

## **The Unrecognized Co-Educator In Academic Service-Learning: Community Partners' Perspectives On College Students Serving Diverse Client Populations**

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Universities strive to educate students about diversity through their curriculum and classroom discussions; however, students rarely may encounter diverse populations on the college campus. Thus, faculty members have turned to academic service-learning to expose students to diverse populations in their own communities. Scholarship on academic service-learning has focused primarily on faculty and student perspectives, rarely accounting for the crucial role of community partners in this endeavor. The present study seeks to understand the issues community partners face and the role they play in working with academic service-learning students whose backgrounds differ from those of their organization's clients. The two main themes that emerged from the participants' responses—college students' initial reactions to diverse clients, and community partners as co-educators—illuminate community partners' vital contribution to diversity education. Eliciting community partners' perspectives will help university administrators, faculty, and students, as well as community organizations themselves, understand the influential role community partners and clients play in advancing diversity education.

In recent decades, universities have made significant efforts to incorporate greater diversity into both the student body and the academic curriculum. Faculty frequently integrate material encompassing diverse perspectives into their courses to promote multicultural education (Bigatti et al., 2012). Yet despite advances in diversity education and ongoing efforts to recruit diverse student populations, college students often learn about diversity in the classroom without encountering it, since student populations at many universities remain largely homogeneous.

By reading about or discussing diverse groups in such environments, students encounter marginalized groups only from a distance, with few if any members of those groups present. Yet according to the National Survey of Student Engagement (2010),

“Experiencing diversity teaches students about themselves and other cultures” (p. 39). In this context, academic service-learning provides a necessary, and otherwise missing, component of diversity education. By bringing students into the community to meet people with lives and backgrounds unlike their own, this pedagogy allows students to encounter firsthand the issues confronting their local community and the broader society.

The reciprocal relationships between university students, faculty, and community organizations provide the foundation for a successful academic service-learning experience (Stoecker & Tryon, 2009). Each individual brings their personal experiences and background into these relationships, influencing their understanding of those with whom they

interact. The diversity of backgrounds and experiences among the participants in these relationships creates tremendous opportunities for both conflict and growth. It is for this reason that Lin, Schmidt, Tryon, and Stoecker (2009) declared, "Diversity is possibly the thorniest issue facing service learning in higher education today" (p. 118).

For students, the rewards of service-learning include enhancing community relationships, bonding with clients (especially children), and learning to interact with people different from themselves (Basinger & Bartholomew, 2006; d'Arlach, Sanchez, & Feuer, 2009; Tryon et al., 2008; Worrall, 2007). Academic service-learning can impact students' perspectives on demographic differences, including those of race, ethnicity, and social class (Lee & Espino, 2010). Research has demonstrated that when students are required to examine their attitudes and assumptions in academic service-learning courses, they become more aware and more accepting of issues related to diversity in the local and broader communities (King, 2004; Nicholas, Harwood, & Radoff, 2007; Root, Callahan, & Sepanski, 2002; Taylor & Trepanier-Street, 2007). Conversely, however, students who provide service for or otherwise interact with individuals different from themselves without reflecting on their own preexisting attitudes and stereotypical assumptions may experience feelings of privilege, fear, suspicion, guilt, and/or superiority (Novek, 2000). Thus exposure to diverse populations without sufficient support and appropriate reflection may reinforce or intensify, rather than alleviating, negative stereotypes (Darby, Knight-McKenna, Spingler, & Price, 2008; Rosenberger, 2000; Schwartzman & Sutton, 2013).

Schwartzman and Sutton's (2013) ethnography explored the experiences of African American college students volunteering with African American clients at a food distribution center. The authors expressed their surprise that the students seemed unable to connect with the clients. When the students realized there was not enough food for all the clients, some responded with disengagement, assuming the role of "food guardians versus food providers" (p. 73). Echoing previous findings, the researchers noted, "Students need to be emotionally as well as cognitively prepared for processing their service-learning experience" (p. 76). Both before and after their service-learning experience, students need appropriate support and assistance for growth and learning to occur.

