgrantee). Dayton is a rural community, situated in Lyon County just south of Reno, in the western desert region of the state.

Prior to the CHESP project, middle and high school students and teachers in these two counties had limited experience with service-learning. While previous attempts had been made to promote service-learning, these efforts lacked a formal structure and a community-level organization. In Storey County, the school board approved service-learning as an elective option in 1995, but similar efforts were defeated in Lyon County.

Due to the large geographic distances separating the primarily rural communities in Storey and Lyon Counties, the CHESP program currently operates as five separate decentralized programs, each developed and implemented through a task force and youth leadership team in one of the five communities constituting Storey and Lyons Counties: Fernley, Yerington/Smith Valley, Dayton, Silver Springs, and Virginia City. The task forces meet monthly and have approximately equal numbers of adults and youth. Many task force members participated in similar committees through previous (1999) state and federal grants, but they were not involved in service-learning. Staff report that the committee spent much of their first year of CHESP planning the project, developing partnerships, struggling with the different structures and roles of partner organizations, and becoming educated on service-learning.

Subgrantee Partnership

As in the case of the grantee-level partnership, the Storey-Lyon Service-Learning subgrantee partnership has functioned with centralized leadership in a decentralized program. A unique aspect of this subgrantee project is the role of the individual community task forces in developing and implementing service-learning activities as described above. In addition, in an effort to promote a closer relationship with local school districts, this subgrantee selected a K–12 teacher as its project director. The key partners in the Storey-Lyon CHESP project include:

- *Lead Partner:* The Healthy Communities Coalition of Lyon and Storey Counties;
- *Fiscal agent:* Central Lyon Youth Connection;
- *K-12 partner:* Lyon County school-to-work counselors; and
- *Additional community partner:* Lyon County Human Services.

In addition, teachers from local school districts and representatives from other groups and agencies such as the UNR Cooperative Extension program, the Bureau of Land Management, Nevada State Parks, and community groups such as the River Wranglers, a local nonprofit environmental group, have been involved in particular service-learning projects.

Aside from the collaboration of a few graduate students from UNR and a connection to the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension program, which consist mostly of 4-H activities, the project does not have any active higher education partners. This has been a challenge due to the rural location of the two counties and the large distances from universities and community colleges.

Local Management Structures

The CHESP project director in the Storey-Lyon Service-Learning Program is a middle school teacher in Storey County with grant management experience. Each of the five community task forces also has a leader who receives a stipend from the subgrantee and a youth advisor who may or may not receive a stipend. The project also has the additional resource of a youth advisor and half-time VISTA member at the subgrantee level. The youth worker at the subgrantee level works with a regional youth team (comprised of one youth from each of the five communities in Storey and Lyon Counties). The

VISTA member has been involved in developing a community-mapping project, writing and distributing articles on the CHESP subgrantee activities, and leading a service-learning project in a local park.

The Storey-Lyon CHESP subgrantee initially had a steering committee composed of the CHESP project director, a local high school teacher, a representative from the Central Lyon Youth Connection, a representative from the Parks and Recreation Department, and the director of a local community-based environmental group. In the spring of 2002, the CHESP steering committee joined with 35 members of a larger community coalition comprised mostly of members of local community organizations. In addition to administering several other community programs and grants, this group approves the CHESP mini-grant applications at its monthly meeting.

Project Descriptions

The strategy of the Storey-Lyon Service-Learning Program was to provide mini-grants of up to \$5,500 to organizations and individuals such as student groups, teachers, task force groups, and community agencies in each of the five communities to implement service-learning projects. Focus areas for projects are flexible, and depend upon the needs of the communities. Examples include before-and after-school programs, environmental issues, hunger and poverty, and health and nutrition. Over the past two years, the subgrantee has funded half-dozen small service-learning projects, and has integrated service-learning into several other initiatives developed by individual task forces and community members. Key projects include:

- *Trails project.* Several teachers and classes of students from the middle school and high school in Virginia City along with several community members and representatives from the Bureau of Land Management, the State Parks Department, and the State Historic Preservation Office are collaborating to build hiking and biking trails as well as a two-story educational kiosk with resources, student-built displays and space for classes.
- *Park renovation design project.* The Dayton CHESP task force has adopted a portion of a local park with the goal of making the park more accessible to residents. A local art teacher and track coach, along with their student groups, are working with the task force to design and implement the project. The task force leader and the subgrantee's VISTA member are spearheading the project. As of the fall of 2002, members of the team had organized a clean-up day and had received training on trail development.
- *River Wranglers.* The director of the River Wranglers, a nonprofit environmental group, worked with local high school teachers and 17 students from four different high schools to hold an Earth Day event in Silver City, which was attended by several hundred residents in April 2002. The students were trained in river conservation and related environmental issues and conducted presentations during the event.
- *Children's theatre project.* In the fall of 2002, a local Boys and Girls Club developed a service-learning project in which students were trained in theatre and video production skills and organized a public performance focused on community concerns. Students also contributed poems, videos, art projects, and stories about current events to a website that focused on student perspectives.

In addition to these and other service-learning activities, the Storey-Lyon CHESP director has worked with several school-to-work counselors in Lyon County to make service-learning an optional, independent project for junior and senior high school students. After gaining the support of the assistant superintendent, the counselors presented their idea to the school board and received approval to implement the project in each of the four secondary schools in Lyon County. The plan is for counselors to work with individual students to develop service-learning projects in their local communities, which tie in to specific learning objectives.

Truckee Tahoe Service-Learning Partnership Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

The Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation, a local nonprofit organization, is the fiscal agent for the Truckee Tahoe CHESP Service-Learning Program, also known as the Truckee-Tahoe Service-Learning Partnership (TTSLP). The TTSLP serves the rural, mountainous community of Truckee, California as well as the Lake Tahoe region bordering the states of Nevada and California. The Tahoe Truckee Service-Learning Partnership, established in September of 2001, administers both the CHESP grant and a CalServe grant—a service-learning grant from the California Department of Education. These two grants share the same staff and many of the same goals and activities. Both grants fund youth development activities, but while CalServe funds must be spent in classes and on teacher training, CHESP funds can be used to fund partnership training to promote student learning and youth development through school/community collaboration and service. The TTSLP’s mission is to bring together students, educators, and community members to collaborate and develop service-learning projects.

Subgrantee Partnership

The Truckee Tahoe CHESP subgrantee partnership is a collaborative effort led by the TTSLP management team, composed of representatives from key partners. The TTSLP functions as a cohesive partnership and shares responsibilities for project development and administration among members of the management team. As indicated above, the lead partner and fiscal agent is the Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation. Other primary partners include:

- **Lead partner:** *Truckee Tahoe Community Collaborative (TTCC)*. The TTCC, a coalition of community agencies, serves as an umbrella organization for the TTSLP CHESP project. Prior to CHESP, the TTCC had no involvement in service-learning activities.
- **K–12:** *Tahoe Truckee Unified School District*. The local K–12 school district is considered by project staff to be an integral part of the TTSLP CHESP project. In addition to school district staff participating in the collaborative, the district provides professional development and related support for service-learning to K–12 teachers.
- **CBOs.** Three key community organizations are involved in the Truckee Tahoe CHESP subgrantee partnership. *Sierra Watershed Educational Collaborative (SWEPC)* is a local, nonprofit environmental education organization that supports environmental service-learning activities with youth groups throughout the local area of Truckee Tahoe. *The Boys and Girls Clubs* conduct numerous after-school activities, including several service-

learning projects such as a peer education project focused on drugs, alcohol, and teenaged pregnancy prevention. *Caring About Kids* is a community-based mentoring program that trains youth to become student mentors for other young people in service-learning activities.

In addition, the TTSLP CHESP project has about 20 additional community organizational partners that serve as sites for service-learning activities and whose staff participate in service-learning training. The CHESP project does not currently have a higher education partner and is working to develop a relationship with a local private college that is involved in service-learning.

Local Management Structures

The director of the Truckee Tahoe Community Collaborative wrote the CHESP subgrant and serves as the subgrantee project director. She is also the current director of Caring About Kids, a local non-profit youth organization, and the former director of the Truckee Tahoe Children's Collaborative, a community coalition that became the Truckee Tahoe Community Collaborative. The project staff include a CHESP youth advisor and an AmeriCorps*VISTA member who facilitate youth leadership teams. The TTSLP management team includes the CHESP project director, the CalServe coordinator at the local K–12 school district, the CHESP youth advisor, the VISTA worker, the TTSLP education director, and a K–12 school district administrator. The management team meets alternate weeks and oversees both the CHESP program and the CalServe grants.

The TTSLP has a steering committee that consists of five youth, ten teachers, and four representatives from the key community-based organizational partners. The group meets every other month to address the combined CHESP and CalServe action plan and to build support and infrastructure for service-learning activities in the community. In addition, the CHESP project holds two partnership meetings a year in which all partners share resources and technical assistance.

The CHESP youth leadership team includes five students representing different youth service programs and different areas. The team's goal is to promote service-learning and build leadership among youth. The CHESP project has also implemented a program that trains students as mentors with the goal of recruiting groups of students and working with them to develop and implement service-learning projects. As of the fall of 2002, the program had approximately 50 students working on service-learning activities individually or in teams.

Project Descriptions

The majority of the Truckee-Tahoe CHESP service-learning projects have focused on environmental issues, a popular community concern for the Truckee Tahoe area. Recently, the program has also expanded to include projects involving other community issues such as hunger, homelessness, and drug and alcohol prevention. Approximately 20 CHESP service-learning activities are coordinated by student leaders and local advocates—teachers and staff who work at local schools or community organizations. Examples of CHESP service-learning projects include:

- *Watershed restoration activities.* Approximately 15 teachers work with groups of students during after-school projects on watershed restoration activities such as planting trees, raising fish, and monitoring streams.
- *Challenge Days.* In April 2002, members of the youth leadership team, along with several other youth, organized three Challenge Days attended by about 300 students. Challenge Day is a national nonprofit organization designed to stop teen violence and alienation. The group coordinated three one-day workshops for high school and middle school youth, teachers, parents, administrators, counselors, and members of the community to address issues such as violence, racism, tobacco, drugs, and alcohol through a series of games, activities, and group discussions.
- *Torch Club.* Middle school students work on an after-school community-mapping project to identify areas of need in their communities.

Bringing Everyone’s Strengths Together (BEST) Coalition Subgrantee

Overview, Background and Implementation

The BEST Coalition for a Safe and Drug Free Nevada is a nonprofit community service agency located in Las Vegas, a metropolitan community situated at the southern tip of Nevada and well known for its large number of casinos and active night life. The BEST Coalition was founded in 1989 and serves as the fiscal agent for the BEST CHESP subgrantee. The agency’s mission is to “implement and facilitate school, family, and community partnerships to promote a safe and drug-free lifestyle for all Nevadans.”² BEST has approximately 90 coalition members representing all facets of the community, including schools, community organizations, family resource centers, and treatment facilities. The CHESP project was implemented in September 2001. Prior to CHESP, neither the organization nor its community partners had been involved in service-learning activities.

Subgrantee Partnership

The BEST Coalition subgrantee partnership is primarily managed and led by the CHESP program director and the CHESP youth advisor with minimal collaboration by partner organizations on program development and implementation. As indicated above, the lead partner is the BEST Coalition. Other primary partners are:

- **Community Partner:** *Volunteer Center of Southern Nevada.* The Volunteer Center’s initial role was to work with community organizations and link them with teachers and schools. This did not work out as planned, so the BEST CHESP staff have recruited the community organizations on their own. As a result, the Volunteer Center has taken on other initiatives to promote service-learning, such as establishing a youth council to develop and implement service-learning activities within the Las Vegas community.

² Bringing Everyone’s Strengths Together (BEST) Coalition for a Safe and Drug Free Nevada, Mission Statement, 2001.

- ***K–12: Regional Service-Learning Center.*** The director of the Regional Service-Learning Center (funded by the Nevada Department of Education) serves as the project’s K–12 partner and is a member of the project’s adult partnership team. The Center trains teachers in service-learning and provides them with mini-grants to implement service-learning projects. These services were in place prior to CHESP and are independent of CHESP.
- ***Other Community Partners.*** The BEST CHESP project considers the approximately 24 community and school-based organizations (e.g., YMCA, recreation center, 21st Century Schools) that had representatives trained in service-learning by the BEST CHESP project to be part of an adult partnership group.

Local Management Structures

The CHESP subgrantee proposal was developed and written by a team consisting of the directors of BEST, the Volunteer Center of Southern Nevada, Raising Nevada (a grantee-level partner), and the local Safe and Drug-Free School Program.

The BEST CHESP project staff is comprised of three members: (1) a project director, who also serves as the director of the BEST Coalition; (2) a CHESP youth advisor, who coordinates overall CHESP project activities on a day-to-day basis and works with the youth council; and (3) an AmeriCorps member, who joined the project in the fall of 2002 and works with students on service-learning projects. The BEST CHESP project had hoped to obtain a VISTA member in January of 2003, but plans had not been finalized as of the time of our visit.

The BEST CHESP project has a youth council of approximately ten high school and college students who meet alternate weeks. The primary goals of the youth council are twofold: (1) to recruit and train other youth in service-learning; and (2) to work with community agencies on after-school programs involving service-learning activities.

The BEST CHESP project also has a group of adult partners who represent school and community organizations. The purpose of the group, which meets every other month, is to share resources and information about service-learning activities. However, due to staffing changes at the BEST CHESP, meetings have been less frequent, and the group did not meet for several months during the fall of 2002.

The BEST CHESP project is also working on a way to link their youth council members to their adult partnership of community organizations. Thus far, these two groups have worked on parallel activities and the project has faced challenges in bringing these two groups together.

Project Descriptions

The major focus for the BEST CHESP project during its first year has been to recruit and train members of both the youth council and the adult partnership group to, in turn, recruit teams of students in schools, after-school programs, youth groups, and community organizations, in order to design and implement service-learning activities across the community. The youth council identified

the same priority needs as the project staff: substance abuse prevention, violence prevention, and youth voice. Key activities include:

- *Training for youth and adults.* Members of the youth council and adult participants have received training in service-learning through attendance at national service-learning conferences and through programs sponsored by the BEST CHESP staff and the NSLP CHESP grantee. Members of the youth council also worked with the BEST CHESP project staff to sponsor a two-day CHESP Youth Conference in July of 2002. Approximately 30 middle school, high school, and college students were trained to develop and implement service-learning activities at the conference. In February 2002, the BEST CHESP project also trained representatives from 24 community organizations that will function as service-learning sites. Additional training was provided to seven adult mentors and about seven youth from each organization.
- *Other service-learning initiatives.* The BEST CHESP project staff reports that youth or adult participants working with schools or community organizations have implemented a range of service-learning activities, including the following: youth/adult collaboration on a community campaign event to distribute informational brochures and perform a skit on the subject of violence prevention; a presentation on abstinence at a YMCA camp for teenaged girls; Make a Difference Day, which featured numerous service activities; a clean-up day and a party for children at a local women's shelter; a school-based peer mediation project; and a community garden at a local school.

Subgrantee-Level Discussion Summary

The three subgrantees presented in this case study demonstrate solid examples of CHESP projects led by community-based organizations, two that serve primarily rural areas and one that is situated in Las Vegas. The subgrantees illustrate three different approaches to CHESP:

- The Storey-Lyon Service-Learning Program awarded twenty \$5,500 mini-grants to organizations and individuals;
- Truckee Tahoe Children's Collaborative focused on environmental service-learning activities and other projects coordinated by student leadership teams; and
- The BEST Coalition is youth-led approach, which emphasized a combination of training activities and a variety of community service projects.

Summary Analysis

In this final section we present analyses of the Nevada CHESP experience to date, from the perspectives of the grantees, subgrantees, and members of our research team.

Grantee and Subgrantee Perspectives

Overall Reported Progress

CHESP grantee and subgrantees report success in the following six areas: (1) increasing CHESP partners' awareness of and support for service-learning; (2) increasing service-learning activities in communities served by CHESP subgrantees; (3) expanding partnerships between schools and community agencies; (4) gaining approval of high school credit for independent student service-learning projects in one community; (5) creating lasting community impacts (e.g., biking trails); and (6) increasing confidence and personal growth of student leaders.

Replication and Sustainability

The Nevada grantee and subgrantees demonstrate a solid understanding of the importance of replication and sustainability, and have undertaken a number of steps to promote these objectives.

- *Tools.* Several tools are in place that can help replicate service-learning activities: (1) a service-learning video developed by the grantee; (2) a subgrantee newsletter describing service-learning activities; (3) teacher lesson plans; and (4) abstracts describing individual CHESP service-learning projects. No information is currently available about how these materials are being used and whether they are, in fact, resulting in replication of the model.
- *Funding.* CHESP grantee staff are confident that the CHESP partnerships will continue at the grantee as well as at the subgrantee level, and have begun to explore additional grants and funds from foundations and other sources. Currently, grantee staff report that all of the subgrantee partnerships have funding from sources other than CHESP.
- *Youth voice.* Grantee and subgrantee staff feel that youth leadership development activities will facilitate institutionalization of project activities in the subgrantee communities. In addition, they report that they expect the bonds and connections that have been established between the partners will continue to flourish.
- *Action plans.* The grantee has asked subgrantees to incorporate explicit sustainability plans into their year three action plans. Subgrantees report that they are exploring fundraising opportunities and other types of funding as part of these plans but the adequacy of these plans and success of these efforts will only become apparent over time.

Recommendations for the CHESP Program Model

The NSLP CHESP grantees and subgrantees have a number of recommendations for CNCS and their colleagues in regard to implementing the CHESP program:

- *Allocate adequate time and resources.* Nevada CHESP grantee leaders believe that the process of developing and supporting subgrantee partnerships was much more time- and resource-consuming than they had imagined, particularly in terms of developing

partnerships and implementing activities and strategies. Upon reflection, grantee leaders report that they would have spent more time with subgrantees, providing more hands-on assistance in helping them to design their partnerships, create action plans, and develop budgets.

- *Integrate youth/adult activities.* The Nevada CHESP experience also emphasizes that it is not enough to create structures to promote youth leadership. It is also necessary to find ways to integrate these structures with other CHESP partnership activities and projects. Grantee staff report that in several of the subgrantees, the youth are involved in a youth development team while the adult partner representatives are involved in separate subgrantee management or adult advisory groups, yielding a system in which the youth and adult team members are disconnected.
- *Develop ways to increase involvement with higher education.* Both grantees and subgrantees reported that there were major challenges to overcome in integrating colleges and universities into existing partnerships between K–12 schools and districts and community-based organizations. These challenges were exacerbated when there were no institutions of higher education near the other participating groups. To promote increased involvement and partnership with higher education institutions, the grantee has recently developed a new strategy to provide mini-grants of \$500 to \$3000 to individuals representing higher education institutions that partner with a K–12 school, a school district, or a CBO on service-learning activities. The initiative seeks to fund new, smaller scale partnerships involving higher education entities as a strategy in attracting more higher education stakeholders to the CHESP program.
- *Develop public relations materials.* The Nevada CHESP experience also highlights the importance of achieving public awareness of service-learning partnerships as a key ingredient in promoting future success. In reviewing their progress, staff report that they would have liked to have done more to support public awareness of CHESP and service-learning by developing and distributing promotional materials.
- *Develop approaches for rural areas.* Rural areas face numerous barriers such as geographic distances between partners and participants and limited numbers of community-based organizations. Staff report that using small task forces in rural areas may prove to be a good way to provide collaborative services where agencies and young people are dispersed geographically, but it is too soon to know how effective this model ultimately will be.

Implications and Lessons

The Nevada CHESP experience points to the difficulties in creating balanced three-way partnerships among CBOs, higher education institutions, and the K–12 system and ways to meet them. Grantee staff report that, in retrospect, they wished that they had worked harder with subgrantees to ensure they had all three partners on board when the program began.

In addition, training and other professional development was important to ensure a common understanding of quality service-learning including how to promote it. This point was highlighted on several occasions on the subgrantee level.

One of the most interesting findings about the Nevada CHESP experience is the different ways that agencies use the term “partner.” While the term usually refers to agencies that are actively involved in planning and carrying out programs, in some instances, the term is used to refer to agencies that serve only as the sites for service-learning activities. For example, one of the subgrantees considers the 20 community agencies whose staff attended service-learning training provided by the subgrantee as well as agencies willing to serve as service sites to be subgrantee partners.

Staff at a number of Nevada subgrantees reported several lessons learned in the course of their experience to date. One reported success was the value of having a K–12 teacher in the role of CHESP project director, especially in gaining support within the schools. Staff also pointed to the importance of clearly designating the roles of the partners and having the partners involved in developing the project’s action plan.

Chapter Four

Florida Department of Education: Florida CHESP Program

Introduction

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<i>Website:</i>	http://www.fsu.edu/~chesp
<i>Organization (Type):</i>	Grantee: Florida Department of Education (SEA) Managed by Florida State University (HE)
<i>Subgrantees:</i>	Fifteen (three K-12 school districts and 12 HEs)
<i>Initial CHESP funding:</i>	October 2000
<i>Funding levels:</i>	Year one: \$440,000; year two: \$440,000; year three: \$396,000

This report contains a description and analysis of the planning and first two years of operation of the Florida Community, Higher Education, and School Partnership (CHESP) program that was initially funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service in the fall of 2000. The official grantee and fiscal agent for the program is the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) but the program is directly administered under contract to the FDOE by the Florida Alliance for Student Service at Florida State University's (FSU) Center for Civic Education and Service. This CHESP program currently has 15 subgrantees, each funded at between \$11,000 and \$30,000 per year. Florida universities or community colleges lead 12 of the subgrantees and a K-12 school district leads the remaining three subgrantee partnerships.

The Florida CHESP experience provides a useful example of the implementation of the program by a State Education Agency (which subcontracts another group to run the program) that does not impose a rigid model or approach for its subgrantees or limit the type of issues subgrantees will address through service-learning. The design of this approach was deliberate and based on the following assumption: Florida faces a wide array of diverse issues and its communities know best what particular issues they face and how service-learning might be most effectively employed to address them. As a result, each subgrantee project has a locally developed program with unique service-learning activities. The 15 subgrantees are building CHESP models that focus on issues related to the environment, intergenerational/oral history, health, conflict resolution, reading, home safety, and teacher education.

Although each project has its own set of individual goals, Florida CHESP has also developed a set of common statewide goals, all encompassed within five areas of priority:

- Increasing student grades and performance;
- Positively affecting student attitudes and behavior;
- Meeting the needs of the larger community;
- Increasing institutional capacity and infrastructure for service-learning; and
- Building sustainable community/higher education/school partnerships that will continue to address these issues in the future.

As described in several places in this case study, the Florida experience demonstrates both the value of building upon the foundation of pre-existing relationships and partnership programs and the fact that, even in such situations, efforts to expand and enrich partnership activities to create meaningful three-way partnerships take time and effort.

This report begins with a description of the grantee program and partnership implementation along with grantee-level activities. We then present the experience at three of the 15 subgrantees—the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, the Florida State University Project SALLY, and the Pine Jog Environmental Education Center. The remainder of the report provides analyses of the experience to date, including implications and lessons learned.

Grantee-Level Discussion

Overview

Lead Grantee Organization: Florida Department of Education/ Florida State University

The Florida CHESP program has been built upon the foundation of pre-existing Learn and Serve programming and administrative structures. As stated above, the fiscal agent for the program is the Florida Department of Education. The Department of Education has received Learn and Serve America (and its predecessor Serve-America) grants since 1992. Since 1995, these projects have been administered by Florida State University as part of a broader FDOE effort to contract out a wide range of functions. The University has been involved in community service and service-learning for almost ten years, including projects funded by several Learn and Serve America Higher Education grants.

The CHESP project proposal was developed and written by the Florida Learn and Serve director, a former educator and administrator at the Florida Department of Education. The director moved from FDOE to co-direct the Florida Alliance for Student Service (FASS) and to manage CHESP at FSU when the University assumed management of the Florida Learn and Serve grant. In February 2001, FASS hired a program director to manage the CHESP initiative.

Goals

The program's stated overall goal is to create a systems change in Florida that will bring together the area stakeholders and encourage them to focus on collaborative, reciprocal service-learning.¹ In addition to facilitating progress towards the five areas of priority outlined above, the grantee also aims to:

- provide training and technical assistance to subgrantees and potential service-learning participants;
- develop youth leadership infrastructure throughout the state; and
- integrate service-learning into teacher education.

The grantee suggested a general framework for subgrantee partnerships but did not designate a specific community need to be addressed by subgrantees. As a result, subgrantees were given the flexibility to develop projects that addressed the needs of their individual communities in a manner that they determined most appropriate. The designated focus for the subgrantees is to create service partnerships among all students of all ages to enable them to enhance their skills by applying learning through service.²

Grantee Partnership

The Florida Alliance for Student Service (FASS), a unit of Florida State University, has served as the driving force behind the planning and implementation of CHESP in the state, assisted by other partners who play specific limited roles on an as-needed basis. More detailed descriptions of the grantee-level partners for the CHESP program and their roles are presented below:

- *Florida Alliance for Student Service (FASS)*. Located at Florida State University's Center for Civic Education and Service, FASS is the lead organization in the partnership. FASS, formalized in 2001, is a coalition of five statewide programs: the Florida Campus Compact, Florida Learn and Serve, the FASS VISTA Initiative, Title IV Community Service Grants, and CHESP. All five programs are involved in service-learning and volunteerism and are co-located at the University to promote closer collaboration and to maximize resources. Staff from the FASS programs collaborate on a variety of initiatives and support the CHESP project but other than the CHESP director, none have a specified role in the project.
- *Florida Department of Education, Office of School Improvement*. The FDOE is the official grantee and fiscal agent for the Florida CHESP program and the grantee for the state's school-based Learn and Serve America Grant. The FDOE has administrative responsibilities for the CHESP subgrantee financial contractual process, but does not play an active role in planning or overseeing the program operations.

¹ Florida Department of Education CHESP Progress Report – Year One, April 2001.

² Florida Department of Education, Memorandum: Request for Proposals (2nd Round of Funding): Community, Higher Education, and School Partnerships (CHESP), February 2001.

- *Florida Commission on Community Service (FCCS)*. The FCCS, enacted into law in 1994, was created to fulfill the state’s responsibilities under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 to strengthen communities through volunteer service. Each year, FCCS awards and administers more than ten million dollars in federal funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service to local community service-learning programs and projects, the majority of which are run by community-based entities. The Commission is considered a grantee-level CHESP partner but the grantee has not designated a specific role for them in the CHESP program.

Program Management Structure

The CHESP director, housed within FASS, is responsible for the overall management and administration of the grant as well as providing technical assistance to and monitoring subgrantees. The CHESP program staff includes a program coordinator, an AmeriCorps*VISTA member, a work-study student, and an evaluation consultant.

Role of Other CNCS Programs

As previously mentioned, the Florida CHESP program works closely with AmeriCorps*VISTA and other programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Grantee-Level Program Activities

Subgrantee Selection

To select subgrantees, in October 2000, the grantee distributed a Request For Applications (RFA) to a wide range of K–12 and higher education educators and administrators throughout the state. To facilitate subcontracting arrangements with DOE and reduce administrative burdens in subcontracting to other entities, only K–12 school systems, state universities, and public community colleges were eligible to apply for subgrants. Twenty-two individuals from across the state with experience in service-learning served as the reviewers for proposals and 14 of those reviewers served as members of the advisory council that made final funding decisions. The grantee received a total of 42 proposals during two application periods and funded a total of 14 CHESP subgrantees by the summer of 2001. An additional subgrantee focusing on building service-learning infrastructure (infusing service-learning into teacher education) was funded in the fall of 2001. Seven of the 15 CHESP subgrantees are former Learn and Serve subgrantees and three of these subgrantees are building their CHESP programs on the projects and issues initiated under Learn and Serve.

The grantee initially sought to fund subgrantee projects under two categories: (1) models of K–12 and higher education (HE) collaborative service-learning models in which the K–12 and HE students serve together in teams or through a “cascading” process (e.g., college students tutor high school students who tutor elementary school students or others in the community); and (2) projects that build capacity and infrastructure for K-16 service-learning^{3,4} through research dissemination, curriculum

³ K-16 is a term used to describe the system of education encompassing kindergarten through the four years of formal post-secondary education, typically, but not exclusively regarded as a college or university.

design, and infusion of service-learning into teacher education. There were no proposals submitted under the infrastructure category in the first round of applications. As a result, this category has since evolved into programs focusing on teacher education, an approach that was implemented through the fifteenth subgrantee.

Technical Assistance and Training

The FASS grantee provides technical assistance and support to its 15 subgrantees through a variety of mechanisms, including annual monitoring visits, annual regional meetings, and a meeting of all subgrantees at the annual Florida Service-Learning Institute. The grantee also provides technical assistance and consultation, as needed, to individual subgrantee projects and has developed a shared training calendar with other Corporation-funded projects in Florida.

The CHESP project has also been involved in other collaborations to support and promote service-learning and teacher education throughout the state. One such partnership, initiated by Florida CHESP, is the collaboration of the four FASS partners to coordinate and host the Inaugural Florida Institute on Service-Learning in Teacher Education that was held in September 2002. Teams from 19 institutions of higher education (and their partners) participated in this inaugural institute that had a total of approximately 75 participants. A second institute is planned for the fall of 2003.

Promoting Youth Voice

The Florida CHESP grantee has been engaged in a range of activities to promote the development of youth leadership among its subgrantees. In particular, the project has collaborated with several state and local organizations to develop partnerships geared toward activities to support youth leadership and service-learning. The grantee held its first Youth Leadership Institute over a four-day period in April 2002. Approximately 50 to 60 participants in teams composed of three high school students, one higher education student, and one administrator from 11 of the 15 CHESP subgrantees participated in the Institute.

In the spring of 2002, the project director met with the Florida Commission on Community Service's Youth Advisory Council to discuss a partnership and collaboration among the various service programs in Florida.

The grantee has also initiated a partnership with the Volunteer Center in Leon County and several community-based organizations to develop youth leadership through service-learning in Leon County as part of the larger statewide youth leadership strategy. The team formed through these partnerships will participate in Service Leadership Florida's training and community planning process.

Internal Evaluations

The grantee recently hired an evaluation consultant to work with grantee and subgrantee staff to further develop the statewide evaluation plan and data collection process. Over the past 18 months, subgrantees and the grantee staff have been documenting progress on the project's key objectives through surveys and student assessments. The primary data collection instruments being used by the subgrantees are student surveys on attitudes and knowledge of content areas. Additional evaluation

activities were still being planned at the time of our site visit and the local evaluations were not expected to be completed until the summer of 2003.

Grantee-Level Discussion Summary

At the grantee level, the Florida CHESP program is built upon strong pre-existing Learn and Serve programming and administrative structures. Among these, the administration of the Department of Education programs by staff at Florida State University's Center for Civic Education and Service provides a good example of a public-private partnership in the grantee-level management of CHESP. The Florida CHESP approach has focused on efforts to fund and support models of K–12 and higher education collaboration with community groups and has recently expanded to address the infusion of service-learning into teacher education.

Subgrantee-Level Descriptions

The following section presents three subgrantee case studies: the Miami-Dade Public Schools, the Florida State University Project SALLY, and the Pine Jog Environmental Education Center.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

The Intergenerational Community Studies Oral History CHESP project is administered by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (MDCPS) Intergenerational Programs Division. The MDCPS, encompassing a large metropolitan area on the east coast of Florida, has approximately 370,000 students and is the fourth largest school district in the nation. The Intergeneration Programs Division is located under the District's Community Services Department. The Division, which has been in operation for approximately 15 years, began with an adopt-a-grandparent project. It has since grown to include more than 30 community programs, some of which involve service-learning. The CHESP subgrantee project was funded in February 2001.

Subgrantee Partnership

The MDCPS leads the CHESP subgrantee partnership and works closely with six other partners who are deeply involved in the partnership and share the vision as well as the planning responsibilities for the project. The program's six other key partners include: The University of Miami Institute for Public History; the Historical Museum of Southern Florida; the Black Archives History and Research Foundation of South Florida; Miami-Dade Community College; the Biscayne National Park; and Close-Up Productions, a local video production company with a ten-year history of collaboration with the school system.

As the partnership has grown, new partners have been added and existing partners have increased their involvement depending upon the specific service-learning activities being implemented. For example, the Museum held a few student workshops during the first year of the project. In the second year, due to the increased number of students using the Museum's resources, the Museum director

became more involved in the partnership and trained additional Museum staff to work with K-12 students during student field trips to the Museum. For other community partners, such as the Biscayne National Park, this is their first year in the project and their first partnership of any type with local schools and community agencies. Most of the other key partners have had some relationship with each other prior to the CHESP project as a result of being located in the same community, but their collaboration and communication was limited. Other than the Black Archives, none of the other community partners had been involved in service-learning activities prior to CHESP.

In addition to these key players, there are several other local community agencies that play lesser roles in the partnership, such as the area agency on aging, a public library, and an environmental education organization. For the past several years, the MDCPS has had several VISTA members involved in their intergenerational projects but none specifically involved in CHESP activities until recently. This past year, one of the VISTA members worked with the CHESP project to coordinate World War II oral history interviews.

The CHESP Oral History project was primarily developed through discussions among three individuals: the director of the MDCPS's Intergenerational project, the owner of Close-Up Productions, and a University of Miami history professor who became involved with the MDCPS Intergenerational project prior to CHESP as a result of community forums. These three individuals had worked together previously on other community intergenerational and history initiatives and, at the professor's initiative, began discussing the concept of an oral history project prior to learning of the CHESP grant. The owner of the video production company took the lead in writing the CHESP proposal, but all three partners were very much involved in the project design. In addition, lead staff from the Black Archives and the Historical Museum met with the team and contributed ideas for the grant.

Local Management Structures

The MDCPS, as the lead agency, has overall responsibility for the CHESP subgrantee project management. The Intergenerational project director and a small management team of project staff members coordinate the project. CHESP subgrantee funds are distributed among the partners as needed by the MDCPS. The largest expenses have been for transportation and admission for participating students and teachers to the Historical Museum and other historical entities in the community.

The project does not have a formal advisory board but key partners and other involved community agencies are considered members of the project consortium, which meets monthly to plan activities and discuss project issues. The consortium has approximately 20 members on its mailing list.

Project Descriptions

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools CHESP program currently includes approximately 40 high school teachers and two middle school teachers from about 18 schools, an increase of approximately 20 teachers and 6 schools from the first year of the program. The program's goal is to produce oral histories of elders to contribute to the historical records and archives of the community. Student participants develop oral history skills in addition to learning the history of their community and gaining exposure to cultural institutions and community issues. Key activities are to record oral

histories of elders in the Miami community, produce videos and other materials, develop curricula for the classroom, and conduct community presentations. In addition to the actual interviews and videotaping sessions, the students are involved in a variety of other activities in preparation and support of the interviews such as field trips to historical organizations to research the topics about which they will be interviewing the elders. A summary of each of the Miami CHESP subgrantees' key activities is presented below.

- *Oral History Projects.* During the first year of the project, high school students taped and transcribed oral histories of elders in the community who played a role or had a story to share about the civil rights movement in Miami. The histories were used to develop a civil rights archive at the high school media center. One of the histories was a catalyst for a county-wide civil rights curriculum for all students. The focus for the second year of the project is on World War II and will involve students conducting oral histories of World War II veterans and other elderly residents with involvement in World War II. By spring 2003, staff report that more than 150 oral histories have been completed.
- *Hampton House Preservation Project.* This activity involved the historic preservation of the Hampton House, a local public housing complex that had been a resort for wealthy and influential African Americans in the 1960s. Through their civil rights research during the first year of the project, students and teachers discovered that the Hampton House, then scheduled to be demolished, may have been the original site of Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech (three years before the march on Washington). The students and teachers have been instrumental in initiating and promoting a community-wide advocacy program to create a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that will renovate and preserve the building as a historical landmark.
- *Biography/Portrait Booklet.* During the first year of the program, students interviewed approximately 20 outstanding local environmentalists, and art students drew their portraits. The interviews and portraits were subsequently published in a booklet. The second-year biography/portrait booklet will profile Miami residents who were involved in World War II activities.
- *Biscayne National Park.* In the Parsons Jones Community Studies Project, high school seniors worked with park rangers to research and document oral histories about the lives and accomplishments of an African American family who resided in the Park. This activity has since been expanded to include the history and restoration of a local beach used by African Americans and other homesteaders in the early 1900s.

Florida State University—Project SALLY Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

The subgrantee lead agency is the Florida State University (FSU) Center for Civic Education, located on the FSU campus in Tallahassee. The Center is an FSU division that engages students and faculty in community-based learning through service. The Center is also the home to the FASS program (the CHESP grantee) and is aligned with FSU's Southside Professional Development Schools Network, a K–12 collaborative partnership that includes Leon County Schools, FSU, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and local businesses and community leaders.

The Center first became involved in tutoring programs with college students and local elementary students in 1997 through the America Reads program. Some FSU students had a service-learning requirement in their classes, others were volunteers, and a few students were hired as coordinators for each of the sites. In the spring of 2000, a faculty/student pilot program (the FSU mentor program) was launched which included 25 faculty and a small number of FSU students trained to mentor students in an elementary or middle school. FSU staff developed the program with some input from local principals and district staff, and by the fall of 2000, the program was fully implemented. In May 2001, the CHESP funding was awarded and Project SALLY was developed and combined with the pre-existing America Reads program (involving FSU students) and the FSU mentor program (involving FSU faculty and staff).

Subgrantee Partnership

The Project SALLY subgrant activities are, for the most part, planned and overseen by Florida State University staff, with other partners serving in an advisory capacity. As noted earlier, Project SALLY was developed and is administered by the Florida State University Center for Civic Education and Service, located on the FSU campus in Tallahassee. In addition to the Center, there are roughly 20 faculty members in different departments at FSU that teach service-learning courses through Project SALLY or are involved in the project as tutors. Key partners in Project SALLY include the Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce and five elementary and middle schools from Leon County School District.

Local Management Structures

The director of Project SALLY has overall administrative and management responsibilities for the project. The project also hired 12 FSU students (nine through Federal College Work-Study funds) to serve as project coordinators at the schools. The coordinators' roles are to train, schedule, and monitor the mentors; help plan and organize reflection activities; and act as a liaison between the tutors and school administration/teachers, as well as between the tutors and the Center for Civic Education and Service.

In general, Project SALLY's partners do not meet on a regular basis nor do they have a role in the project's operation and management other than being part of Project SALLY's advisory council. The advisory council is composed of ten members, representatives from FSU, K-12 staff and principal representatives, and a representative from the Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce. The advisory council is reported to meet periodically, but as of the fall of 2002, they had not met since the previous year.

Project Descriptions

Project SALLY addresses needs in three arenas: literacy, the application of skills learned in university classrooms, and community building. FSU students and faculty are recruited by the Center for Civic Education and Service from a variety of disciplines including the schools of Social Work and Education. Mentors provide one-on-one tutoring primarily to first-grade students and also to some second-grade students whose skills in reading and writing are below grade level. This past year,

approximately 400 FSU students and 50 FSU faculty members participated in the project providing mentoring and tutoring in reading to approximately 230 students.

During its first year, Project SALLY also began a cascading service model in three grade levels (first, fourth, and sixth) in which upper grade students tutored lower grade students. There was difficulty implementing this approach due to the challenges of the middle school year-round schedule and numerous computer problems. This past year, the project focused on partnered reading between second- and first-grade students and between first-grade and preschool students. The FSU mentors work with the elementary student tutors through reflection activities.

Prior to serving, all FSU students and faculty/staff tutors participate in an extensive orientation and training in the Revised Open Court Curriculum, a structured curriculum designed to improve reading skills of low-performing first graders. Approximately one-third to one-half of the FSU student tutors are required to tutor for one of their classes and receive in-class instruction related to their tutoring work. One FSU professor requires students in her advanced child psychology class to serve as a tutor five days a week for two semesters. In addition, her in-class curriculum focuses on developmental issues related to children's behavior. All tutors participate in a group reflection session mid-semester.

Pine Jog Environmental Education Center Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

The subgrantee lead agency is the Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, located within the College of Education at Florida Atlantic University (FAU). The Center's mission is "to develop, provide, and model environmental education programs which foster an awareness and appreciation of the natural world, promote an understanding of ecological concepts, and instill a sense of stewardship toward the earth and its inhabitants." The Pine Jog Center has been involved in service-learning projects since 1998, primarily through a pilot project for the Earth Force Community Action and Problem Solving (CAPS) program. The CAPS program is a national service-learning model that involves middle school students working on service-learning activities focused on environmental issues.