Holsapple (2012) reviewed 55 studies to analyze the impact of academic service-learning courses on students' understanding of diversity. He found that the literature clusters around six main themes: "tolerance of difference, stereotype confrontation, recognition of universality, interactions across differences, knowledge about the served population, and belief in the value of diversity" (p. 6). The most frequently cited finding, in 32 of 55 studies, centered on stereotype confrontation, in which students reduced previously held negative beliefs about the groups with whom they worked as a result of participating in an academic service-learning course. The second most frequently referenced result, in 28 out of 55 studies, related to knowledge about the served population. Students increased their knowledge of a group's customs, the ways the group was marginalized, and the differences among members of this population through their academic service-learning experience.

In the process of achieving these outcomes, community partners fulfill a unique role. As college students come face-to-face with the diversity of an organization's clients, community partners are on site, directly observing and facilitating student-client interaction. Yet surprisingly little research has explored community partners' perceptions of how to incorporate into their organizations students whose backgrounds are very different from those of the clients they serve. From the perspective of this key group, how do students increase their understanding of diversity? In this study, *diversity* is defined as differences in ability, age, gender, race, and socioeconomic background. The purpose of this study is to understand the issues community partners face and the role they play in working with academic service-learning students whose backgrounds are very different from those of their organizations' clients.

### **Context of the Study**

The researchers in this study are faculty members and undergraduates at a small, private liberal arts university in the southeastern U.S. Eighty percent of the undergraduate students at this institution are white, 6% are African American, 3% are Hispanic American, 1% are Asian American, 1% are multiracial, 2% are international students, and 7% are unreported. Students registered with the university's disability services office comprise 9.4% of the total population. In 2011, 69% of incoming freshmen at this university reported family incomes of \$100,000 or more. Sixty percent of the students are female and 40% are male, and the vast majority are of traditional college age (18-22 years old). Eighty percent of students at the

university participate in some type of volunteer experience.

The county in which the university is located has approximately 151,000 residents. The county's priorities with regard to health issues are health care access, obesity, mental health, and substance abuse. The county's priorities in relation to social issues are education, poverty, homelessness, and domestic violence. Among the families living in this community, 22.8% of children live in poverty, which is higher than the state average. The economic downturn left many residents without jobs and created a shortage of affordable housing. This is the largest metropolitan area in the state with two major interstates, but it offers limited public transportation.<sup>1</sup>

### **Theoretical Approach**

Gudykunst's (2005) theory of anxiety/uncertainty management (AUM) provides the theoretical framework used in this study. The AUM theory of intergroup encounters focuses on interactions with "strangers," defined as individuals "who represent both the idea of nearness in that they are physically close and the idea of remoteness in that they have different values and ways of doing things. . . . Interacting with strangers is characterized by anxiety and uncertainty" (p. 285). AUM seeks to identify the means through which such individuals can communicate effectively—defined as "maximizing understandings" (p. 289)—despite the anxiety produced by their cultural or other differences.

According to Gudykunst (2005), while some level of anxiety and

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<sup>1</sup> The exact reference is not provided to maintain the confidentiality of the participating organizations. Retrieved from "[X] Community Assessment: 2011."

uncertainty is essential to the communication process, the degree of unease that accompanies encounters between culturally different individuals creates a barrier that must be surmounted for communication to succeed. Gudykunst recommends *mindfulness* as the key process through which anxiety may be managed and uncertainty moderated to achieve the optimal levels required for intergroup communication. He explains, "Four needs are critical to AUM: 1) our need for a sense of predictability (or trust), 2) our need for a sense of group inclusion, 3) our need to avoid diffuse anxiety, and (4) our need to sustain our self-concept" (p. 295). Mindfulness, he believes, provides the means through which individuals can meet these needs and more accurately understand others' perspectives.

### **Methods**

After obtaining Institutional Review Board approval for this study, the researchers solicited the participation of staff members from 15 nonprofit organizations that had partnered with the university to serve as academic service-learning sites. Potential participants received an email and/or phone call requesting their participation in the study and all agreed. The 15 organizations represented in this study serve the following populations: children and adults who are homeless or living in poverty; individuals with health care needs, including terminally ill patients; individuals with disabilities; and children with educational, social, or emotional needs.

The first two authors of this paper, both of whom are faculty members actively involved in academic service-learning at the university, conducted hour-long individual interviews with one or two staff members from each

organization who are directly involved in the partnership. In these interviews, participants were asked questions pertaining to their motivation to partner with the university and the benefits and challenges of working with students from racial and socioeconomic backgrounds that differed from those of their clients. The two interview questions related to diversity included: (a) Does it matter that our students represent a predominantly different race and/or socioeconomic background from your consumers/clientele? and (b) What are the benefits and challenges of these differences?