This CHESP project expands upon a previous Learn and Serve grant that involved the Earth Force CAPs program and was developed and initiated by staff from the Pine Jog Center. Just prior to the CHESP grant, the Center received a \$225,000 grant from the MacArthur Foundation. They were also awarded a grant from a local community foundation to implement a new service-learning project. In their search for additional support and matching funds, Pine Jog staff discovered the CHESP program and applied for a CHESP subgrant. The resulting project was established as the Arthur R. Marshall Fellowship Program. The program's emphasis is on creating a cascading model in which students from local universities and colleges and a few local high school students serve as Marshall Fellows and work with younger K-12 students (e.g., elementary and middle school students) on environmental service-learning projects.

Subgrantee Partnership

The Pine Jog CHESP subgrantee program activities are almost exclusively planned and overseen by Pine Jog staff, with limited contributions on an as-needed basis from the other partners. As indicated above, the lead partner is the Pine Jog Environmental Education Center. The Marshall Fellowship Program (the CHESP subgrantee project) staff report that they have already developed approximately 35 partnerships, with such groups as other departments within FAU; local elementary, middle, and high schools; other colleges and universities; city and county government agencies; youth-oriented community groups such as the Cub Scouts and 4-H Clubs; foundations; and environmental organizations. All of these groups contribute in some way to the Marshall Fellowship program but with the exception of one professor at the Florida Atlanta University/Florida International University (FAU/FIU) Joint Center for Urban and Environmental Problems, who developed and facilitated the course curriculum for the Marshall Fellows, none of the other partner organizations play a major role in guiding or facilitating the project, nor do they meet regularly with project staff. They do however, provide support to the program in various ways. For example, the local schools, colleges, and universities are used as recruitment sites for Marshall Fellows; local businesses and foundations contribute resources; community programs allow Marshall Fellows to work with their student members; and members of environmental and city and county agencies make presentations and share information with Marshall Fellows.

Local Management Structures

Overall, the Marshall Fellowship Program is managed by a director from the Pine Jog Center with guidance from other Pine Jog staff. The Pine Jog Center also has an advisory council that was initiated through the Earth Force project and advises all Pine Jog programs, including the Marshall Fellowship Program. The advisory council meets quarterly and includes a dozen members representing FAU, the Pine Jog Center, local K–12 school districts, and various community-based organizations. The council serves in an advisory capacity only and has no management responsibilities. As of the time of our site visits, the council had not recruited any youth or Marshall Fellows as members but since that time, a Marshall Fellow has been added to the council.

Project Descriptions

The Marshall Fellowship Program began in September 2001 with the recruitment of seven local high school students and 20 college students representing four colleges. These young adults were then enrolled in a three-semester program. Training during the first semester included: (1) a monthly course on growth management that featured an initial two-day retreat; (2) six Saturday sessions that focused on learning about local community issues from city and county leaders and community agency staff; and (3) specialized training in the Earth Force CAPS program. During the second semester, the Marshall Fellows worked in teams using the Earth Force CAPS curriculum to develop and complete environmental community projects. During the third and last semester in the fall of 2002, the Fellows worked in small teams with elementary and middle school youth in after-school clubs and programs to facilitate service-learning projects in the community. In April 2002, the Fellows developed and implemented an event for all youth participating in the project and attended six continuing education seminars on service-learning methodology and project implementation. In September 2002, a second round of 29 new Marshall Fellows began orientation and training.

By June 2002, the Marshall Fellows had worked with 117 local elementary and middle school students to complete 13 service-learning projects. By the fall of 2002, the Marshall Fellows had worked with youth groups to facilitate 11 additional service-learning projects that involved 312 K–12 students in service-learning activities. These activities include public awareness campaigns on environmental issues, animal rights advocacy, educational programs to promote recycling, watershed activities, and park restoration.

Subgrantee-Level Discussion Summary

These three Florida CHESP subgrantee cases, taken together, demonstrate the range of involvement that CHESP partners play in the program operations. One project (Miami-Dade) demonstrates an established well-balanced partnership in which multiple partners play a very active role in the implementation of CHESP. In the other two subgrantees, most of the CHESP project activity is directly overseen by the lead agency and other partners play very limited roles in actual project management. The following summary analysis section expands on this issue.

Summary Analysis

The final section of our report consists of analyses of the Florida CHESP experience to date, both from the grantee and subgrantee perspectives and from our own.

Grantee and Subgrantee Perspectives

Overall Reported Progress

According to grantee staff and partners, the CHESP program can claim many accomplishments in the area of specific service-learning activities as well as in developing capacity and infrastructure. The progress reported by grantee staff align with the overall grantees goals, especially in terms of influencing student outcomes, increasing institutional capacity and infrastructure for service-learning, and building sustainable three-way partnerships. The grantee considers the following seven accomplishments at both the grantee and subgrantee level to be their most important program outcomes:

- facilitation of stronger collaborations between K–12 and higher education partners;
- support of the development of 15 subgrantee projects involved in service-learning activities;
- development of projects using the cascading model of service-learning with K–12 and higher education students;
- training of dozens of individuals in service-learning across the state;
- increased recognition of the link between service-learning and teacher education;
- collaboration among FASS partners; and

- initiation of a strategy to increase the quality and quantity of youth leadership through service-learning throughout the state.

Specific project outcomes reported by staff at subgrantee lead organizations and subgrantee partner organizations included the following:

- *Increased communication and collaboration among all CHESP partners.* According to one community-based subgrantee partner, involvement in CHESP has helped them form new partnerships and strengthened their relationships with other community-based organizations as well as the K–12 school district and a local university.
- *Increased awareness and publicity for subgrantee partners.* Community organizations in one subgrantee site report that their involvement in CHESP has increased their exposure in the community and led to new opportunities for their organizations (e.g., new partnerships, access to new resources). In addition, higher education partners in several subgrantees report an improved image in the community for their institution as a result of their participation in CHESP.
- *Increased higher education partner commitment to service-learning.* For example, a higher education professor reports that, as a result of his involvement in the local CHESP project, his university plans to establish a center for public service to increase student involvement in service-learning across the institution.
- *Community and participant benefits.* Subgrantees typically report multiple benefits to CHESP student participants and their communities, such as students' increased self-esteem, improved student performance, valuable research and production of historical materials, and the development of bonds between K–12 and college students.
- *Increased numbers of individuals involved in community service and service-learning activities.* Subgrantees report that their CHESP projects have substantially increased the number of K–12 and college students involved in service-learning activities.

Grantee staff reported that several factors helped facilitate the planning and implementation of the Florida CHESP program, including: (1) the ability to develop the program based on an existing service-learning program with knowledgeable and experienced staff; (2) the strong association of other partners with FSU and its history in service-learning and support of the program; and (3) the collaboration between the organizational partners of FASS in providing additional funding, staffing, and expertise.

Replication and Sustainability

Grantee staff report that some of the subgrantees have tools in place that can be used to help replicate their practices. The grantee is also currently developing a system-wide process to document or collect these materials from subgrantees and prepare a strategy for replication. Examples of materials produced by subgrantees include job descriptions for CHESP staff, action plans, detailed and comprehensive curricula, videos of service-learning activities, and student and teacher training resources.

Grantee staff report that one strategy being employed to build sustainability and long-term service-learning infrastructure involves the infusion of service-learning into teacher education programs, in the hope that service-learning will become more established and of higher quality in schools throughout the state. In addition, subgrantees are required to develop and submit a sustainability plan as part of their year-three renewal application. The grantee staff report that strong partnerships at both the subgrantee and statewide level will be critical for sustainability and feel that excellent progress is being made in developing such partnerships at the statewide level.

As of the time that this report was prepared, it was too soon to be sure how effective these efforts would be. Currently, sustainability efforts and plans are uneven across the subgrantees and some projects reportedly are doing more than others. The grantee expects that these efforts will be further developed as the subgrantees approach year three of their projects. Examples of the subgrantees' plans and efforts towards sustaining their project include: receiving a state service-learning grant to provide district-wide training to build service-learning into the school district's structure; applying for additional funds through foundations or corporate sponsors; collaborating with other CHESP partners in writing grant proposals; obtaining continued funding from the lead community organization or higher education lead partner; and establishing a CHESP project as a 501(c) 3 in order to have more flexibility and increased access to resources outside of the school district.

Recommendations for Improving the CHESP Model

Grantee and subgrantee staff and partner staff identified several issues and offered recommendations based on their experience to date that have direct implications for the future of the program at the national level as well as the state level in Florida. The three key issues include:

- *The need for additional time to promote meaningful partnership activities.* Many program staff at the grantee and subgrantee levels reported that there had not been adequate time to develop the initial project goals and it would have been helpful to have additional time for the processes of establishing the partnerships and planning the projects. This seemed to be especially true for subgrantees whose partnerships did not exist prior to CHESP. They found that considerable time was needed to develop meaningful relationships among groups who have not had a history of collaboration. Staff recommended that CHESP be a five-year grant instead of a three-year grant. Program staff also reported that time is also needed to promote integration of service-learning into teacher education programs, in planning as well as in implementation.
- *Increased flexibility in use of funds.* Subgrantee staff reported that they would like to be able to use CHESP funds to purchase necessary equipment (e.g., video cameras) and student refreshments, both of which are not allowed under their CHESP grant due to federal regulations regarding purchasing food and state restrictions regarding purchasing equipment. Another suggestion was to provide stipends for teacher training provided during the summer.
- *The need to devote increased attention to promoting youth leadership.* As noted earlier in this case study, the grantee staff report a firm commitment to youth voice and the program has emphasized youth leadership and youth development activities at many

levels. However, youth have not yet had a formal role in project development activities at either the grantee or subgrantee levels. The grantee's goal is to form a statewide youth advisory group for the CHESP project but they will need to determine a role for the group as well as a way to overcome geographic and financial barriers that currently stand in the way of creating this group.

Implications and Lessons

The Florida CHESP experience provides many examples of the kinds of steps that are necessary to promote meaningful partnership activity at both the grantee and subgrantee levels. For example, the facilitating factors reported most often by subgrantee lead agency and subgrantee partner staff include: (1) the importance of all partners sharing a common vision and goal for the project; (2) the value of having a general structure or some components of the project already in place (e.g., service-learning curriculum); (3) the value of pre-existing relationships with partners (thus avoiding the additional burden of creating new partnerships from scratch); (4) the importance of firm commitment of non-lead partner organizations' administrations; (5) the value of financial support from grants and/or other sources; and (6) the importance of clear communication and understanding of roles among partners.

The issues involved in promoting partnerships become even more important when promoting ambitious three-way partnerships among higher education, K–12, and community-based organizations. Grantee staff emphasized the need to promote these kinds of three-way partnerships at the subgrantee level where many partnerships were not yet fully evolved. They report that many subgrantees were still initiating these partnerships when they applied for CHESP funds and, despite the fact that the Request For Applications stated that “all proposals must have significant collaboration between K–12, higher education, and community organizations,” several projects were missing an active community-based organizational partner. It is unclear whether there were any common factors affecting these programs that limited their collaboration with community partners.

As noted in our descriptions of the three Florida CHESP subgrantees in this case study, much of the activity at the subgrantee level is directly overseen by the lead agency. In two of the three subgrantees, other partners play very limited roles in actual project management. Across the 15 projects, the three-way partnerships are at different levels of development. Grantee and subgrantee staff recognize the importance of balanced three-way partnerships and are promoting such structures, but note that this model takes time and long-term commitment.

The experience with CHESP has also illuminated many well known barriers in building partnerships at the grantee and subgrantee levels (e.g., scheduling conflicts, delineating roles and responsibilities) and provided examples of how these challenges can sometimes be especially potent for efforts to engage community-based organizations as full partners. In addition, the experience has highlighted the bureaucratic and organizational issues that are involved such as lack of support from key elements of partner organizations including, at times, top management. All of these issues require time and skilled interventions from grantee-level staff to be ameliorated.

Chapter Five

Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning: Common Links Through Service-Learning

Introduction

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<i>Website:</i>	http://cfl.state.mn.us/servicelearning/
<i>Organization (Type):</i>	Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning (SEA)
<i>Subgrantees:</i>	School districts—eight in year one, nine in year two, and ten in year three
<i>Initial CHESP funding:</i>	October 2000
<i>Funding levels:</i>	Year one: \$222,100; year two: \$240,529; year three: \$230,000

This case study report describes the Minnesota “Common Links Through Service Learning” program, a Community, Higher Education, and School Partnership (CHESP) program, which was funded in October 2000 by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The grantee, Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning (DCFL), partners with the nationally recognized service-learning leader, the National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC), and Minnesota Campus Compact (MNCC) in planning and overseeing this effort. The program funded eight partnerships in the first year of the program, one led by a school, six led by local school districts, and one led by a cooperative school district working with 11 local school districts. In year two, another school-district-led partnership was added. In year three, a statewide community organization was added, bringing the total number of subgrantees to ten. As new subgrantees were added, funding levels of subgrantees of existing subgrantees were decreased.

The Minnesota CHESP program devotes a high priority to incorporating service-learning pedagogy into the curriculum of colleges of teacher education by engaging student teachers in service-learning pedagogy in K–12 schools. In addition, youth voice is an important part of the Minnesota CHESP approach and is implemented through the requirement that young people make up at least one-third of all mandatory subgrantee steering committees.

This case study report describes and analyzes the Minnesota CHESP program as of October 2002. It begins with a description of state-level activities and then highlights activities at two subgrantee sites—Cedar Riverside School in Minneapolis and Duluth School District in Duluth. Rather than describing a third subgrantee, we report on two sets of focus groups attended by all Minnesota CHESP subgrantees in the spring and fall of 2002, respectively. The report concludes with lessons learned by grantees and subgrantees.

Grantee-Level Discussion

Overview

Lead Grantee Organization: Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning

Minnesota has been the home of many of the United States' leading service-learning policymakers, researchers, and practitioners for more than twenty years. As the headquarters for the National Youth Leadership Council, the Service-Learning Exchange, the Service-Learning Clearinghouse (until 2000), the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (until 1993); Minnesota Campus Compact; and a cadre of nationally known service-learning scholars and practitioners, Minnesota has earned its reputation for quality service-learning practice and research. The grantee, the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning (DCFL), has received Learn and Serve America K-12 and community-based funding since 1994.

Many state offices of education have experienced financial and political difficulties in maintaining high quality service-learning programs in light of new demands from high stakes testing, a national economic downturn, and new leadership following changes in elected officials. Minnesota's DCFL is no exception: a recent state workers' strike, major shifts in state budget funding priorities, and state and local school district budget cuts have created stress and pressure on all education agencies in the state.

DCFL's service-learning program works closely with other programs within state government. Perhaps most significant is the relationship within DCFL between the service-learning and high-stakes testing staff responsible for the Minnesota Educational Effectiveness Program (MEEP). As in other states, standardized testing scores and related graduation standards are among the highest priority issues at all levels of the Minnesota education system. Thus, DCFL staff have made a concerted effort to link service-learning to achievement of state standards in order to provide a solid foundation for service-learning in the state. For example, DCFL service-learning staff trained MEEP staff to include service learning in the training that they provide to help local school districts improve performance on standardized tests. Staff from both units of DCFL wrote curriculum and provided training to help teachers incorporate service-learning into MEEP endorsed civics curriculum.¹

However, the election of a new governor in November 2002 and the subsequent selection of a new leadership team for the DCFL have led to a re-thinking about what Minnesota's standards should be, hence the efforts of service-learning leaders to align their efforts with those of the standards movement in the state may also need to be rethought and refined.

¹ The exact nature of the high stakes testing in coming years remains uncertain, however, due to the election of a new state governor who is committed to promoting major changes in this state's educational system.

Goals

The Common Links Through Service-Learning program seeks to build strong three-way partnerships between community organizations, higher education, and K–12 schools or school districts throughout the state of Minnesota. The program has five goals:

- Expanding the role of youth in service-learning across the state of Minnesota;
- Training 25 teachers and 20 community-based representatives in assessing student learning, integrating service-learning into curriculum, and meeting graduation standards;
- Creating eight local partnerships between community agencies, at least one higher education institution, and at least one K–12 school to ensure that the program identifies and meets meaningful community needs, involves youth, and strengthens cross-sector service-learning programs;
- Providing semi-annual workshops for 25 faculty members of teacher education departments in the eight partnerships; and
- Increasing civic responsibility of 3,200 K-12 student participants through cross-sector service-learning projects in all eight original partnerships.

Grantee Partnership

The Minnesota CHESP grant is centrally planned and administered by the lead partner, the Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning (DCFL) with assistance and support from two other partners. The grantee-level partnership builds on well-established relationships between DCFL and the two primary partners: National Youth Leadership Council and Minnesota Campus Compact. The partners typically meet individually with DCFL (rather than as a group), and although they provide input, the DCFL coordinator makes most key program decisions. We have elsewhere described this as a typical “hub and spoke” model of partnership. At the grantee level, each partner receives about \$8,000 a year from CHESP and provides a 100 percent match. These partners and their roles are described below:

- *Minnesota Campus Compact (MNCC)*. MNCC is among the more well-respected and well-established statewide Campus Compacts in the country. In this CHESP program, MNCC provides training and technical assistance to staff and faculty of teacher education programs and hopes to expand service-learning practices among newly trained teachers in the state of Minnesota. MNCC works with its member institutions (50 colleges and universities) to build effective partnerships by training and advising subgrantees, assisting in grant-making efforts, serving on review committees, leading partnership-building sessions at statewide conferences, conducting service-learning institutes in teacher education, and managing a state grant program that supports campus-community collaborations. Since this CHESP program was initiated, MNCC has added one full-time staff person to work with K–12 schools, and expects to create a new position in July 2003 to build partnerships with schools and community-based organizations.

- *National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC)*. Founded in 1983, NYLC is one of the country’s oldest service-learning organizations. NYLC sees “youth voice” as a critical component of service-learning, and this point of view led to NYLC’s selection as the CHESP partner with primary responsibility for providing training and technical assistance to CHESP subgrantees in support of incorporating youth voice into their partnerships. Despite its national focus², staff do not see any lessening of NYLC’s commitment to Minnesota. According to NYLC staff, “[We] started in Minnesota and we are not leaving.”

The partners helped to shape the CHESP grant writing process. The initial proposal called for teacher training to be the primary objective of the entire grant, but Campus Compact encouraged a broader approach in recognition of the many ways colleges and universities can partner with schools and community organizations. As a result, Minnesota does not require subgrantees to focus on teacher training, but strongly encourages it.

In addition to CHESP, DCFL works with MNCC and NYLC on a wide range of service-learning activities, including Learn and Serve America, Leadership Schools, and Learning In Deed. Much of the DCFL service-learning training is conducted jointly between the subgrantees of these different funding initiatives. Although Minnesota grantee-level partners rarely meet around any one of their specific initiatives (such as CHESP), DCFL service-learning staff meet individually with MNCC and NYLC staff as part of their many program partnerships. For the most part, partners seemed satisfied with this arrangement. As one partner said, “It’s hard to separate out CHESP because that’s just the way we do things in Minnesota.”

Program Management Structure

The DCFL staff is responsible for managing the CHESP program. When DCFL’s service-learning coordinator—who wrote the initial CHESP proposal and originally supervised the CHESP program—resigned in the fall of 2001, the recently hired assistant assumed the management role. The new CHESP director identified this unexpected change in leadership mid-way through the program to be a challenge for Minnesota’s CHESP initiative.

Minnesota DCFL also staffs a Learn and Serve America steering committee that holds four meetings each year to provide oversight and direction to the service-learning coordinator. The steering committee includes representatives from the DCFL units responsible for high-stakes testing, training, and public relations, along with the two CHESP state-level partners and several subgrantee representatives. Youth were not represented on the committee at the time of the case study.

Role of Other CNCS Programs

The DCFL service-learning coordinator oversees and manages four service-learning funding sectors: Learn and Serve America, CHESP, the Kellogg Foundation-funded Learning In Deed, and

² NYLC sponsors the National Service-Learning Exchange and the annual National Service-Learning Conference

Communities Engaged in Enhancing Learning through Service (CEELS). All of these grant programs recipients participate in joint trainings.

Grantee-Level Program Activities

Subgrantee Selection

In Minnesota, CHESP subgrantee funding is renewable, but with declining allocations over the three-year term of the program as follows. In year one, subgrantees were eligible to receive up to \$20,000; in year two, subgrantees were eligible to receive up to \$15,000; and in year three, the maximum funding was \$10,000. According to DCFL officials, this allocation plan made it possible to increase the number of subgrantees in the second and third years of CHESP. There were eight grantees in the first year at \$20,000 each; another was added in years two and three, bringing the total number of grantees in the final year to ten.

The CNCS CHESP funding process forced DCFL to develop tight timelines for selecting subgrantees. As is the case with many state education agencies, state regulations prohibit DCFL from initiating subgrantee allocations until they receive the official award letter from CNCS. Anticipating this delay, DCFL staff notified potential subgrantees in the summer that funding might be available in the fall. Even with advanced preparation, however, the delayed official announcement meant that subgrants could be issued only in the middle of the school year.

DCFL selected subgrantees through a competitive Request for Funding (RFP) process in which Minnesota public school districts were eligible only if they had, or were willing to create, three-way partnerships with CBOs and institutions of higher education. The RFP process provided subgrantees with the following organizational and administrative guidelines:

- Develop a comprehensive vision and action plan to involve youth as decision makers; increase the role of college and university students, especially pre-service teachers, in service-learning; and increase the integration of service-learning into curriculum to provide a network of service-learning opportunities within their educational systems;
- Develop a partnership steering committee of 8–12 people including two to three students (at least 25 percent of the committee), one K–12 teacher, one K–12 administrator, two higher education representatives, and one community-based agency representative;
- Select an elementary and a secondary school as lead schools for the projects;
- Participate in the statewide system to support service-learning and attend regional workshops;
- Attend an annual service-learning conference, either at the state or national level;
- Participate in the statewide evaluation of CHESP;

- Match funds at 100 percent in-kind or cash; and
- Submit semi-annual reports with required information.

Once proposals were received, a diverse steering committee met to make recommendations about selection of subgrantees. The reviewers were supplied with packets of applications and trained in the review process. In addition, one representative of each of the three grantee-level partners read all 28 applications. The final decision in the selection of CHESP subgrants belonged to the DCFL project coordinator who could (and sometimes did) overrule reviewers when it was deemed appropriate.

Technical Assistance and Training to Subgrantees

DCFL provided a wide range of training and technical assistance in the implementation of its CHESP service-learning partnerships. Because subgrantees of specific programs varied in their service-learning experience, DCFL hosted meetings among Learn and Serve, Learning In Deed, and CHESP subgrantees—a process that maximized knowledge sharing, supported service-learning infrastructure, and increased the likelihood that subgrantees could learn from each other. DCFL staff also visit subgrantee sites at least once a year.

Promoting Youth Voice

As mentioned earlier, NYLC provided training to CHESP subgrantees in developing youth voice. In addition to statewide and regional training, two of the CHESP sites received on-site training from NYLC in youth voice. Nevertheless, youth did not have many opportunities to play a direct role at the grantee level.

Internal Evaluation

DCFL did not hire an outside evaluator for CHESP. Instead, DCFL monitored subgrantee activities through events, reports, and site visits, and provided feedback. While all participants in CHESP planning agreed that service-learning—in particular, the reflection component—led to improved student outcomes, DCFL officials had not developed or selected instruments to measure student outcomes at the time of our site visits.

The CHESP steering committee completed a 40-page Self-Assessment of Service-Learning (SASL) in the second year of the grant. Although committee members found it useful to consider the grantee-level program through the lens of SASL, the utility of the exercise for planning purposes was diminished by funding shifts in DCFL.

Grantee-Level Discussion Summary

Minnesota's CHESP program highlights the experiences of a state education agency (SEA) in a state with a great deal of service-learning experience and resources, and within a climate of staff changes, budgetary crises, and greater demands for accountability. In the development of the CHESP grantee-level partnership, DCFL staff recruited established partners to provide specific forms of technical assistance and training to subgrantees. Minnesota's CHESP is also an example of leveraging CNCS

money with existing partnerships to broaden the scope of service-learning in Minnesota. The next section will describe important changes that subgrantees were able to create in their schools and communities through CHESP.

Subgrantee-Level Descriptions

This section contains descriptions of the partnerships created by two of the ten subgrantees—Cedar Riverside School in Minneapolis and Duluth School District in Duluth—and the program activities they sponsored. We also report on two focus groups with all Minnesota CHESP subgrantees held in the spring and fall of 2002 respectively.

Cedar Riverside School Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

The Cedar Riverside K–8 Charter School is located on the first two floors of a Minneapolis high-rise apartment building. Half of the 120 students also live in this building, which serves 17 nationalities including Vietnamese, Native American, and a newly arrived Somali population.

Since becoming a CHESP subgrantee, the Cedar Riverside School has incorporated community service as a central part of its mission. As such, every person in the school contributes to its maintenance: the principal cleans the toilets, teachers sweep the floors, and students help keep the school clean.

The Cedar Riverside School CHESP program represents a three-way partnership between the school, Augsburg College, and Fairview Hospital.

Subgrantee Partnership

Augsburg College, the higher education partner that is located two blocks away from Cedar Riverside, played a pivotal role in the school’s development. Prior to receiving the CHESP subgrant, Augsburg College pre-service student teachers were involved in service-learning projects at Cedar Riverside—that is, they provided service *to* the Cedar Riverside students. Since CHESP, not only did the Augsburg teacher education program use service-learning as a method, but student teachers also were taught to use service-learning pedagogy in the K–12 curriculum. In addition, the College worked with the Cedar Riverside School by hosting visits for K-12 students to the Augsburg campus, participating in the AmeriCorps “Get Ready” program, and collaborating with Cedar Riverside staff to write grants and conduct training initiatives.

Cedar Riverside CHESP program had 17 community partners including the multi-family, mixed-income, high-rise building; local hospitals; a nearby day-care center; the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce; two high schools; several colleges; and a camp in Wisconsin. In its second year of CHESP, more than one hundred and fifty people referred to as “community partners” volunteered in the school.

The relationship between Fairview Hospital and Cedar Riverside provided a good example of a reciprocal partnership. Cedar Riverside students visited the hospital to organize records and paint hallway decorations, and the hospital donated school supplies for the school. Additionally, Fairview doctors donated \$3,000 every year to the school operating budget.

Local Management Structure

The Cedar Riverside School's board of directors helped maintain communication and direction for the CHESP partnership. Board members included parents, Cedar Riverside staff, and representatives from both Fairview Hospital and Augsburg College. A smaller advisory committee specifically for the CHESP program included representatives from the core partners.

Youth played a limited leadership role in service-learning during the first two years of the CHESP subgrant. However, during the third year, Cedar Riverside increased the role of youth through the introduction of ambassadors—students who serve as a link between classroom and service activities. Ambassadors were elected by classmates as part of a course on democracy and civics, and served for the year as spokespeople to community partners on behalf of their classes.

Project Descriptions

As mentioned earlier, service-learning was a central focus of Cedar Riverside School's culture and philosophy. The school's vice principal and service-learning coordinator—the primary service-learning advocate at Cedar Riverside School—describes the impact of CHESP in one word: "Hope." She states, "Before CHESP, students were used to being the recipients of service. Now they see that they can do things too!"

Each student in every grade level was engaged in ongoing service-learning projects. Using a curriculum toolkit prepared by the vice principal, teachers developed theme-based service-learning units. For example, a section on "birds" provided a multi-disciplinary unit that integrates science, math, art, and service lessons.

Cedar Riverside students are involved in a wide range of service-learning projects:

- Painting potted plants and giving them to a hospital (*art*);
- Playing games with handicapped children at an Augsburg College sporting event (*social studies*);
- Painting watershed drains (*science*);
- Training Somali middle-school girls to lead an after-school English as a Second Language class for Somali women in the high-rise building (*language arts*); and
- Helping kindergarten students create books and videos (on subjects such as "red" and "blue"), which they read to children in a nearby nursery school.

In addition to Cedar Riverside’s academic goals, the school’s mission is designed to educate its diverse student population about American concepts of civic engagement. According to the vice principal, “We want students to know what it means to be a citizen. Since many are not citizens, we can demonstrate what that would mean using service-learning. America is not just a place to give you things. We expect you to give as well.” In this way, CHESP developed service-learning projects to expose students to this reciprocal concept of citizenship.

Duluth School District Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

Prior to CHESP, the Duluth School District had received both Kellogg Foundation-funded Learning In Deed and federal Learn and Serve America grants. The Duluth CHESP subgrant has attempted to build on these district-wide initiatives through the broad oversight of a committee structure—a process, according to many, that has strengthened relationships among schools, colleges, and community organizations.

Subgrantee Partnership

The CHESP partnership built on an existing three-way partnership with a strong lead organization that was created under previous funding. The partners were coordinated through an advisory committee and included the following:

- *Higher education partners.* University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD) and the College of Saint Scholastica. UMD, the key higher education partner, has approximately ten thousand students. The initial CHESP contact was with the UMD Department of Child Education, but staff turnover shifted the primary contact to the “Darland Connection”—UMD’s volunteer tutoring program. Several other UMD departments have also embraced service-learning in their classes, a fact that the service-learning coordinator credited to district-wide advocacy efforts sponsored by CHESP. The fact that three UMD staff and two UMD students served on the Duluth Service-Learning Community Committee’s CHESP subcommittee demonstrated that the UMD/CHESP partnership worked to integrate service-learning into pre-service education and provide links between aspiring and practicing teachers.
- The College of Saint Scholastica (CSS), a small independent college with about 2,200 students, was forming a second higher education service-learning partnership with a local elementary school that emerged in year three of CHESP. CSS partnered with a nearby elementary school, using an AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteer to help plan and staff the effort. Together they developed a walking tour connected to the elementary science curriculum and involved CSS occupational therapy and music students with the elementary school to provide services at the Benedictine Health Center, a Senior Citizen facility. Elementary students also worked with arthritic patients to develop their finger dexterity through the use of music therapy.

- *Community partners.* The YMCA and the Duluth Chamber of Commerce. In the first year of CHESP, due to staff changes at key partner organizations, Duluth struggled to maintain a committed, involved partnership around service-learning issues. In the spring of 2002, CHESP paid for representatives from the YMCA and Duluth Chamber of Commerce to attend the National Service-Learning Conference to learn about service-learning and mobilize their involvement in the partnership. After the national conference, leaders from both groups approached the Duluth service-learning coordinator in hopes of becoming part of the CHESP steering committee. Community partnerships were ultimately established at the institutional level with both organizations—both of which, despite their inherent differences, provided important benefits to the partnership.

Local Management Structure

At the core of the Duluth CHESP partnership was the ongoing Duluth service-learning community committee, a group with 27 full members and three adjunct members from the three sectors of the partnership—higher education, K–12 schools, and community organizations. The committee maintains institutional (rather than individual) representation from the Duluth Chamber of Commerce, the school board, and the YMCA. This was an approach that was validated when several key people changed positions and their replacements joined the group. The committee gives members the opportunity to share ideas about institutionalizing service-learning throughout the community.

Project Descriptions

The Duluth CHESP program was engaged in a wide range of activities that educated the district about service-learning, including:

- *Workshops and training.* One regular training offering was “Service-Learning 101,” a full-day course designed and jointly led by two UMD college students, the Duluth service-learning coordinator, and the two AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers. During the summer of 2002, more than seventy-five teachers, community partners and college students attended the course.
- *Working with the community.* Local leadership worked to build a stronger relationship between businesses and the Duluth Chamber of Commerce. Based on ideas developed at the Seattle national service-learning conference, the Chamber co-sponsored the project “Art in the City” in December 2002. The Downtown Business Council arranged for the Duluth transit system to bring students downtown to paint empty storefronts with winter scenes for the holiday season. Community businesses paid for supplies and a pizza celebration.
- *Coordinating projects.* AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers, through an AmeriCorps grant, have worked in the school district to promote service-learning programs, produce a newsletter, and develop training opportunities. Duluth CHESP has applied for a VISTA volunteer to assist in coordination of the initiative but, as of our second site visit, nothing had been confirmed.

Focus Group of Minnesota CHESP Subgrantees

In addition to site visits at the two subgrantee partnerships described above, members of our research team attended two statewide CHESP trainings in March and November of 2002. We conducted focus groups and interviews with representatives of all ten Minnesota CHESP subgrantees. Findings and overall themes of these discussions are presented below.

- *Minnesota CHESP partnerships varied widely in scope and type of activities.* Grantees range from single school districts to cooperative districts serving multiple communities. Among the ten sites, some have a greater focus on the school level, and some focus more on the community. For example, the Saint Peter school district initiated community-wide study groups on the needs of the growing Somali immigrants. The Pine to Prairie Cooperative in Red Lake Falls, on the other hand, emphasized school staff development through training and the creation of a service-learning curriculum that focuses on the roles that higher education and community partners play in schools. Partners included several state universities, community organizations, and, in one site, America's Promise Fellows.
- *Subgrantees were satisfied with DCFL's support and training.* Subgrantees especially noted the value of information sharing and peer-learning sessions in statewide meetings. However, they acknowledged that the geographic distance between sites sometimes made it difficult to travel to the statewide meetings.
- *Subgrantees suggested that the terms of the decreasing allocation process should be reversed, given the nature of partnership development.* They reported that in year one, when partnerships were just being established and staff were being hired, it was hard to spend the full \$20,000 (plus the 100 percent match). Conversely, by the end of the third year when partnerships were active, more funds were needed to support the increasing scope of activities.

Subgrantee-Level Discussion Summary

The two Minnesota subgrantee cases and the focus group discussion demonstrate the range of approaches taken by CHESP subgrantees in Minnesota. The subgrantees represent very different types of organizations: one is a small charter school in the metropolitan city of Minneapolis and the other is a large school district in the northern industrial city of Duluth. In light of their different needs and resources, they have approached CHESP very differently. Whereas the charter school emphasizes a small tight partnership with only a few partners, the latter maintains a broad committee structure that invites a range of networked institutional partnerships. The Minnesota focus group discussion reinforces this lesson that the Minnesota CHESP subgrantees vary in scope, size and activities. In addition, the focus group and case studies suggest that subgrantees were satisfied with the Minnesota CHESP program.

Summary Analysis

Grantee and Subgrantee Perspectives

Overall Reported Progress

While grantee-level respondents were generally satisfied with the evolution of the CHESP program in their state, they expressed concern about two challenges: (1) the potential impact of expected statewide budget cuts and (2) the closing of the Minnesota Office of Community Service and Volunteerism, which had worked with community-based volunteer directors across the state. The grantee-level partners were aware of and discussed the importance of developing stronger statewide networks for service-learning as a buffer from these challenges.

Both the lead partner and other partners at the grantee level shared a mixed assessment of the evolution of the CHESP subgrantees. All were able to identify outstanding examples of partnerships in the state and felt that the CHESP model broadened the definition of partnership. However, they felt strong sustainable partnerships had not taken hold across the state to the extent that they had originally hoped.

Still, according to the original DCFL service-learning coordinator, “CHESP has forced us to think about the bigger picture.” Within the Department of Children, Families, and Learning, CHESP helped sustain a service-learning office during a period of severe budget cuts and programmatic reorganizations. Additionally, CHESP helped build a stronger relationship between DCFL, NYLC, and the Minnesota Campus Compact.

NYLC leaders noted that their training sessions and curriculum materials were strengthened because they had been tested in new settings as a result of CHESP. At Minnesota Campus Compact, CHESP helped establish a new position that focused on building relationships with K–12 schools initiatives (especially around teacher education); in addition, two part-time positions focused on building community-based service-learning relationships.

In terms of the specific value-added impact of CHESP funding, both grantee and subgrantee contacts reported that subgrantee efforts have met with varied results. Some efforts have demonstrated great success. In one case, a CHESP partnership was credited with the creation of a new school (the Chaska School in which service-learning was built into the school philosophy). In other cases, CHESP was viewed merely as one of many grants, in a long history of service-learning initiatives in Minnesota—a fact that makes it difficult to single out any distinctive contributions from the CHESP initiative.

Subgrantees also noted some specific CHESP accomplishments, including:

- More new teachers entered the field with service-learning teaching experience;
- Community awareness and understanding of service-learning, diversity, and culture increased at many of the subgrantee sites;

- Sensitivity to cultural issues on the part of faculty increased in many of the subgrantee areas;
- Efforts to integrate community organizations into the life of the school increased;
- Efforts to learn about youth and their needs improved; and
- New curricula for service-learning that involved community and higher education partners was developed and adopted.

Despite the uniqueness of each subgrantee situation, a number of lessons emerged from the Minnesota CHESP subgrantee experience. In subgrantee focus groups, the following challenges were reported to be important to the effectiveness of partnerships:

- Community leadership often changed at frequent intervals;
- Some community partners did not understand their role as co-instructors when working with students involved in service-learning activities;
- Some teachers were reluctant to share responsibility for curriculum development with community-based partners, university partners, parents, students and others;
- Potential higher education partners were often at a great geographic distance from K–12 districts and CBO partners, thereby making it hard for faculty, students, or other college staff to play an active role in CHESP planning, service delivery, and assessment;
- Logistical concerns existed such as conflicting schedules among higher education, K–12 schools, and CBO schedules; and
- Competing time demands sometimes eroded partnerships (e.g., the ability of one of the state partners to support subgrantees was limited by their involvement in planning a national conference).

Several factors facilitated successful subgrantee-level partnerships. Efforts to help community leaders and members to see connections between their own needs and opportunities and those of potential K–12 and higher education partners were seen as beneficial to healthy partnerships. Subgrantees were able to cite numerous instances in which the higher education and K–12 partners have listened closely to their CBO partners and thus improved their program designs. In one subgrantee’s experience, having steering committees act as study group and going back to an agreed-upon community vision were seen as touchstones for partnership development. These kinds of study groups can incorporate K–12, higher education, and community perspectives to provide common ground to change culture.

Another area that was seen as important for partnership development was the ability to set clear expectations for partners and mechanisms to assess whether these expectations are being met.

Subgrantees even suggested developing means to find new partners when an existing one does not meet expectations.

Replication and Sustainability

At the grantee level, DCFL staff were not sure whether they would *want* to either replicate or sustain the program in its current form. If they could develop the CHESP program again, the DCFL service-learning leadership believed that it would be useful to distinguish between those (potential) subgrantees that already have productive partnerships and those that needed to develop them. DCFL would then develop funding levels and timelines that reflect the different developmental progress of subgrantee partnerships. For example, larger subgrants of about \$20,000 (per year) would then make sense for more established partnerships, which could be expected to move into project planning and implementation more quickly. On the other hand, year one planning grants for about \$10,000 would be more than enough to support the growth of fledgling or new partnerships. CNCS might also consider encouraging such an optional planning period established for subgrantees in year one as part of its overall program design.

The question of sustainability has led to different responses from various subgrantees. In some cases (such as Cedar Riverside), CHESP has been responsible for transforming the culture of an entire school. In such cases, continuation of service-learning would require little or no outside community support or funding, and it is therefore widely felt that the service-learning activities will continue beyond the term of the grant. In other cases, however, the initiatives have not yet developed clear plans for sustaining themselves beyond the grant period. As one subgrantee partner said, “All of my grants expire this year. I don’t need a ton of money; I just need some. We all need somebody to spearhead it. It takes time, involves lots of people.”

Recommendations for Improving the CHESP Model

In Minnesota, according to DCFL staff, the CHESP program did not differ significantly from previous Minnesota service-learning programs. But grantee leadership reported an ability to strengthen the emphasis on partnerships. Learn and Serve *allowed* three-way partnerships, whereas CHESP *required* them. “It was hard to require such partnerships before CHESP,” according to a DCFL service-learning coordinator, “so it was smart of CNCS to set aside funding specifically to promote partnerships.”

According to DCFL leadership, the CHESP program has made it clear that in order to build effective partnerships, groups need either (1) pre-existing relationships or (2) sufficient planning time (at least one year) to identify needs and strategies to deal with them. In other words, the CHESP experience has demonstrated that “partnership development” is a very different process when it is built on the foundation of pre-existing partnerships and when it is not.