The interviews were transcribed verbatim, then imported into the Atlas.ti data analysis software. The three questions that guided the analysis process were: (a) Are there concerns related to the students' demographic backgrounds in working with the organizations' clients? (b) What challenges do community partners face in working with students whose demographic characteristics are different from those of their organization's clients? and (c) What are the benefits of students and clients coming from different demographic backgrounds?

The researchers analyzed the transcripts using inductive analysis (Roulston, 2010). Each transcript was coded in response to the three analysis questions. The researchers developed a partially ordered meta-matrix in a table format to indicate each participant's codes in response to the analysis questions (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013). Once the matrix was completed, the researchers identified the categories by comparing the codes across participants to determine patterns. These categories were then examined for themes that best represented the data.

## **Findings**

The two main findings in this study support Gudykunst's (2005) theory of anxiety/ uncertainty management. In the first theme that emerged from the data analysis, 12 of 15 community partners (80%) described the college students' initial responses of fear and anxiety as a result of interacting with clients who were different from themselves. Community partners attributed these emotions to college students' lack of awareness of client needs and broader societal issues. Three other community partners did not report observing these emotions among the students.

In analyzing community partners' responses to the question of whether differences in background between students and clients matter, we discovered that community partners do not just observe students struggling with anxiety and uncertainty as a result of such differences. In addition, some of them actively inform or teach students about these differences to help them advance their understanding of diversity, overcome their anxiety and uncertainty, conquer their fear of interacting with those who are different, and relate more effectively to the clients. In this process, the community partner assumes the role of co-educator. This theme of community partners as co-educators was not a direct response to our research questions. Nevertheless, it is an important finding that highlights the vital role community partners play in initiating and supporting student reflection, thereby advancing mindfulness.

### **Initial Responses of Fear and Anxiety When Working with Diverse Clients**

While 12 of the 15 participants reported observing negative initial responses they characterized as "shock" and "fear" when students began working with the

community organization, the three remaining participants reported observing no negative responses from the students. A staff member for an organization that provides housing and programming to low- and moderate-income families suggested why this might be the case for her clients:

I think the children that they are helping may be fascinated by [the students]. And another thing I was saying, when they come to us, our children come from places where they don't have anything, you don't think about it . . . so [the students] don't know what they come from, and so they don't know what their home life is like. . . . I don't think it makes a difference.

From this staff member's perspective, the college students provided the attention the children needed, and she saw no evidence that the economic disparity between the students and the children was an issue for either side.

However, while some community partners did not perceive problems arising from the differences in backgrounds, the majority did report challenges for the college students. These community partners noted that the college students were often unprepared for the vast differences between their own backgrounds and those of the clients they served. A staff member who develops programs for individuals with developmental disabilities characterized the college students' responses as nervousness, observing, "I think a lot of them are extremely nervous. . . . to work with people that are different than themselves."

Similarly, another participant described reactions of fear and intimidation among the college students in her organization:

There are a lot of students who are intimidated by working with older adults. . . . You know, there's

issues that you don't necessarily think about. . . . And although most of these kids have grandparents, they don't have to deal with their grandparents' incontinence issues, and memory loss issues, their hearing loss. You know they get that grandparent for some one-on-one time and they're familiar with that grandparent and have known them their whole life so it's not scary. . . . But sending them into a room of 30 assisted living residents, or 30 memory care residents, it scares them a little bit. . . . So it takes some time to work past that.

Even when interacting with a population that is not itself unfamiliar, such as elderly adults, when students have not previously confronted the specific issues they encounter among their clients, anxiety and uncertainty may result.

Community partners noted that in addition to responding with fear, college students often experience a form of culture shock. Accustomed to the relative privilege of their home life and their campus community, they are often unaware of the depth and breadth of the need in their local community. A staff member in an organization that focuses on health education initiatives and awareness explained:

I think for us, usually the initial shock is if the students haven't left campus and this is their first placement and all they really knew was campus. They come over here and they just have eyes wide open just to see that [the city] and county is this big, and oh my gosh there's this much poverty, or there's this great of a need, or there are this many Spanish-speaking families, diversity amongst cultures and ages, especially if they are not from this state or this area, so you

kind of see a lot of the students saying, "Wow, I had no idea."