While the Minnesota experience suggests that the level of training and support from CNCS was appropriate and while grantee lead partner staff considered Corporation staff to be helpful, returning phone calls and providing good information, they also suggested some ways that CNCS could provide further assistance. One staff member commented that

CNCS needs more regular ongoing communication with sites. For example, a monthly mailing to all grantees with an ‘FYI’ section might provide more notice about changes to policies or grant guidelines—including possible legislative proposals before they go into effect. In particular, it would have been nice to have had more notice about changes in Service-Learning leader schools.³

On the other hand, as previously described, the combination of CNCS’s funding process and state DCFL requirements turned the subgrantee selection process into a hurried, start-and-stop sequence. One possible implication of this experience is that CNCS should consider state funding cycles and keep state regulations in mind when proposals for funding are issued, so that local-level planning can take place in a reasonable fashion. This challenge is especially important when programs are so focused on collaboration among partners.

Finally, as noted above, several Minnesota CHESP officials believe that CNCS should consider having such an optional planning period established for subgrantees in year one as part of its overall program design.

Implications and Lessons

The Minnesota CHESP experience points to several factors that can facilitate the implementation of partnership programs such as CHESP. Some of these are beyond the control of grantees, such as whether there exists:

- A rich track record of service-learning management and training, including Learning In Deed and Learn and Serve grants; or
- A strong pre-existing experience of collaboration among potential partners (e.g., DCFL, Minnesota Campus Compact, and NYLC).

However, other facilitating factors can be influenced as the program is implemented. These include (1) the existence of strong state guidelines that require the inclusion of broadly-based advisory committees with a youth presence, and (2) the utilization of an effective subgranting RFP process.

Grantee or subgrantee representatives identified the following barriers and challenges to the development of partnerships:

- A growing state funding crisis that has had an impact on support for all education programming at the local school district level, a factor that makes it hard to maintain service-learning infrastructure (such as coordinators and professional development).
- The need to distinguish between CHESP goals and Learn and Serve/Learning In Deed goals at both grantee and sub-grantee levels and the difficulties in doing so.

³ In comparison to previous years where there were more than a hundred new leader schools, there are now only 25 new leader schools. Minnesota did not submit any leader school applications this year.

- Finding ways to measure the effectiveness of the partnerships that are being created or enhanced. Initially DCFL leadership spent a great deal of time on a process to develop a self-assessment rubric based upon a “continuum” of partnership formation. However, the early versions of the continuum were determined to be “too linear” to be a good reflection of the complex realities of partnership development and program growth. The conclusion reached was that all partnerships take on a form of their own and go through transformations, thereby making it difficult if not impossible to come up with rubrics with clear continua.
- Lack of understanding of what an optimal functioning “partnership” can be and what it can mean for partners and the community at large. For example, some concerns have been expressed about the investment of time and money in partnership development that could have otherwise been spent directly on service-learning.

There is little that CNCS or a state service-learning program can do about some of the challenges faced in Minnesota, in particular, those relating to budgetary crises. However, CNCS (and/or CHESP grantees) can play a key role in developing materials and planning training or technical assistance to clarify (1) the distinct expectations for CHESP (as opposed to other service learning grants), (2) the value added from effective three-way partnerships, and (3) ways to measure progress towards the development of these kinds of partnerships.

Perhaps the most important lesson that can be drawn from the Minnesota service-learning experience relates not so much to the challenges that have been faced by Minnesota DCFL, but to the ways that Minnesota’s strong service-learning foundation can be used to buffer a state’s service-learning program against these crises.

Chapter Six

Mississippi Department of Education: K–12 Lighthouse Partnerships

Introduction

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When the Mississippi Department of Education and the State Commission learned about the upcoming CHESP grants, they decided to submit three distinct Learn and Serve America proposals—one for higher education, one for community-based organizations, and one for CHESP—each based on the CHESP model of three-way partnerships, but with different lead agencies drawn from different service sectors. The resulting three programs, known as the *K-12 Lighthouse Partnerships*, *Community Based Lighthouse Partnerships* and *Higher Education Lighthouse Partnerships* provided our research team with a unique opportunity to observe the same CHESP model sponsored by different types of Learn and Serve America funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

This case study report focuses on the *Mississippi K–12 Lighthouse Partnerships*, the initiative that is supported by a CHESP grant but addresses the entire Lighthouse initiative at the grantee level. The grantee, the Mississippi Department of Education, turned over the management of its CHESP initiative to the Mississippi Center for Community and Civic Engagement (CCCE), which is located at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM).

CCCE is a statewide center that was created in 2000, in part through funding from CHESP. CCCE manages and provided CHESP funding to nine K–12 school district subgrantees and also manages five *Higher Education Lighthouse Partnerships* and seven *Community Based Lighthouse Partnerships*. The discussions of three subgrantees in this case study—two CHESP-sponsored K-12 Lighthouse Partnerships (Hattiesburg and Forest) and one higher education Lighthouse Partnership (Jackson State University)—illustrate some of the differences that result from implementing the same model with different kinds of lead subgrantee agencies.

Grantee-Level Discussion

Overview

Lead Grantee Organization: Mississippi Department of Education—The Center for Community and Civic Engagement (CCCE) at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM)

In 1992 the Mississippi Department of Education (DOE) obtained a Serve-America grant for its School and Community-Based Service-Learning program, and the agency has received continued support from CNCS since 1994. By the year 2001, service-learning programs were initiated in 33 school districts, serving 36,000 young people in more than one hundred schools. Still, state leadership acknowledges that most Mississippi schools are in the early stages of linking community service and academic curriculum. According to one official, “Prior to CHESP, service-learning didn’t really catch on with Mississippi school superintendents at the district level . . . Many superintendents still see service-learning as a [non-academic extracurricular] program, [but] we try to impress upon them [that it] is a teaching tool.”

At the higher education level, prior to CHESP, few institutions in Mississippi were engaged in service-learning. The University of Southern Mississippi was the first in the state to establish an office of service-learning and one of the first to join Campus Link—a network of colleges and AmeriCorps programs in Mississippi. As such, USM became a natural site for the statewide CCCE center.

Despite the fact that Mississippi has consistently ranked near the bottom of all 50 states on academic outcomes, especially in literacy, as well as its limited experience with school-based service-learning, the state has a rich history of community service and volunteerism. In particular, AmeriCorps has been a source of pride for educational reform leaders in Mississippi; 350 AmeriCorps students currently work in the Future Teachers Corps program, where they use service-learning to teach reading to younger K–12 students.

In 1999 and 2000 the Mississippi State Commission for Volunteer Service invited K–12 educators and administrators, post-secondary faculty and administrators, and representatives from several community-based organizations to devise a strategic plan to strengthen the infrastructure for service-learning throughout the state. Two initiatives emerged from this effort: (1) the Mississippi Alliance for Community Service-Learning (MACSL); and (2) a three-year strategic plan, in which funding for service-learning shifted from short-term mini-grants awarded to individual teachers to a more systemic approach that funded local school districts.

Goals

The overall Mississippi Lighthouse Partnerships initiative has a set of common objectives:

- Establishing a statewide service-learning center on the University of Southern Mississippi campus;

- Establishing subgrantee Lighthouse Partnerships among higher education institutions, K–12 districts, and community-based organizations;
- Developing service-learning activities for participants within these Lighthouse Partnerships; and
- Creating or improving after-school programs for K–12 youth.

The original K-12 Lighthouse CHESP proposal (written by staff at DOE) also outlined objectives that focused on improving students’ reading levels in the State of Mississippi—that were not contained in the other two Lighthouse grants.¹ In addition, during years two and three of CHESP, CCCE developed the following four performance objectives for its K-12 Lighthouse:

- *Increasing youth participation.* Seven hundred and fifty children and/or youth will participate in after- and out-of school educational and recreational programs, which will be implemented by each Lighthouse Partnership.
- *Developing curricula.* Ten service-learning curricula will be developed and/or strengthened by K–12 teachers involved in CHESP. These curricula will be submitted to and certified by Mississippi Alliance for Community Service-Learning (MACSL) and will benefit 750 potential service-learning participants.
- *Improving academic ratings.* Service-learning curricula will be integrated into after- and out-of-school programs, resulting in a minimum of 70 percent of participants demonstrating improved academic achievement and engagement as measured by a survey of teachers and faculty.
- *Establishing local advisory boards.* Each Lighthouse partner will establish a local advisory board to provide ongoing input and feedback, resulting in high quality programming as measured by a survey of program staff.²

The DOE and State Commission realized that they were undertaking an ambitious statewide initiative, and since they hoped to receive funding for at least one of their three proposals, they were eager to begin. So, before funding was received, the DOE and the State Commission scheduled a training conference for CBO, higher education, and K–12 entities throughout Mississippi to promote high quality service-learning based upon three-way partnerships. About one hundred people attended the June 2000 conference and were informed that all three Learn and Serve America grants had been funded. CNCS funding for the Lighthouse Partnerships became available in the fall of that year.

¹ See Mississippi Department of Education, *Mississippi K-12 Lighthouse Partnership: a Community, Higher Education, and School Partnership* grant application to the Corporation for National and Community Service: Learn and Serve America, March 6, 2000.

² USM Center for Community and Civic Engagement c/o Mississippi Department of Education, *Mississippi K-12 Lighthouse Partnership Year 2 Proposal*. July 31, 2001.

Grantee Partnership

At the grantee level, the K–12 Lighthouse Partnership is an example of a centralized model, in which three parallel grantee-level programs are managed by one organization—in this case, the CCCE. This form of partnership evolved as CCCE developed into a state service-learning center and became a part of the USM campus. The key grantee level partners are:

- *Higher education: University of Southern Mississippi.* USM hosts the CCCE and manages all three Lighthouse partnership programs for the state Department of Education.
- *K–12: Mississippi Department of Education.* The DOE maintains fiscal responsibility for the CHESP grant and for the K–12 Lighthouse Partnership subgrantees.
- *Community Group: Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service.* MCVS managed the CBO-led Lighthouse Partnerships during the first two years, but CCCE assumed that responsibility for year three.
- *Other: Mississippi Alliance for Community Service-Learning.* MACSL serves as an advisory board for CCCE and meets quarterly. MACSL includes the Attorney General’s office, the Community College Board, United Way, the Mississippi Department of Education, and the State Commission on National and Community Service.

All three Lighthouse programs are centrally run and coordinated by the CCCE, which provides a sense of cohesiveness to the three areas of Lighthouse initiatives.

Program Management Structure

Under the leadership of the CCCE director, three full-time Lighthouse coordinators were hired to manage the subgrantees in their respective Lighthouse programs. These grantee-level staff share common functional responsibilities for all 21 Lighthouse Partnerships. For example, the K–12 Lighthouse coordinator provides overall curriculum development support; the CBO Lighthouse coordinator develops and conducts training initiatives; and the higher education Lighthouse coordinator oversees program evaluation. Over time these responsibilities have shifted somewhat to adapt to new demands, lessons, and staff changes. Task overlap and close communication between the three coordinators reinforce their sense of teamwork.

Because the three-way partnership model had not existed in Mississippi prior to CHESP, the Lighthouse Partnership program evolved differently from previous service-learning initiatives. The development of the relationships between higher education, CBOs, and K–12 entities was facilitated by the availability of funding for all three groups. According to the CCCE director, if only two of the three types of grantees had been funded rather than all three, at least one group would not have been as well represented in the partnerships.

Role of Other CNCS Programs

In addition to overseeing CHESP and the other Lighthouse programs, the CCCE, also manages the Mississippi AmeriCorps*VISTA literacy program and Mississippi's CampusLink AmeriCorps initiative. This has made it easy to assign VISTA volunteers to six of the nine K–12-led Lighthouse Partnerships. Their specific roles range from running a subgrantee program to working side-by-side with program staff, depending upon the needs of the site. AmeriCorps*VISTA provides a national network, opportunities for training, support for teachers and program administrators, and grant writing expertise. Two of the VISTA volunteers were recruited nationally, while the others were locally recruited. CampusLink AmeriCorps members provide opportunities for college students to support campus-based community service, including their cornerstone Mississippi Mentor Corps initiative. Opportunities to build Campus Link involvement into the Lighthouse partnerships are being explored by several sites.

Grantee-Level Program Activities

Subgrantee Selection

When this CHESP initiative began in the year 2000, a K–12 Lighthouse coordinator had not yet been hired. Consequently, the DOE was able to fund ten, rather than seven, initial K–12 Lighthouse Partnership districts, each at an annual rate of \$40,000 with some of the “extra” funds. In the fall of 2001, the grantee decided to replace two of the original sites with two new school districts selected using an RFP process that drew seven applications. The selection committee based its decision on three variables: (1) how well structured the proposed programs were, (2) the degree of institutional “buy-in” to partnerships, and (3) how effective the partnerships were. During the course of the grant, the committee replaced another subgrantee using a similar process. When there was turnover in subgrantee staff, the K–12 Lighthouse coordinator participated in the hiring and selection of new employees. For example, during the CHESP reapplication process for year three, the grantee required each site to employ a full-time service-learning coordinator and provided a job description for the position.

Technical Assistance and Training

Staff from all of the Lighthouse Partnerships were required to participate in statewide training sessions that were held four times a year in the first two years of the program. Training content has changed over time as subgrantee programming has evolved. Early training sessions covered basic topics such as needs assessment and an introduction to service-learning, while later sessions emphasized partnership management and program evaluation.

Because the Lighthouse lead partners represent a range of institutions, with different lead organizations, different target groups and different curricula needs, only two statewide trainings have focused on curriculum development (one on service-learning curriculum development and the other on “train the trainers” methodology). Instead, the CCCE provides individualized support for curriculum development during frequent site visits to support the varied implementation strategies of the three types of subgrantees. As a result, each site has developed service-learning curricula that suit its individual needs.

CCCE is developing a curriculum certification process for service-learning through the University of Southern Mississippi. Once sites and teachers submit an application for curriculum certification and the curriculum is reviewed and certified, the CCCE intends to offer fellowships for teachers that will include funds for professional development and/or program supplies.

In addition to offering statewide training, CCCE leaders have partnered with service-learning leaders from six neighboring states to host the Gulf South Summit—a regional conference to foster civic engagement through community partnerships—that took place in February 2003. The Lighthouse planners for the Summit believed that it should address the need for a stronger regional service-learning infrastructure, especially for those states that do not have access to state membership organizations such as Campus Compact. Thus the conference was designed to focus on building regional capacity and infrastructure to support communities, colleges and universities, and K–12 school districts to engage students in comprehensive service-learning activities.

Grantee leadership staff also attended and presented workshops at national service-learning conferences including NYLC-sponsored conferences in Denver (2001) and Seattle (2002), and the National Service-Learning Research Conference in Nashville (2002).

Promoting Youth Voice

The original Lighthouse grant proposals included a focus on youth voice through the development of youth action councils. While CBO-led Lighthouse Partnerships are currently developing youth action councils, according to the K-12 Lighthouse coordinator, K–12 subgrantees dropped this objective due to lack of interest on the part of the subgrantees.

Internal Evaluation

From the outset, CCCE leadership recognized the need for a comprehensive approach to assess the Lighthouse program's effectiveness. Mississippi Lighthouse Partnerships therefore participate in three tiers of self-study:

The first tier, at the subgrantee level, is based on training and support provided by CCCE staff. Individual sites are expected to evaluate specific activities that not only measure project outcomes, but also advance continuous improvement.

The second tier consists of pre- and post- surveys, available online, that measure academic and engagement outcomes identified by CCCE leadership. Initial findings from the 2001–2002 school year suggest not only greater involvement by youth in service-learning initiatives, but also promising results in the areas of academic, social, and civic impacts on young people.

The third and final tier is an examination of Lighthouse implementation that is being conducted by a widely-respected scholar in the field of service-learning. This effort was designed with two broad ideas in mind: (1) providing experiential education and empowerment for the student participants in the research process at three universities and (2) offering insights into “network development” based on site visits to three higher education, one CBO, and one K–12 CHESP Lighthouse subgrantees.

Faculty at the three universities train students in program evaluation using service-learning pedagogy and students then assess the partnerships at their schools.

Grantee-Level Discussion Summary

At the grantee level, the Lighthouse initiative is an innovative example of how three parallel Learn and Serve CHESP-like programs have worked together to strengthen the infrastructure of service-learning in the state of Mississippi, despite their separate sources of funding. The initiative is further enhanced by the grantee's decision to employ a centralized model of partnership, which (1) provides technical assistance, training, management, and oversight to CHESP and other Lighthouse Partnerships; (2) utilizes university resources; and (3) encourages close communication between the three Lighthouse coordinators as well as the larger entities they represent—K–12 school districts, higher education, and CBOs.

Three of these subgrantee Lighthouse Partnerships are discussed in the section that follows.

Subgrantee-Level Descriptions

This section presents descriptions of three subgrantee Lighthouse Partnerships: Hattiesburg School District Family Education Center Project Lighthouse, Forest Municipal School District Project Lighthouse, and Jackson State University Project Lighthouse. Information was obtained from two sets of sites visits in the spring and fall of 2002 and was supplemented by conversations with grantee-level lead contacts and partners as well as reviews of relevant documents.

Hattiesburg School District Family Education Center Project Lighthouse Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

The mission of the Hattiesburg Public School District Family Education Center (FEC) is to link district schools to the families of its students. To support this goal, FEC provides resources such as a parent/teacher lending library, GED classes, a school-to-career center, Boy Scout and Girl Scout clubs, community arts, and a meeting room for community groups.

The CHESP-funded “Project Lighthouse” has been a key element of the FEC since fall 2000, under the guidance of an umbrella community-university-school district advisory committee. During the 2001–2002 school year, about one hundred students came to the FEC to complete homework, work on academic enrichment projects, use technology, participate in a range of arts activities (creative movement, visual arts, and piano lessons), and engage in occasional service activities that benefit the community.

Hattiesburg, a city of 45,000, is home to the University of Southern Mississippi, three large medical centers, and some small industries. While new building construction and redevelopment have created a sense of growth, some neighborhoods still suffer from poor street lighting, lack of sewers and

sidewalks, and abandoned buildings. In the year 2000, the Board of Education decided to convert a former Dr. Pepper plant into an adult education and parenting center. When construction attracted local youth to the site, plans expanded to create the Hattiesburg Family Education Center in hopes that the new structure would benefit youth as well as adults. Subsequently, the school district applied for and received CHESP funding to create Project Lighthouse, a full-year extended-day school program, at the FEC.

Subgrantee Partnership

The Hattiesburg Project Lighthouse represents a “hub and spoke” model of partnership in which the school district initiates and coordinates projects independently with either community organizations, parents, and/or its higher education partner. Most of the projects take place at or near the FEC site. The partners include:

- *Lead K–12.* Hattiesburg School District Family Education Center
- *Community organizations.* Boys Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Dream of Hattiesburg
- *Higher education.* USM Office of Community Service-Learning

Local Management Structures

During the first two years of CHESP, the assistant superintendent of the Hattiesburg School District also served as director of the FEC. Two part-time coordinators staffed the Hattiesburg Project Lighthouse, which focused almost exclusively on after-school tutoring and homework help to youth. The FEC director recruited partners from the University of Southern Mississippi and various community organizations to run short-term youth community service projects at the FEC and to serve on the Project Lighthouse advisory board, which expanded its role to provide guidance and support to the overall Family Education Center mission and activities.

In the summer of 2002, the FEC director left the district. The new director, at the behest of the CCCE created a new full-time position: Project Lighthouse coordinator. The new coordinator had previously served as a VISTA volunteer at the project.

Project Lighthouse and several other FEC activities involve both VISTA and AmeriCorps volunteers. VISTA volunteers support service-learning programs by recruiting community partners, planning activities, supervising youth and seeking to link service with learning in areas such as math, reading, and art/music. AmeriCorps volunteers train youth on technology as part of a Digital Divide grant that supports computer training for youth who attend after-school activities. Youth did not have a formal role in planning or operating the Lighthouse.

Project Descriptions

Project Lighthouse was designed as an extended-day program where K–12 students spend at least half of their time engaged in service-learning activities. Youth have participated in community service activities such as Martin Luther King Jr. Day projects, Project Care food collection drives, a health

fair, development of a bike trail, recycling projects, and community clean-ups. While approximately 100 students have participated in service projects over the course of two years, this amount is less than the 50 percent of the expected target. None of the projects are explicitly connected to an academic or any other formal curriculum.

When the new Lighthouse coordinator came on board in September 2002, the program shifted its mission so there was greater emphasis on service-learning. The shift, according both grantee and subgrantee leadership, occurred so that the new coordinator (who had gained service-learning experience as a VISTA member the pervious year) could focus on the priorities of CHESP full-time. During the third year of CHESP, the coordinator was able to bring the goals of Hattiesburg’s Project Lighthouse into better alignment with those of the Mississippi Lighthouse initiative. For example:

- Developing a process for youth voice in project development and implementation;
- Improving documentation and evaluation of service-learning projects;
- Explaining to staff and community how Project Lighthouse works;
- Increasing USM student and faculty involvement; and
- Increasing the overall number of service-learning projects to one new major project per month.

Forest Municipal School District Project Lighthouse Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

Between the fall of 2001 and the spring of 2002, Forest Municipal School District’s CHESP Project Lighthouse provided students with an after-school experience that focused on academic success, civic responsibility, and social development. The program placed special emphasis on improving language skills of participants through intensive and creative tutoring three times a week. The Forest CHESP program operated for two years, but, due in large part to administrative problems, the school district’s new superintendent decided not to reapply for CHESP funding in year three.

Forest is a small rural town of about 5,000 where the dominant industry is industrial poultry plants. A growing Latino population has created new demands for bilingual services on the school district. Respondents describe Forest as “a close-knit small town where everybody works together.” The School District and local partners identified two critical goals: helping students with reading and increasing parental involvement.

Subgrantee Partnership

During its operation, the Forest project represented a loose-knit partnership of a K–12 district, parents, community organizations, and a community college that developed common service projects. Partners include:

- *Lead K–12.* Forest Municipal School District.
- *Community organizations.* Parents, Forest Head Start, Partnership for a Healthy Scott County, R&W Christian Learning Center, Ward Activity Center, American Red Cross, and a local nursing home.
- *Higher education.* East Central Community College.

Local Management Structure

The Forest School District played a primary role in managing all aspects of the CHESP initiative. During its operation, an advisory committee for this Lighthouse project provided a monthly opportunity for youth-serving organizations to share accomplishments, review agreements, and solve problems.

Project Descriptions

During its two years, the Forest Municipal School District Project Lighthouse after-school program served over 1,400 students, providing tutoring and additional academic instruction by paid adult tutors, many of whom were teachers. The program focused on academic success, civic responsibility, and social development, with a special emphasis on developing reading and language skills. In addition to tutoring help from approximately 20 teachers, East Central Community College students and other community adult volunteers also worked with participating youth on service projects such as landscaping projects, convalescent home visits, and a community gardening project.

According to staff members, an important component of the Forest Project Lighthouse for students was to participate in service-learning activities that meet curricular goals. As one partner explained, “Teachers help guide the projects, but youths plan them.” Another benefit of the Forest Project Lighthouse was strong parental involvement, a by-product of district workshops for parents. Youth also raised \$2,900 for the Red Cross as a response to the September 11, 2001 tragedy.

Despite these accomplishments, as mentioned earlier, a new school district superintendent in Forest decided not to reapply for continued participation in the CHESP initiative during year three. According to site leadership at the Forest School District, “The paperwork was just too cumbersome. It took almost six months to get reimbursed and made us feel like we were being audited every time we requested a payment.” The School District thus decided to forgo a guaranteed third-year grant in the amount of \$40,000. Although some other sites complained about similar issues, Forest was the only K–12 CHESP Lighthouse to withdraw from the project in three years.

Although the after-school program was discontinued, many other aspects of the partnership have been maintained. For instance, youth still engage in service projects with parents and community organizations; a new group has emerged, replacing the community and school advisory board, to address the issue of character education; and the district leadership is considering applying for a Learn and Serve America grant next in 2004.

Jackson State University Project Lighthouse Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

Jackson State University (JSU) received a Higher Education Learn and Serve America subgrant that has developed with the CHESP Lighthouse model. JSU is included in this case study to explore the impact of different kinds of lead agencies using the same program model. JSU’s School of Education partners with two community organizations (Stewpot Community Services and Sanders YMCA) and three schools (Rowan Middle School, Poindexter Elementary School, and Isabelle Elementary School) to plan and oversee JSU’s Project Lighthouse. JSU is a Historically Black University with a long history of commitment to community and public service. The JSU Lighthouse Partnership, led by School of Education faculty and staff, involves college students as mentors and tutors at the above-listed schools, and CBOs, and infuses service-learning into teacher preparation courses. JSU faculty, with colleagues in two other schools, are key partners in the statewide “empowerment evaluation” of the Lighthouse Partnerships.

Jackson State University, founded in 1877 by freed slaves, currently has about 8,000 students—most of whom are African American. As a Historically Black University, JSU’s mission has always included a strong commitment to community outreach and service. KIDS Kollege, an on-campus Saturday camp and academic enrichment program for students in grades 1–12, has been a JSU outreach project since 1983. Through KIDS Kollege and other service projects, JSU had established a working relationship with the Jackson community—especially strong with one nearby school (sites that are farther away from the JSU campus had less access to student volunteers). JSU’s Lighthouse grant sought to build partnerships in areas of high need. The interim dean of the School of Education prepared the Lighthouse Partnership proposal with help from a former dean and the principal of a local elementary school, who later became the project’s co-principal investigator.

Since the interim dean encouraged his faculty to build service-learning into their classrooms, several departments have adopted the pedagogy. Eighty-seven college students in education, business, and social work courses are involved in service-learning at the five Lighthouse partnership sites. All college courses provide opportunities for students to apply their classroom learning during tutoring and mentoring sessions at the sites and are expected to reflect on their experiences in journals. A full-time Lighthouse coordinator manages the partnership development and serves as a liaison between faculty and service-learning sites.

Subgrantee Partnership

JSU’s Project Lighthouse represents a “hub-and-spoke” partnership in which the higher education program leads K–12 and community-based after-school programs without any direct links between the non-university partners—i.e., each after-school program is linked to the university but none of the programs are linked to each other. College students serve as mentors and tutors to K–12 students but K–12 students do not provide services. The partners include:

- *Higher education lead.* Jackson State University School of Education.

- *K–12 school lead.* Rowan Middle School, Poindexter Elementary School, and Isabelle Elementary School.
- *Community organizations.* Stewpot Community Services and I. S. Sanders YMCA.

Local Management Structures

During the 2000–2001 year, JSU hired a full-time Lighthouse coordinator who has played an important role in the establishment and maintenance of the partnerships. He resolves problems, fosters communication between JSU faculty and K–12 teachers, and encourages “buy-in” to the program from college students and community/school teachers through daily visits to all the sites and regular meetings with key partners.

The advisory board of JSU’s Project Lighthouse consists of site coordinators, participating faculty, one college student representative, and the school superintendent. At monthly meetings, they identify the needs of both K–12 children and college students, and then brainstorm how to meet those needs.

Project Descriptions

On campus, the JSU Lighthouse coordinator recruited and placed students from courses in education, social work, ethnic studies, leadership, career management, and speech communications. In one section of the mass communications course, students engaged in the participatory evaluation of the service-learning programs.

The number of Lighthouse project partners has increased over time. By the third year of the program, there were five service-learning community sites participating in the JSU Lighthouse project:

- *Rowan Middle School.* This school has a long history of middle grade student participation in *Kids Kollege*. According to the Rowan coordinator, the Lighthouse Partnership has created a “two-way” relationship in which middle school and college students visit each other’s schools. Thirty-five JSU students from two education and communications courses participate in classroom instruction to prepare students for the sixth grade language arts and math exit test, which students must pass to graduate. The site coordinator at Rowan pairs college students with teachers based on students’ professional interests, encouraging a mentor relationship between the teachers and the JSU education students. The Rowan coordinator hopes to see improved exit test scores amongst youth who have been tutored throughout their three years at middle school.
- *Poindexter and Isabelle Elementary Schools.* Poindexter Elementary School has been a site since the inception of Lighthouse Partnerships. The Isabelle Elementary School was added in year three to host JSU students as tutors. In these schools, JSU students work with elementary teachers to provide one-on-one tutoring to students during the school day.
- *S. Sanders YMCA.* This YMCA operates primarily as a tutoring and mentoring program for youth. Parents, teachers, and YMCA staff report noticeable differences in students’

engagement with academics among youth who have participated in tutoring through the JSU Lighthouse Partnership. In the 2002–2003 year, about twenty college students from two classes provided tutoring help to K–12 youth, with a special emphasis on middle school students.

- *Stewpot Community Services*. This organization is a multi-service, faith-based program that serves the needs of the community near Poindexter Middle School. Added in year two of the Lighthouse Partnerships, its mission is to “serve people who need food, shelter, clothing, love, and encouragement to make the most of the lives God has given them.” All children are welcome at the Neighborhood Children’s Program, but special attention is paid to those living in the temporary and transitional women’s shelters at Stewpot.

Subgrantee-Level Discussion Summary

The CHESP efforts to produce three-way partnerships have produced a wide variety of results. While some subgrantees (e.g., Hattiesburg) have built broad partnerships between multiple government and nonprofit stakeholders, others have found strong partners in local businesses. For example, the Benoit subgrantee site in the rural Mississippi Delta relied primarily on the support of a local seed company and a local cleaning company to rebuild the high school athletic complex and plan service activities. At other sites, subgrantees have struggled to achieve ongoing involvement of all three partners.

Summary Analysis

Grantee and Subgrantee Perspectives

Overall Reported Progress

Mississippi Lighthouse Partnership staff believe they are well on the way towards developing a statewide service-learning infrastructure, promoting service-learning, and meeting their goals. CHESP funding has supported infrastructure development in the state by helping to establish the CCCE and providing support for the staff positions of the CCCE director and one of the three Lighthouse coordinators. The Mississippi Alliance for Community Service-Learning (MACSL) has increased cross-sector communication and collaboration, developed stronger institutional support for CCCE and the 21 Lighthouse Partnerships, and created a framework to maintain relationships among state-wide groups and organizations.

Subgrantees credit Mississippi CHESP with increasing service-learning participation among the K–12 youth in the state. CCCE leadership say that they are proud that CHESP established service-learning in K–12 districts where there had been no prior service-learning. According to early internal evaluation data, Mississippi CHESP has already met its target goals for student involvement in service-learning. Finally, CHESP has helped educate professionals and activists across Mississippi around service-learning issues.

Now that participation in service-learning has increased, a remaining research question, which the grantee is examining, is whether correspondingly improved academic outcomes will result. According to reports from grantees and subgrantees, as well as early and tentative results from pre- and post-testing of teachers and students, the Lighthouse Partnerships are indeed improving educational attainment for youth through service-learning.

Overall, the grantee lead agency staff are very satisfied with CHESP and believe that it has improved both the quality and quantity of service-learning in Mississippi. They credit two major features of CHESP with their success: (1) providing an organizing framework for working with higher education, K–12, and CBO partners; and (2) providing three years of funding, which allowed sites to better accomplish their goals.

Although final results from statewide evaluations are still pending, staff report that the subgrantees are well on their way to meeting their goals, as evidenced by the following:

- K–12 youth participation in service-learning has increased, especially in some sites (e.g., Hattiesburg and Forest) where there was little or no service-learning in the past. However, CHESP leaders believe that, in some cases, the link between curriculum and community service still needs to be strengthened at a number of the sites.
- Subgrantees have developed important and lasting three-way partnerships for service-learning; even in the case of Forest, which discontinued its program in year three, leaders note that the partnerships between the districts and other groups have continued.
- Early pre- and post- evaluation data indicate that academic skills among K–12 youth participants have increased overall.
- All subgrantees have written curricula to infuse service-learning into their programs, though the degree of adoption of these curricula varies.
- All subgrantees have developed broad-based advisory councils that meet on a regular basis.

These early observations, as well as conversations with grantee and select subgrantee leaders, indicate that subgrantee Lighthouse Partnerships have accomplished a great deal, and have made progress toward their goals. But as the three subgrantee descriptions in this case study demonstrate, the degree of progress has been uneven.

Replication and Sustainability

At the grantee level, the leaders of CCCE believe that their work and that of their partners will continue after the CHESP grant is completed because they have secured solid support from USM and other sources to continue the statewide work that began under CHESP. Grantee leadership is also seeking opportunities to promote replication of their success through the dissemination of findings and lessons at conferences and in publications. For example, CCCE presented its initial research at the 2002 National Service-Learning Research Conference and will co-host the 2003 Gulf Summit.

Recommendations for the CHESP Program Model

Although grantee and subgrantee leaders are, in general, satisfied with the CHESP experience, they feel the experience provides important lessons that may assist CNCS or others who fund future national grant-making initiatives like CHESP. Two important challenges were overcome in the Mississippi case. First, CHESP funding was limited to state education agencies (SEA), Tribal organizations, or multi-state grant making entities. In Mississippi, the SEA assigned the contract to the University of Southern Mississippi to manage the CHESP grant. Given USM's success in developing a statewide organization (CCCE) and managing the CHESP initiative, CNCS may want to re-examine its requirement that CHESP be limited to the above-named three entities and consider opening grant eligibility to a broader range of programs. Second, CNCS's decision to reduce funding in the third year by \$50,000 would have caused problems, had the Forest site not decided to withdraw, which allowed CCCE to redistribute funding.

In addition, grantee and subgrantee staff report several barriers and challenges that may be instructive to other practitioners who are interested in developing and/or managing CHESP partnerships as outlined below. As evidenced in the Forest School District, subgrantees sometimes had difficulty managing administrative requirements. To alleviate this difficulty, CCCE offered numerous financial workshops but many sites continued to have problems. In the future, the Mississippi Lighthouse coordinator plans to provide training on how to complete reports and to meet individually with each site's financial manager.

Staff turnover has been a particular challenge for partnerships led by school districts. Eight out of ten school district-led Lighthouse Partnerships experienced a key staff/coordinator change in a two-year span, which the grantee attributes to lower salaries, more limited support, and more assignments, than their counterparts in higher education.

Program continuity was more of an issue for CBO and school district-led Lighthouse projects than for higher education. Four of the original five CBO programs have discontinued their Lighthouse Partnership grant; one school district-led partnership opted not to reapply; and two subgrants were discontinued by CCCE after year one. Only one higher education site did not continue after year one, based on a mutual agreement reached between the site and the CCCE. Grantee leaders attribute some of these differences to the fact that higher education institutions often have an office that deals solely with the fiscal management of grants, while individual K–12 schools and CBOs sometimes do not—a fact that led to increased difficulty with financial reporting and documentation.

Rural partnerships sometimes had difficulty maintaining the involvement of higher education partners, especially in remote areas such as the Mississippi Delta region where universities are not always close to participating school districts. The busy university schedules of both students and faculty make travel and participation in such communities difficult. Two approaches seemed to help overcome these challenges: (1) personal connections, such as the case of the Project Lighthouse coordinator who is also enrolled in an advanced degree program at the university; and (2) college students who are awarded financial incentives, such as those provided by Campus Link AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps*VISTA programs, to work with the sites.

Despite these challenges, grantee staff report that several factors facilitated the success of the CHESP model in Mississippi: (1) the three-year funding period, although staff also recognized that sustainable partnerships involve relationship-building over time and may need an even longer period of time; and (2) the CHESP model of involving three different sectors as partners.

Staff report that four main factors have contributed to the success of Mississippi Lighthouses at the grantee level:

- The presence of a mediating institution such as MACSL has helped to support collaboration between multiple stakeholders. Even prior to CHESP, the planning group that ultimately became MACSL provided opportunities for people and organizations from higher education, government/state agencies, and non-profit/civic groups to come together around shared interests and concerns in service-learning.
- A second grantee-level success factor has been the vision and leadership of the CCCE director and staff. Mississippi Lighthouses found that having a central organization manage all three Lighthouse programs (higher education, K–12, and community-based) improved teamwork and communication among organizations, strengthening all of them. Furthermore the common mission of the CCCE, combined with a flexible scope of activities, provided opportunities to build a strong three-way service-learning infrastructure across the state of Mississippi.
- When subgrantees had a full-time coordinator, both the partnership and links to curriculum seemed to flourish. In cases where a part-time coordinator balanced the work with other responsibilities, there was often not enough time to fully support the three-way partnership, develop strong service-learning curriculum, and provide basic site management.
- Finally, a key to success has been the grantee’s focus on continuous improvement, as seen by the development and use of an extensive evaluation; the expansion of goal targets as the initiative exceeded original expectations; and the grantee’s introduction of a requirement for full-time coordinators at subgrantee sites.

Implications and Lessons

In Mississippi, CHESP provided the organizing framework for all 21 Lighthouse Partnerships funded from three different Learn and Serve sources. The Lighthouse Partnership provides an important opportunity to compare and contrast the implementation of three-way partnerships based on different funding sources and with different types of lead organizations. These lessons include:

- CHESP-type partnerships can be implemented effectively through higher education and community-based funding sectors, as well as through the CHESP funding source;
- Partnerships led by higher education, community organizations, and K–12 districts have many common features and some common challenges, such as maintaining partner involvement;

- K–12 schools, higher education institutions, and community organizations have different needs in the areas of curriculum development and staff consistency and stability; and
- Higher education-led partnerships may tend to see K–12 youth as recipients of service-learning activities rather than as participants in service-learning. The limited role for K–12 students under the higher education-led Lighthouse raises a question of whether more needs to be done to promote K–12 service-learning under CHESP projects that are not overseen by schools or school districts.

The K–12 Lighthouse coordinator pointed out that partnerships on paper are not always the same as partnerships in practice. In-person visits and communication are crucial in order to understand the complexity and nuances of relationships among partners. Additional lessons learned by CCCE include the following:

- The use of an RFP process and interviews were effective ways to select subgrantees because they allowed the grantee to gain a richer understanding of the ability and commitment of sites to developing sustainable three-way partnerships;
- Strong communication between subgrantees is important, and CCCE plans to promote more peer-to-peer learning to support this effort;
- Site visits (as opposed to statewide training) provide opportunities for more personalized and deeper one-on-one technical assistance in areas such as curriculum development; and
- Intensive service-learning training for subgrantees should start at the beginning of CHESP to clarify any confusion between community service and service-learning.

Chapter Seven

University of Pennsylvania Center for Community Partnerships: West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC) Replication Project

Introduction

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<i>Website:</i>	http://www.upenn.edu/ccp/WEPIC/replication/index.html
<i>Organization (Type):</i>	University of Pennsylvania Center for Community Partnerships (GME)
<i>Subgrantees:</i>	Twenty (17 nationally, 3 in Pennsylvania)
<i>Initial CHESP funding:</i>	September 2000
<i>Funding levels:</i>	Year one: \$500,000; year two: \$550,000; year three: \$350,000

This case study report examines the West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC) Replication Project, which is supported in part by the Community, Higher Education, and School Partnerships (CHESP) program, and funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service’s Learn and Serve America program.

Since 2000, CHESP funding has enabled the WEPIC Replication Project to adapt and disseminate two models: the University-Assisted Community Schools (UACS) model, which is now being implemented in seventeen sites nationally, and the Youth-Driven Service-Learning Centers (YDSLCL) model, which has been replicated at three Pennsylvania sites. Grantee staff overseeing both approaches are housed at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) Center for Community Partnerships (CCP).

The Penn CHESP grant is unique in that it has subgrantee sites widely dispersed across the United States and two distinct program models. Therefore, the organization of this case study report varies somewhat from the five other reports in that the two models are treated as *two separate sub-case studies* as follows:

- Part One describes the University-Assisted Community Schools model at the grantee level (University of Pennsylvania Center for Community Partnerships) and presents a subgrantee partnership led by Monongalia County Schools.

- Part Two describes the YDSL model (being overseen by the Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance at Penn's Center for Community Partnerships) and presents the YDSL subgrantee partnership between Temple University and Gratz High School in Philadelphia.
- Part Three contains an integrated discussion of the implications and lessons learned from both models.

Although they are treated separately in these case studies, all twenty subgrantees from both models are integrated into a single program at the grantee-level.

PART ONE: University-Assisted Community Schools Model

Grantee-Level Discussion

Overview

Grantee Lead Organization: University of Pennsylvania Center for Community Partnerships

The WEPIC Replication Project builds upon the 18-year experience of the West Philadelphia Improvement Corps, a University-Assisted Community School model in which school districts function as centers of education, services, and civic participation for young people and adults. The key grantee level partners of the Project are the University of Pennsylvania Center for Community Partnerships, the West Philadelphia Partnerships (a community based organization), and the School District of Philadelphia, West Region. The WEPIC Replication Project is managed by the Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn).