In this community, public transportation is very limited, so college students must have a car to be connected with the community. Many students do not have cars, and are therefore exposed only to very limited areas of the county. This community partner described how unprepared such students may be when they begin to see the true diversity of their community and recognize the extent of the poverty in their own city. In such situations, some community partners respond by seeking to help the students overcome their initial fear and anxiety, guiding them to use their newfound awareness to benefit those living in the community surrounding their campus.

#### **Community Partners as Co-educators**

According to Gudykunst's (2005) theory of anxiety/uncertainty management, uncertainty and anxiety decrease when individuals approach intergroup communication with the sense of competence that comes from mindfulness. Supporting this theory, five community partners shared their approaches to helping raise college students' awareness and increase their understanding of the organization and its clients. Beyond simply exposing college students to individuals different from themselves, some community partners went a step further, actively engaging students in reflecting on their service-learning experiences.

Administrators and other staff members from the partner organizations invested time and effort in sharing their own perspectives and the views and experiences of their clients with the college students. The mutual sharing of life experiences and perspectives between students, community partners, and clients served as a catalyst for broadening the perspectives of all three parties.

One community organization provides afterschool, summer, recreational, and teen programs for children ages 4 to 18 from single-parent households with incomes at or below the poverty line. A staff member from this organization noted how the college students and her young clients learned from each other to gain new perspectives. She noted:

The kids from [college] of course probably come from a different background than probably all of the kids that we deal with here. And I think they learn from each other, because some of the stuff that our kids talk about to them or the way that our kids act towards them, they're like, "Why are they doing that?" It's just the way our kids are, and our kids learn from each other, when they see the [college] kids they're like, "Oh, they go to college." It's a new perspective on different things, or a bigger goal to look towards in life. And when the [college] kids see them they're humbled, because they are like, "Man, people really go through this?" So I think they feed off of each other and learn from each other, and one thing that I do wish [there were] more African American kids from [college] . . . because we're an African American organization and I think it's kind of weird seeing all Caucasian kids come over to where African American kids are. It's like, Why don't our people care?

This community partner observed the mutual learning process that occurs between the college students and the children and young adults in the organization. The children and young adults share their stories with the college students, helping them understand different ways of life and the challenges other people face. The college students share their experiences

of going to college, encouraging the children and young adults to broaden their goals.

However, this staff member also expressed disappointment at how few African American college students participated, wondering what message is sent to the clients when most of the college students assisting the organization are Caucasian. This problem is a result of the small number of African American students who attend the college. The university is working to increase the racial diversity of its student body, an issue that impacts the community as well as the university itself.

In some situations, a community partner wants students to understand that the clients they serve may not be so different from themselves, despite their initial impressions. For example, a staff member who provides therapeutic horseback riding explained the manifold benefits of having college students come to her farm:

It's beneficial because of the fact that I'm trying to get my clients to be independent and meeting people out in the community. And socialization and communication skills, and stuff like that. And I'm wanting [college students] to understand that you can go out on the road today and be hit by a drunk driver and end up like this in a wheelchair. And I tell them that every time they come here. And they're like, "No, not me, it's not gonna happen to me." Well, we didn't know it was going to happen to Jeff and it did. And he's a quadriplegic in a wheelchair. I try to hopefully have lessons learned there in both areas. . . . You know, most everybody when they first come out here, they start crying. When they see, you know, when I tell the stories and stuff.

For this community partner, it is important to show the college students that her clients are people just like them. At times able-bodied people may think they are fundamentally different from those with a disability, but in truth, a disability can happen to anyone. When the community partner shares these stories and the college students meet the riders, they begin to recognize that they have more similarities than differences.

A community representative also emphasized the importance of exposure to people different from oneself to help see beyond those differences. She stated:

Sometimes you just have to experience that, you just have to visit a homeless shelter and see that there is a young guy the same age as me there and that could be me . . . you know so somebody who lost their job and didn't have family to support them, they could be at the homeless shelter, so we do have some smart people at the shelter, who lost their job or their spouse left them and they are there because they took all their money, and just really sad situations. So I think you can tell them all day long but they're not going to believe it till they experience it.

For this community partner, exposure is critical in helping students understand that anyone can encounter life circumstances that leave them homeless, and that the residents of the homeless shelter are not fundamentally different from the students themselves.