WEPIC started in 1985 as a youth corps program proposed by four University of Pennsylvania (Penn) undergraduate students in a seminar taught by the current director of the CCP. The students were working in a Summer Job Corps in the West Philadelphia communities surrounding the Penn campus. Around the same time, a radical community group called MOVE was headquartered in a row house near the University. When neighbors complained about MOVE's trash, noise, and weapons, police arrived with arrest warrants. In the confrontation that ensued, police dropped firebombs on the roof of the building, burning 61 row houses and killing 11 people. The City of Philadelphia faced national media coverage and outrage, and turned to WEPIC as a resource to help the community.

WEPIC developed a working partnership with the University of Pennsylvania and the West Philadelphia community, through a broad-based community organization, the West Philadelphia Partnership. WEPIC has worked on a range of issues including nutrition education, environmental health and improvement, literacy, community development, and academic improvement. Out of this work came a focus on the community school as the organizing institution for the community and

WEPIC's University-Assisted Community Schools (UACS) model of partnership. In 1992, Penn created the CCP as a University-wide center. Since that time, WEPIC has developed a national reputation for its work and its alumni include several high-ranking service-learning officials. The University-Assisted Community Schools program was recently awarded the inaugural William T. Grant Foundation Youth Development Prize, sponsored in collaboration with the National Academy of Sciences' Board on Children, Youth, and Families.

In 1992, the current WEPIC Replication Project Manager joined the CCP staff to replicate the success of the WEPIC partnership at other campuses around the nation. Following a planning grant and an initial one million dollar implementation grant from the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, WEPIC replicated its model at three sites (the University of Kentucky-Lexington, the University of Alabama-Birmingham, and Miami University) between 1994 and 1997. Between 1998 and 2000, a second DeWitt Wallace grant and the first Learn and Serve America grant allowed the partnership to expand to nine sites.

Until this point, the WEPIC Replication Project had emphasized partnership development, development of service-learning in higher education to support school-based work, and creation of extended-day programs. Under a Learn and Serve America Higher Education grant from the Corporation, WEPIC developed and refined its pedagogical service-learning approach, "Academically Based Community Service," which integrates service into faculty and student teaching and research in all WEPIC courses. The strategic objective for WEPIC's work has been forming long-term collaborations with the key sectors of a community—schools, CBOs, communities of faith, and higher education institutions such as Penn—that can work together for positive change.

When they learned about CHESP, WEPIC leaders organized a conference call with all its DeWitt Wallace and Corporation-funded replication sites to involve them in proposal planning. The established sites proposed the idea of partnering with other higher education sites to mentor them in the development of new UACS projects, an approach that has become a key element of the current CHESP program.

Goals

Specific objectives in the University of Pennsylvania CHESP proposal applicable primarily to the UACS grantee level include:

- Providing subgrants to 20 higher education institutions to act as the lead agencies in CHESP partnerships to develop K–16 service-learning that serves their surrounding communities;
- Developing a training and assistance team of staff from Penn CCP, the Pennsylvania Service Learning Alliance (PSLA), and existing sites to help develop partnerships;
- Engaging in a comprehensive evaluation that captures project development, levels of collaboration among partners, and institutional change; and

- Building the capacity of local organizations to develop ongoing collaborations that improve academic skills.

WEPIC informally provides a set of guiding principles to subgrantee sites that includes the following:

- Focusing on the neighborhood school as the core institution to revitalize the community;
- Bringing together a university and a community in school-based, neighborhood-centered, action-oriented efforts that seek to serve, educate, involve, and activate all participants;
- Linking the school’s curriculum, programs, and services to the needs of the community and developing academically-based community service as central to achieving the university’s research, teaching, and service missions; and
- Developing mutually beneficial/respectful democratic partnerships.

Grantee Partnership

The Penn Center for Community Partnerships’ WEPIC Replication Project incorporates two partnerships at the grantee level: the National Advisory Committee and the Subgrantee Network.

WEPIC Replication Project National Advisory Committee. The advisory committee consists of representatives from a range of national, international, and local foundation, government, academic, and education backgrounds who help guide the direction and growth of the WEPIC Replication Project. The advisory committee developed guidelines for the selection of the new CHESP sites, building on a workshop on partnerships for higher education/school/community teams that Penn hosted in conjunction with the National Center for Community Education. The advisory committee also provides oversight to the management and implementation of the overall WEPIC Replication Project. The advisory committee represents a hybrid model in which the group sometimes meets as a whole and at other times acts as a “hub and spoke” partnership in which a range of constituencies meet on a one-on-one basis with Penn staff to discuss the specifics and activities of the CCP that pertain to them.

WEPIC Replication Project Subgrantee Network. WEPIC considers all of its subgrantee higher education partners to be an emerging collegial network—a balanced partnership of equals. For example, some subgrantees helped write the CHESP grant proposal and select other subgrantees. Since the inception of this CHESP project, the group has met regularly either face-to-face or by conference call to discuss common problems and lessons, and to set directions for the project. According to the WEPIC director, “The key to our continuing success is the willingness to operate as a partnership. Every site learns from every other site. There is an exchange with other universities who learn from each other. We don’t even like the term ‘replication’; we changed it to ‘adaptation.’ There are many good programs that we want to become a cooperative network. That’s what we are moving towards.” The Penn WEPIC staff report that they facilitate this process but do not “direct” it. According to the WEPIC Replication manager, the collegial partnership model fits in well with the higher education academic culture: “State departments of education can afford to be more top-down, but if we didn’t do a collegial model it wouldn’t fly. Faculty just wouldn’t respond to it.”

Program Management Structure

A project manager and administrative assistant act as the WEPIC Replication Project's primary management team. They plan conference calls among partners, conduct site visits, coordinate events, and document results of the project. Given the decentralized and collegial nature of the partnership between subgrantees as discussed above, the program structures at the subgrantee levels vary according to the needs and priorities of the local sites, but all are built around the guiding principles provided by WEPIC.

Role of Other CNCS Programs

At the grantee level, the WEPIC Replication Project does not work with CNCS programs other than CHESP.

Grantee-Level Program Activities

Subgrantee Selection

The WEPIC Replication Project has used three different selection processes for subgrantees of the CHESP-supported University-Assisted Community Schools model:

1. Seven pre-existing sites (from the previous DeWitt Wallace and Learn and Serve grants) were offered \$20,000 from CHESP in years one and two and \$12,000 in year three to continue the process of partnership development and to mentor a partner institution of higher education. Six of the seven sites that were eventually able to do this included:
 - Bates College,
 - The University of Rhode Island,
 - The University of Denver,
 - The University of Dayton,
 - Clark Atlanta University, and
 - The United South Broadway Corporation with the University of New Mexico.¹

2. The six new colleges selected by the established sites became their mentee partners. Each of these colleges received \$30,000, \$28,500, and \$17,500 in years one through three respectively. These six sites included:
 - Morehouse College,
 - New Mexico State University,
 - Regis University,
 - Lewiston/Auburn College,

¹ According to the grantee, the Community College of Aurora did not believe they had the resources to mentor another institution, so they did not select a partner, but were included in the grant as an existing site.

- Rhode Island College, and
 - Central State University.
3. Four additional UACS sites were selected through an RFP process that was overseen by the WEPIC National Advisory Committee. These sites were required to demonstrate that they would integrate service-learning into the K–16 curriculum and build the capacity of both higher education institutions and K–12 schools to deliver high-quality service-learning. Unlike the six new schools above, however, these four did not have a “mentor” institution. These four sites included:
- Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis,
 - Mercer University,
 - A partnership between the Monongalia County School District in Morgantown, West Virginia, several community organizations and West Virginia University; and
 - A partnership between Harms Elementary School in Detroit, MI, and the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor.

Technical Assistance and Training to Subgrantees

Grantee-level staff engage in a wide range of activities to support subgrantees, including providing technical assistance and support to sites, managing the grant progress and reporting requirements, maintaining a listserv for grantees, conducting site visits to provide one-on-one support, solving problems, facilitating regular telephone meetings with all CHESP subgrantees, developing publications that describe and analyze the experiences of the partners, and managing an evaluation of partnerships. In addition, Penn or one of the project sites hosts an annual meeting of the group that is attended by all sites and provides opportunities to exchange ideas and lessons with colleagues with similar experiences.

Penn has paid explicit attention to the goal of developing a network of professional colleagues among grantees and subgrantees. The idea of an equitable and collegial partnership rather than a hierarchical grantee-subgrantee relationship was institutionalized by the Penn decision to allow subgrantees to structure their own university/community partnerships. Within this framework the partnerships were required to include higher education/school district/community teams and to use an agreed-upon structure to define community needs, and develop and implement plans to use service-learning to help meet them.

The CHESP grant allowed the partners to move beyond an intention to transform their relationships to create a genuinely deep collaborative partnership. As a result, many innovations in the UACS model have emerged. For example, the development of mentor-mentee pairings grew from a collaborative design process. Also, in some partnerships community based organizations and/or a school district emerged as lead partners. Finally, in some subgrantees, CBO and/or K-12 partners co-authored articles and co-presented at national academic conferences.

Promoting Youth Voice

Although many YDSLSC subgrantees encourage student leadership (see Part Two) Penn has not made the promotion of youth voice a priority of the University-Assisted Community Schools model.

Internal Evaluations

Penn has contracted with a University of Denver professor to conduct an evaluation of the WEPIC Replication CHESP subgrantee partnerships, focusing on the process and development of partnerships in the UACS model. He has already interviewed key leaders from each CHESP site and was expected to present results in spring of 2003.

Grantee-Level Discussion Summary

The Penn Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) WEPIC Replication Project builds on an eighteen-year history of its University Assisted Community Schools Model in West Philadelphia. The success of this model led to the demand from other sites to replicate and adapt the model to their local communities. The replication of this model began at seven sites in 1992. Under CHESP, the model has been expanded to seventeen sites and evolved into a more collaborative relationship between grantees and subgrantees.

Subgrantee-Level Descriptions

This section presents a discussion of a new CHESP-funded UACS subgrantee partnership, comprising the West Virginia Monongalia School District, West Virginia University, and several community-based organizations. Information was obtained from site visits in the spring and fall of 2002, supplemented by follow-up telephone conversations with grantee-level lead contacts and partners.

The Kaleidoscope Project (West Virginia Monongalia School District) Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

The Kaleidoscope Project in Morgantown, West Virginia, is one of four new UACS partnerships selected by a national RFP process under CHESP. The lead agency is the Monongalia County School District. Through its Learning Trails Collaborative Project (Kaleidoscope's major initiative), this subgrantee has used service-learning and a broad-based partnership as tools to enhance hands-on science education in the schools as well as to promote a more active lifestyle in a community that has a very high level of obesity. The Learning Trails Collaborative Project leaders have developed a system of trails linking the surrounding community with South Middle School and White Park. The South Middle School has played an integral role in the design and implementation of the trail. West Virginia University (WVU) students from several departments and a service fraternity are also participating in the Project.

Prior to the Kaleidoscope Project, the Monongalia School District helped to form a group called the After-School Alliance, a group of United Way-funded nonprofit organizations that work with school-aged children. The After-School Alliance learned about the WEPIC Replication Project at a national conference and decided to apply. The resulting Kaleidoscope Project not only built on pre-existing After-School Alliance relationships, but also brought in university partners and the new community partners such as the environmental groups. The Kaleidoscope Project eventually evolved into a broad coalition of community residents that adopted an innovative approach to promoting healthier lifestyles for adolescents and adults.

Subgrantee Partnership

Subgrantee partners include:

- *Higher education partner.* West Virginia University (Office of Student Service-Learning). The WVU Office of Service-Learning has undergone staff changes during the first year of the CHESP. The lead contact person at the school district credited the addition of a full-time service-learning director at WVU with an expansion of the role of WVU students in the CHESP subgrantee activities.
- *Other WVU-associated higher education partners.* West Virginia University (College of Human Resources and Education); Eberly College of Arts and Sciences; Department of Recreation and Parks Management; and the Alpha Phi Omega Co-Ed Service Fraternity.
- *Community-based organization partner.* Mon Valley Green Space Coalition. This coalition represents a monthly (at least) gathering of representatives from several organizations and citizens interested in preserving natural green space within the Morgantown area.
- *Other community-based organization partners.* Board of Parks and Recreation; City of Morgantown; Morgantown Fun Factory (a non-profit children’s museum); West Virginia Workforce Investment Board; United Way; AmeriCorps Promise Fellows; and Monongalia County Department of Litter Control

Local Management Structures

Unlike most of the WEPIC Replication sites, the Kaleidoscope Project is led by a K–12 school district. According to WEPIC leaders, this decision was based on the school district’s established leadership and partnership-building capacity. The Monongalia School District helped to build the Kaleidoscope Project into a “balanced three-way partnership model” in which representatives from higher education, K–12 schools, and community organizations work together to make decisions and plan projects. Key partners are in frequent, often daily, contact. A larger group of organizational partners meets for more formal monthly meetings where all partners have an opportunity to share updates and news in a circular, around-the-room fashion.

Project Descriptions

According to subgrantee leadership, the Kaleidoscope Project has undertaken a variety of specific projects, the most visible of which is the Learning Trails Project. As noted earlier, obesity is an issue for youth in Monongalia County, due in large part to sedentary lifestyles. In fact, the County has one of the highest rates of teenage obesity in the country.

The Kaleidoscope committee began to consider ways to persuade students to walk to schools and recreation centers instead of riding. They noted that a trailer park and a housing project are located near a middle school, but busy streets without sidewalks (or even much of a shoulder) made the walk to school dangerous for students. The Kaleidoscope committee came up with the idea of developing a trail to connect the housing project, the trailer park, the middle school, and a nearby park/recreation area.

The trail became a major community-wide service-learning initiative. Students from the Forestry Technology and Landscape Management Technology programs at the Monongalia County Schools Technology Education Center developed on-the-job experience by planning trail architecture (e.g., walking bridges) and clearing large trees. The Board of Parks and Recreation contributed full-time staff support and equipment to the project. University students and community residents participated in the trail construction as well. With oversight by WVU Education faculty and students, elementary school youth brainstormed questions about nature, which middle school youth researched and answered to develop “learning stations” along the trail. The Learning Trail has since become a central organizing point of the Kaleidoscope Project. The Trail supports environmental preservation and provides a healthy, active option to connect youth at the housing projects to their schools and nearby playgrounds.

Other activities of the Kaleidoscope Project include the following:

- Faculty from WVU and K–12 teachers developed a “backpack” curriculum for K–12 teachers to hold environmental educational programs on the trail. Teacher and student backpacks include readings, guiding questions, and suggested service activities to be used on the trail.
- The Morgantown Fun Factory, a soon-to-open children’s museum has hosted seasonal “Nature Days” for the community to highlight progress on the trail. These days linked recognition of the service work with opportunities for K–12 students to learn about natural environments.
- *River of Words* is a national arts and education poetry contest to promote awareness of environmental issues. Two of the six national winners were from Monongalia County. These students were honored at the “River of Words” Spring Fair Celebration (May 2002), which was held on the trail and featured public educational activities and displays of art and poetry by and for public school students. WVU supported the community event with a mini-grant and university student volunteer staff.

Subgrantee-Level Discussion Summary

The Kaleidoscope Project activities and accomplishments centered around the creation of the Learning Trails Project to address several needs simultaneously, including (a) obesity among children; (b) environmental education; (c) environmental preservation; (d) K-12 student career learning—as demonstrated by students in the Forestry program; and (e) community building.

The Kaleidoscope Project provides an example of an adaptation of the Penn UACS model to an Appalachian community setting. The approach which includes defining a local need and working in partnership with a broad-based coalition of democratic partnerships was similar to the experience of Penn in West Philadelphia and demonstrates the application of all four UACS principles described in the grantee section above. An overall analysis of the UACS model under CHESP follows.

Summary Analysis (University-Assisted Community Schools)

Grantee and Subgrantee Perspectives

Overall Reported Progress

The 2000–2003 CHESP funding made it possible to further expand the WEPIC Replication Project to include 11 new sites, raising the total number of sites to 20². According to the WEPIC leadership, in addition to increasing the number of sites, CHESP has made the Academically Based Community Service version of service-learning a more prominent pedagogy within WEPIC. In several of the WEPIC subgrantee sites, the service-learning participants are mostly higher education students in an academic program. According to one faculty member at Penn, “WEPIC’s strength is the impact on [higher education] academia, less on the [K–12 or] community impact.” However, there has also been a growing emphasis on developing service-learning in the K–12 system in the WEPIC system.

Grantee staff report that, due in large part to the CHESP grant, the WEPIC Replication Project was able to accomplish a great deal. According to the WEPIC leadership, these accomplishments include:

- Expanding the WEPIC Replication Project from nine to 20 subgrantee locations.
- Creating a national professional network of colleagues who are engaged in building UACS partnerships in their respective communities and are increasingly familiar and comfortable with each other. According to one Penn participant, “The meetings [among the national partnership] became less of a show-and-tell style and changed into a real dialogue between colleagues. Partly this was because trust developed.”

² This includes the 17 UACS sites (Penn plus UACS replication partners) and the 3 YDSL C subgrantees that participate in all UACS-sponsored activities as equal partners.

- Developing higher standards and accountability within extended day programs and greater coordination between college campuses and community-based sites. According to a Penn official, “They have been building community into the academic work of higher education and school.”
- Promoting innovative service-learning projects at the community level. As previously noted in this case study, the West Virginia Monongalia County efforts included development of a Learning Trail while strengthening the three-way community, K–12 schools, and university partnerships.
- Expanding involvement of institutions of higher education in their community. For example, the University of New Mexico has developed a strong community-led partnership that focuses on cultural and racial issues. Similarly, the University of Denver has emphasized links between service-learning and broader community development goals and the University of Rhode Island has established links between its Urban Planning program and service-learning issues.
- Strengthening service-learning infrastructure at higher education partner institutions. For example, Bates College has just created a center for community partnerships that provides a visible focus and support for engagement of individual faculty. The center reaches out to new faculty through course development grants.

Nationally, the WEPIC Replication Project demonstrates the multiple ways that sites could interpret and apply the UACS model. At all sites, the community culture defines both the challenges and the new directions applicable to the process of bringing these partners together.

Similarly, the type of relationships between mentors and mentee varied from site to site. In some cases, representatives of two campuses have met occasionally to share a spirit of common work. In other cases, the collaborations were more involved—developing shared projects and co-learning, for example.

The WEPIC Replication Project experience highlights the value of several key factors that contributed to creating or enhancing CHESP’s three-way partnership model. These factors include:

- *Utilizing full-time service-learning coordinators.* All of the WEPIC partners have full-time coordinators. These coordinators, usually hired by the higher education partner, have played a crucial role in bringing people together and facilitating collaborative planning and service delivery. These site coordinators may be teachers, graduate students, or staff. Several people have noted that this kind of on-site coordinator is an absolute requirement for partnership successes with the kind of complex partnerships that CHESP has been promoting. As one Penn official reported, “When a university has an office of service-learning, it’s a thousand times easier to develop a program there. When only one faculty member has to do it all, we find it is hard to expand beyond one department level.”

- *Building relationships.* At the local level, K–12 schools have been an organizing focus of the WEPIC Replication partnerships, but the university partners have generally played the central facilitative role. This means that university faculty, staff, and students must build positive working relationships with the community and governmental organizations as well as with the local schools and school districts.
- *Emphasizing long-term commitment.* The Penn CCP leadership focuses on the importance of creating long-term commitments, rather than just being grant-dependent. They report that relationships take time and trust to build. According to one staff member, “The relationship is paramount. Otherwise people will back off when there are problems. We want to be centered on building and maintaining the relationship.”
- *Embracing higher education as an equal (and not dominant) partner.* Although the higher education partner is typically the primary recipient of funds in WEPIC replication efforts, grantee and subgrantee leaders do not report a significant problem in the balance of power, especially in cases where the higher education partners make explicit efforts to promote equality among partners (thus avoiding the appearance or the action of trying to take over).

Replication and Sustainability

Replication is a built-in feature to the WEPIC Replication Project, as its very name implies, and the project has a strong history of replication, adaptation, and mentoring of new programs. The CHESP funding has augmented replication, making it possible to expand the UACS model to create new partnerships.

Penn’s Center for Community Partnerships plans to continue the WEPIC Replication Project beyond the term of the CHESP grant using funding from a variety of sources, regardless of the degree of CNCS support available. WEPIC Replication Project leaders believe that the overall replication of their efforts has also progressed as a result of publishing efforts, both in newsletters and the annual journal, *Universities and Community Schools*. Additionally, projects are presented at national and international conferences and events.