While such exposure has the potential to challenge stereotypes and foster deeper respect and understanding, in the absence of a process of reflection it can also have the opposite effect of reinforcing stereotypes (Darby, Knight-McKenna, Spingler, & Price, 2008). As a result, while instructors bear the primary

responsibility for insuring that students in service-learning courses undertake the reflection that is necessary for learning, the findings of this study show that community partners also assist in the reflection process by intentionally and regularly engaging the college students in conversations about their experiences.

A staff member at a community organization serving children from birth to age 5, along with their families and others who work with them, discussed her organization's approach to working with college students and the conversations she has with those students. She noted:

I do think there are some times where [college students] tend to be a little more judgmental quickly . . . even though they don't think of life circumstances with people and why people make certain choices. I think that definitely comes out but I think that's up to us not to put them in situations where these things blurt out inappropriately. There are times, you know, where I think that on occasion people have had conversations with me in my office that if they had said that in the meetings I would have kicked them in the butt; they said it in my office so then you can talk to them about it. Well, let's think about that why might somebody have made that choice. . . . and kind of work it through.

But I haven't found they've done anything inappropriate in front of anybody, it's these thoughts might be in their head but they have enough impulse control and I think that's important that they think about that cause. . . . We realize it's just a fear and so we have to deal with it. So that's one of the areas we've been talking about, how do we work with [college students] . . .

and if we need to go deeper to provide a little more training.

This staff member provides college students with a safe environment in which to share their uncensored thoughts. Through dialogue with the students, the community partner helps them understand how others may make decisions that are different from those they might have made themselves. In addition to spending time with the students, this community partner and her colleagues reflect on how to help students through this process, whether by providing additional training or through other means.

Another community partner also devotes time to educating the students about his clients with development disabilities. He shared:

Once [the college students] see . . . that [the clients] are not going to, um, be ugly to them. They're not going to, you know, spit on them. They're not going to, I hate to use this, but I'm not gonna catch what they've got. You know it's not a disease that's, you know, it's okay to shake hands. It's okay to give a hug. It's okay to high five after a good race, or whatever. And I think [it] opens a world of inclusion, of acceptance of them, you know, maybe a long-range one to really volunteer with these folks.

As students learn about the clients and how to interact with them—as they both increase their knowledge and develop “mindfulness” in Gudykunst’s (2005) sense—they achieve greater comfort with and acceptance of the clients, and in some cases greater dedication to the organization or cause. Overcoming their initial lack of awareness and developing the capacity for mindful interaction is a critical first step in helping students understand and relate to people different from themselves.

Community partners vary in their approaches to working with college students. Some study participants expressed a belief that exposure to diversity in and of itself results in student learning. However, five participants recognized that students need help processing what they experience at their service-learning site. While all community partners may be described as co-educators in some sense, these five participants actively assumed this role by supporting and assisting students in the reflection process. In such cases, community partners spend extensive time teaching students about diversity and listening to college students’ perspectives about people with backgrounds different from their own.

Such community partners schedule time to meet with students individually and privately, inviting them to openly share their thoughts and reactions. These conversations enable the students to express their views honestly while also learning other ways of perceiving individuals and situations. The interactions between the community partner, the clients, and the college students help the students understand different ways of living and become aware of broader societal issues. With support from both the community partner and the course instructor, students may achieve the mindfulness that helps them manage their anxiety and uncertainty, overcome the fear and “culture shock” that can accompany the initial encounter with diverse individuals, and engage in more effective and more fulfilling interactions with the clients they serve.

### **Discussion**

While faculty provide the primary link between the course material and their students’ experience in the community, community partners and the clients

themselves play a critical but often unacknowledged role as co-educators in diversity and multicultural education in academic service-learning. Previous literature on academic service-learning has emphasized that community partners collaborate with universities to educate college students about their organizations and the societal needs they serve (Basinger & Bartholomew, 2006; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Worrall, 2007). The current research adds to our understanding of community partners' vital contribution by highlighting their key role in fostering discussion and reflection on students' interactions with clients from backgrounds different from their own. In doing so they reduce students' anxiety and uncertainty in these encounters, foster a mindful approach to communication with the organization's clients, and help students understand diversity in its many forms.

Previous research on academic service-learning has found that college students often experience fear and anxiety as a result of interacting with individuals whose circumstances and ways of living are unfamiliar to them (McEachron & Ghosh, 2011; Novek, 2000). This study, eliciting the voices of community partners, confirms these findings from another viewpoint. The participants' descriptions of students' anxiety and uncertainty in response to interacting with the individuals their agencies serve are also consistent with Gudykunst's (2005) discussion of the anxiety and uncertainty that accompany intergroup interactions.

As in previous studies, this research found that service-learning accompanied by appropriate reflection challenges college students' stereotypes (Caro & Quinn, 2011; Lin, Schmidt, Tryon, & Stoecker, 2009). Schwartzman and Sutton (2013) described how stereotypes may be reinforced in service learning, and Darby, Knight-McKenna,

Spingler, and Price (2008) also found that exposure to diverse individuals may strengthen rather than challenge stereotypes unless appropriate opportunities for reflection are provided. Five of the participants in this study described the conversations they engaged in with students to help increase students' awareness of social issues and enhance their understanding of their organization's clientele.

Previous research has found that academic service-learning experiences impact students' perspectives on diversity (Holsapple, 2012). This research provides a glimpse into community partners' views of the impact of differing backgrounds between students and clients; however, the study is limited by its small sample size and that fact that all participants are from one community and work with students from a single university. Additionally, community partners may have under-reported negative behavior by the college students for fear of jeopardizing their relationship with the university.

Conversely, the college students may have been on their best behavior when interacting with the staff at their service-learning sites, and may not have expressed their true feelings. Moreover, community partners can observe student behavior only while the students are on site or with the clientele; they have no access to students' attitudes or behaviors off-site or after the service-learning experience has ended, making it impossible to determine whether students' on-site behaviors and attitudes translate into more generalized, longer-term changes. Additionally, this research is limited to the voices of staff members at the community organizations and does not include the voices or experiences of either the students or the clients themselves.

Future research should examine the specific pedagogical approaches and strategies community partners use in advancing students' understanding of diversity and helping them learn to interact more effectively with clients from different backgrounds than their own. Notably, the five community partners who described their strategies for assisting students did so without being asked a question designed to elicit such information. Were this question to be asked directly in future studies, it would likely elicit more numerous and detailed descriptions of community partners' pedagogical approaches and strategies.

Additionally, it is important to elicit perceptions of student/organization/client interactions from multiple perspectives; these attitudes could be measured through pre- and post-test tolerance scales. Moreover, while most of the service-learners in this study came from backgrounds that differed from those of the clients they served, that is not always the case. Future research should explore the experiences of first-generation college students, students from low-income families, and students of color to examine their perceptions of working with the community through academic service-learning courses.

Despite its limitations, this study highlights the role of community partners as often unrecognized co-educators in teaching college students about individuals from diverse backgrounds. A major tenet of academic service-learning is the importance of the reciprocal relationships between university students, faculty, and community organizations (Stoecker & Tryon, 2009). The question remains how faculty can further help students understand their own privilege and begin to see the strengths—rather than just the deficits—of the community and the

clients. Future studies should examine in greater depth the approaches faculty members, as well as community partners, can use to help students become more knowledgeable about the community surrounding their university, and more aware of how their own privilege may influence their interactions with that community.

### **Conclusion**

Students don't experience anxiety or uncertainty when they learn about diversity in the classroom; these kinds of emotional reactions take place only in experiential learning, where they encounter differences firsthand. Thus community partners are the educators who will witness these responses, and they are ideally positioned to help students address and overcome them. Faculty and community partners must work together to initiate the necessary conversations and provide appropriate opportunities for reflection to increase students' understanding of diverse individuals and populations, fostering the mindfulness that decreases anxiety and uncertainty and increases understanding and effectiveness in intergroup communication. This adjustment process will not happen automatically, but must be supported to minimize the risk that stereotypes will be bolstered rather than challenged.

This study illuminates the critical role of community partners in educating college students enrolled in academic service-learning courses about diverse populations. The community partners in this study spent countless hours listening to college students' perspectives and sharing their own experiences with diversity. A key implication of this study is that faculty and universities need to acknowledge the role of community partners as co-educators in advancing

diversity awareness and multicultural education. Institutions, faculty members, students, and community partners themselves need to recognize and celebrate the role of community organizations in educating college students. Universities and faculty members need to acknowledge the limitations of teaching multicultural education in the classroom and recognize the significant role community partners and clients play as co-educators advancing diversity education through academic service-learning.

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