The WEPIC national networking approach is widely believed to have helped sustain programs among subgrantees. Penn plans to re-apply for CHESP and/or other funding to continue the work of this project. Networking at both the local and national level is expected to continue regardless of the sources of funding for this effort.

At some sites, an infrastructure has been developed to support service-learning, which will continue as long as universities find a way to continue funding. This appears likely in at least three of the subgrantees since the University of Denver, the University of Michigan, and the University of Rhode Island all have created new positions that are supported by the regular college budgets and are thus no longer grant-dependent. It is hoped that this model will spread.

While both grantee and subgrantee partners believe that partnerships will continue beyond the term of the grant, they acknowledge that funding is necessary to support the emerging national network and to coordinate trainings, shared work, and publications.

Lessons Learned from UACS Model

Perhaps the most important lesson learned from the WEPIC Replication Project is that it is possible to transform standard grantee-subgrantee relationships into new forms of collaborative partnerships. There is widespread satisfaction with the “network of associates” model and a widespread belief that it is proving to be an effective way to oversee what is traditionally seen as a “replication” challenge in terms of taking a model that has worked in one place and promoting its adoption in many other places. In particular, two factors seem to have facilitated the WEPIC replication efforts: (1) the sense of collegiality among national partners, which was implemented through such techniques as cross-site consulting and peer mentoring, and (2) the reputation and resources of the University of Pennsylvania Center for Community Partnerships.

In large part, this collaborative approach grew out of the necessity of working in a university academic environment. College and university faculty may not have responded to the high levels of control or top-down management often found in a “one-size-fits-all” replication effort. Instead, faculty appreciate the opportunity to adapt and innovate partnerships to local cultures to reflect factors such as their own professional expertise, local needs and demands, a sense of local ownership, and the tacit values of creativity and innovation in academia.

Another set of lessons about partnership development involves the adaptation of the UACS model to new settings. Different cultural contexts and local needs mean that those who seek to adopt the UACS model need to adapt it to meet local needs in different ways. For example, the University of New Mexico felt that it needed to emphasize cultural and racial issues because those are important to that region. The subgrantee partners have had widely varying levels of existing partnerships and understanding of K–12 issues, so the training and technical assistance from the grantee needed to be adapted to each local environment.

PART TWO: Youth-Driven Service-Learning Centers (YDSLCL) Model

Grantee-Level Discussion

Although the Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance (PSLA) is housed at Penn's Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) and is part of the CHESP grant, its YDSLCL model has different goals, activities, and structures from the UACS. Therefore, we have chosen to present the YDSLCL model separately in this case study report. It should be noted, however, that since PSLA and the WEPIC Replication Project share common space, there is a great deal of collaboration and programmatic "cross-fertilization" between the two. Furthermore, the three YDSLCL higher education subgrantees also participate in all national training and technical assistance activities available to the 17 national UACS replication subgrantees, yielding a situation in which most people talk about 20 WEPIC partners.

Overview

Grantee Lead Organization: Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance at Penn's Center for Community Partnerships

As the name implies, the Youth-Driven Service-Learning Centers (YDSLCL) model focuses on finding mechanisms to enhance the role of young people in planning and carrying out service-learning projects. The model of Youth-Driven Service-Learning Centers was developed by PSLA at Gratz High School in Philadelphia, which has partnered with Temple University. CHESP funding made it possible to expand this model to two new sites and deepen support at Temple. Youth-Driven Service-Learning Centers train high school youth as leaders for service-learning in their high schools as well as in the elementary and middle feeder schools in their districts. High school students identify and address community needs, advocate with teachers and administrators for service-learning, and train youth at K-8 schools within their district.

Goals

The objectives of the YDSLCL model include:

- Creating a contact point for K-12 schools to address a broad range of community issues through student service-learning;
- Engaging YDSLCL students in service-learning projects to improve academic skills and to develop social and leadership skills, citizenship, and a sense of efficacy; and
- Convening joint higher education/K-12 student trainings to enhance participants' knowledge about high-quality service-learning.

Grantee Partnership

The PSLA partnership represents a balanced three-way partnership designed to promote sustained university involvement in YDSLCS that had previously emphasized the school systems as being in a central role. The following are the grantee level partners of the PSLA CHESP program:

- *Lead partner.* Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance (PSLA), which developed the YDSLCS model, is the training and technical assistance provider for the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Learn and Serve program. PSLA provides service-learning training and technical assistance through regional workshops, workshops at schools of education, state-wide conferences, interest area focus groups, peer consultants, newsletters, special initiatives, service fairs, a website, and curriculum development.
- *K–12 partner.* Pennsylvania Department of Education (DOE) Bureau of Community and Student Services has provided in-kind and financial support to PSLA's efforts to promote the YDSLCS in high schools across the state.
- *Higher education partner.* The University of Pennsylvania houses the PSLA Eastern office. (The University of Pittsburgh houses the Western PSLA office.) In addition to space, both provide assistance with goal setting, broad program planning, as well as in-kind technical assistance and training to PSLA and the three YDSLCS subgrantees. The partnership between the Center for Community Partnerships and PSLA provides the additional benefits of lessons learned through the development of the WEPIC University-Assisted Community Schools model at the three CHESP higher education subgrantee sites and interactions with national and international colleagues associated with the WEPIC Replication Project.

Program Management Structure

During the planning period for the CHESP proposal, the Pennsylvania Department of Education indicated an interest in building partnerships between K–12 schools and higher education using the YDSLCS model. Subsequently, the department contracted with PSLA to implement the model at three sites in Pennsylvania. PSLA provides technical assistance through site visits to the three subgrantees. (As noted earlier in this case study, the three subgrantees are also involved in partnership development and training activities with UACS model subgrantees).

Role of Other CNCS Programs

The YDSLCS programs are not partnering with other CNCS programs at the grantee level.

Grantee-Level Program Activities

Subgrantee Selection

Through CHESP, the YDSLCS model is being refined to incorporate higher education into the partnerships between K–12 schools and community organizations that were developed through the

first three YDSLCS. In particular, grantee leaders note that links to teacher training programs have been strengthened by the ability to fund higher education institutions to work with YDSLCS on a regular basis. During the planning period for the CHESP proposal, the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance selected three sites in Pennsylvania— Temple University, Lock Haven University, and Slippery Rock University—because they were located near previously developed YDSLCS.

Technical Assistance and Training to Subgrantees

PSLA and WEPIC Replication leaders work together to support subgrantees in reaching their goals in the following ways:

- Managing the grant progress and reporting requirements;
- Maintaining a listserv for grantees;
- Providing one-on-one support, problem solving, and technical assistance to sites through site visits and other communications;
- Facilitating regular, quarterly conference call meetings with all CHESP YDSLCS grantees;
- Developing publications that describe and analyze the experiences of the partners;
- Managing an evaluation of partnerships; and
- Implementing teacher training conducted by PSLA staff.

Promoting Youth Voice

Youth voice is the central element of the Youth-Driven Service-Learning Centers model. It is a core goal of the YDSLCS model to provide opportunities for youth to design and implement service-learning projects

Internal Evaluation

Youth-Driven Service-Learning Centers are participating in the previously discussed evaluation conducted for the WEPIC Replication Project.

Grantee-Level Discussion Summary

PSLA began the YDSLCS model began at Gratz High School in Philadelphia, PA. CHESP provided an opportunity to expand the YDSLCS model to two new high schools and to build ongoing partnerships between Youth Driven Service-Learning Centers and institutions of higher education.

The PSLA is housed at the Penn Center for Community Partnerships and works in close partnership with the center staff. As such, it is considered both *a part of* and *separate from* the WEPIC Replication Project (described in Part One of this case study report). YDSLCS Subgrantees participate in all UACS training. However, in addition to the support provided to the seventeen UACS subgrantees described in part one, these three subgrantees receive technical assistance and support from the PSLA to promote a distinct YDSLCS model which emphasizes K-12 youth leadership. The following section describes an example of one subgrantee's approach to this complex project.

Subgrantee-Level Descriptions

This section presents a YDSLCL subgrantee: a partnership between Temple University; Gratz High School in Philadelphia, PA; and a community-based organization.

Temple University YDSLCL Project Subgrantee

Overview, Background, and Implementation

The Temple University YDSLCL Project centers on a mandatory core curriculum course for Education majors at Temple University. University students who take this course gain practical experience and academic knowledge about service-learning by working with an existing YDSLCL at a nearby school. The YDSLCL has built strong relationships with a community mobilizing organization, the Nicetown Tioga Collaborative, which uses democratic participatory processes to locally define and address issues such as urban environmentalism, education, and health issues.

Subgrantee Partnership

The key subgrantee partners are:

- *Higher Education Lead. Temple University College of Education.* Temple University's College of Education, located in North Philadelphia, serves more than 3,400 students, of which approximately 80 percent are Pennsylvania residents. Temple University Education students participate in a mandatory service-learning core teacher education course, which involves working with Gratz High School faculty and students. The YDSLCL CHESP funding, and support from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, made it possible to bring the YDSLCL approach and pre-existing service-learning efforts together at Temple.
- *K-12 partner: Youth-Driven Service-Learning Center (YDSLCL).* The mission of the YDSLCL, at Gratz High in Philadelphia, PA, is to serve as a catalyst for community development by facilitating partnerships among community members, including CBOs, higher education institutions, teachers and students (K-12), businesses, and concerned citizens, in an effort to positively impact students and their communities.
- *Community-based organization: The Nicetown Tioga Collaborative.* This broad-based community-based organization focuses on a range of urban environmental and community development needs of the North Philadelphia area. College and high school students worked together with the Nicetown Tioga Collaborative to define critical community needs in areas such as after-school programming, recreation, environment, and academic and health-related issues.

The service-learning model at Temple reflects a "cascading" partnership in which older college students work with high school students to plan and carry out community projects. The lead subgrantee is Temple University, which developed a relationship with the YDSLCL at Gratz High

School to support their work. YDSLCL teachers and students built relationships with community partners and elementary and middle school students at feeder schools to promote service-learning.

Project Description

Specifically, the YDSLCL at Gratz High School includes activities to:

- Identify and address community needs;
- Train and involve educators in service-learning;
- Advocate for service-learning methodology;
- Learn and teach leadership skills;
- Empower youth; and
- Promote educational achievement.

The cascading model of partnership fosters an important dynamic between older education-major college students and younger high school students. While college students are more mature and have learned theories of educational practice, high school students are often more adept or “expert” in service-learning and the needs of their community, due in part to the “youth-driven” nature of the centers. The program has focused on helping both college and high school students understand and respect the assets that each brings to the relationship. The Temple professor who oversees these efforts reports that the collaborative service-learning experience provides a “leveling” effect between the college and high school students who are encouraged to form collaborative teams to solve community problems.

At Gratz High School, the YDSLCL existed prior to CHESP funding. An interdisciplinary high school course called “Champions of Caring” linked junior and senior students to nearly forty community organizations and allowed students to play a major role in determining how to support these community groups. CHESP brought Temple University into the YDSLCL partnership.

Temple University students work with the Philadelphia School District Gratz Cluster YDSLCL, and directly with high school students, to assess and address the needs of the surrounding North Philadelphia community. The emphasis on collaboration between the mixed-level student teams that has been promoted by CHESP is widely believed to have produced deeper, richer relationships and student learning experiences this year.

In addition to the collaboration between institutions, this partnership has promoted teacher-student collaborations. Specifically, the Temple professor and students have co-written and published articles on the educational and community benefits of this CHESP partnership at national conferences including the National Service-Learning Research conference.

Subgrantee-Level Discussion Summary

The Temple University YDSLCL Project centers on a required course for students in the College of Education. The lead contact reports that CHESP has encouraged deeper, more meaningful relationships between higher education students and K-12 students who participate in the Youth Driven Service-Learning Center and the surrounding community.

Summary Analysis of Youth-Driven Service-Learning Center

Grantee and Subgrantee Perspectives

Overall Reported Progress

PSLA leaders point to two major accomplishments of the YDSLCL elements of Penn's CHESP grant: (1) bringing YDSLCLs more closely together with higher education and (2) creating or strengthening programs that involve teacher training in institutions of higher education through service-learning at the higher education and K-12 levels. Grantee staff believe that pre-existing YDSLCLs can benefit from the involvement of higher education students, especially education majors, who bring theoretical and practical knowledge to bear on these youth-driven efforts. The college students, who are primarily education majors intending to become teachers, offer important support for high school teachers who are incorporating service-learning into their classes. The college students are also seen as role models for the high school youth.

Replication and Sustainability

The YDSLCL effort is already demonstrating its ability to be replicated in new settings. Since CHESP began, YDSLCLs have expanded beyond the three CHESP-funded sites to 16 additional sites, using funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The PSLA vision (which is reportedly shared by the Pennsylvania DOE) is to develop a YDSLCL in every one of the 501 school districts in the state of Pennsylvania.

Lessons Learned From the YDSLCL Model

Since the development of a link between YDSLCL programs and institutions of higher education, grantee and subgrantee leadership has also recognized a number of the barriers and challenges that are faced in the management and maintenance of three-way partnerships. These include the following:

- Many college and K-12 faculty do not understand how service-learning can foster achievement of "academic" objectives;
- The pressure on K-12 schools to meet high-stakes testing and other academic standards has made developing strong university and community partnerships with K-12 schools more difficult;
- Transportation of students from colleges and schools to community sites has sometimes been difficult, making it hard to implement many planned collaborations; and

- College and K–12 students sometimes express concerns about safety when they are asked to get involved in efforts that require them to deliver services in communities that have a reputation of being “bad neighborhoods.”

Additional difficulties exist in maintaining partnership relationships with community-development and related community-based organizations; WEPIC staff report that they have sometimes experienced a failure to sustain partnerships with Philadelphia community development corporations because, with frequent staff changes and fluctuating neighborhood involvement, relationships are hard to maintain between universities and community organizations.

Another reported barrier to the continuation of YDSLAC aspects of the CHESP partnerships has been the tendency for higher education institutions to see K–12 youth as the recipients of service, rather than active participants in service-learning and community-building enterprises. However, the Temple University subgrantee, in particular, demonstrates that a site can recognize this issue and respond to it as a part of the teacher education curriculum at the university level.

PART THREE: Overall Implications and Lessons of the Penn WEPIC Replication Project

This section consolidates the implications and lessons from the WEPIC Replication Project's University-Assisted Community Schools and Youth-Driven Service-Learning Center models. The collaboration between the University-Assisted Community Schools and Youth-Driven Service-Learning Center models highlights the possibility of bringing related, ambitious, service-learning promotion projects together for their mutual benefit. The WEPIC Replication Project as a whole differs from all other CHESP grantees in that it is a national model with 20 subgrantees. Thus, the Penn Project provides some direct lessons for The Corporation and other national grant-makers who seek to support these types of projects. For example, the Penn CHESP experience has provided useful insights into such factors as:

- *Implementing cross-university partnerships.* It is possible to create cross-university partnerships that will, in turn, promote three-way partnerships in their respective communities. Grantees and subgrantees of the WEPIC Replication Project value the opportunities to meet with and learn from each other.
- *Establishing a collegial network.* Such networks create opportunities for publishing papers and reports, and presenting at national conferences. Grantee staff perceive that a system of communication and shared governance foster a spirit of partnership between subgrantees that contributes to further evidence of the experiences and lessons across colleges and universities.
- *Selecting a diverse range of lead institutions.* The fact that a diverse range of lead institutions were selected and successfully implemented through CHESP subgrants indicates that this model works with different types of lead agencies. The WEPIC Replication Project supports partnerships led by major research universities, community colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, K–12 school districts, a K–12 school, and a community-based organization. Initially, these models were primarily focused on university-led programs. However, the Penn WEPIC Replication leadership demonstrated adaptability and a commitment to supporting democratic partnerships that address pressing community needs, regardless of whether their leads were colleges/universities, K–12 school districts, or community organizations. Penn, in its role as a national grant-maker, allowed the WEPIC Replication Project to be innovative in selecting subgrantees, as shown by the multiple strategies employed in selecting subgrantees.
- *Sustaining partnerships.* The long-term commitment of Penn to the subgrantees and the subgrantees to Penn and each other demonstrates an important model of a sustained partnership. Some of the subgrantees that are now supported by CHESP were previously supported by Learn and Serve America funding and DeWitt Wallace–Reader's Digest Funds, the first of these almost ten years ago. The Penn commitment to maintaining relationships with these diverse partners, while still growing and evolving as a program

with new partners, new sites, and new funding is unique among CHESP grantees and rare among national programs—it stands as a model of what can be hoped for among partnership efforts.

Appendix A

Index of Major Themes and Characteristics of CHESP Case Study Programs¹

Characteristics	Colorado Department of Education <i>(Chapter 2)</i>	Community Chest, Inc (Nevada) <i>(Chapter 3)</i>	Florida Department of Education <i>(Chapter 4)</i>	Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning <i>(Chapter 5)</i>	Mississippi Department of Education <i>(Chapter 6)</i>	University of Pennsylvania <i>(Chapter 7)</i>
Type of Grantee (managing agency)	SEA	GME	SEA (HE)	SEA	SEA (HE)	GME
Grantee Partners	pg. 4	pg. 3-4	pg. 3-4	pg. 3-4	pg. 4	pg. 4, 16
Role of AmeriCorps VISTA	pg. 5	pg.4	pg. 4	pg. 5	pg. 5	pg. 16
Type of Lead Subgrantee Organization	CBO pg. 9; K-12 pg. 11-12; CBO/HE pg. 14	All CBO pg. 7, 9-10, 11-12	K-12 pg. 6, 9; CBO pg. 10	All K-12 pg. 7, 9, 11-12	K-12 pg. 1-2, 8-10; HE pg. 12.	K-12 pg. 8-9; HE pg. 5-6, 19- 20
Subgrantee Partners	pg. 9, 12, 15	pg. 7, 9-10, 12	pg. 6-7, 9, 11	pg. 7-8, 9-10,	pg. 8, 10, 12	pg. 8-9, 19-20
<i>Increases in Collaboration and Three-Way Service-Learning Partnerships</i>						
➤ CHESP brought new partner agencies into planning, delivery and assessment	pg. 12	pg. 3	pg. 7		pg. 2, 4-5.	
➤ Partnerships built on existing relationships.			pg. 6-7	pg. 9		pg. 8
➤ Youth Voice	pg. 1, 3, 7, 9, 10,11, 13-14, 16, 19	pg. 1,4, 5-6, 8, 10, 12-13, 15,	pg. 5, 11, 15	pg. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 16	pg. 3, 6, 9,	pg. 7, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21
<i>Common Barriers to Effective Three-Way Partnerships</i>	pg. 11-12	pg. 15	pg. 9	pg. 16	pg. 16	pg. 21
<i>Perceived Effects of CHESP on Quality of Service-Learning</i>						
➤ Increases in professional development for current or future teachers	pg. 6-7, 10, 14, 15, 19,		pg. 3, 4, 10,	pg. 1, 3, 5, 7, 13	pg. 6	
➤ Links to standards	pg. 1, 6-7, 8, 11, 13-14, 15, 16, 17,		pg. 6	pg. 2	pg. 6-7	pg. 21
<i>Effects of Different Types of Lead Grantee and Subgrantee Organizations</i>	pg. 9-11				pg. 16	pg. 19-20

¹ Page numbers identify location of topic within each relevant chapter.

	Colorado Department of Education <i>(Chapter 2)</i>	Community Chest, Inc (Nevada) <i>(Chapter 3)</i>	Florida Department of Education <i>(Chapter 4)</i>	Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning <i>(Chapter 5)</i>	Mississippi Department of Education <i>(Chapter 6)</i>	University of Pennsylvania <i>(Chapter 7)</i>
Characteristics						
<i>Grantee Strategies for Program Implementation</i>						
➤ Model-driven					pg. 4-5	pg. 16
➤ Locally determined			pg. 4-5	pg. 4		
➤ Regional centers	pg. 4-5	pg. 4				
➤ Cooperative arrangement						pg. 4-5
<i>Subgrantee Models of Three- Way CHESP Partnership</i>						
➤ Balanced partnership			pg. 6-7			pg. 8-9
➤ Partnership with dominant lead	pg. 9-10, 14-15	pg. 9-10, 12		pg. 7-8, 9-10		
➤ Hub-and-spoke	pg. 12-13	pg. 7-8	pg. 11		pg. 8-9, 12-13	
➤ Cascading			pg. 9			pg.18-19
➤ Centralized					pg.10-11	