The Voices of Higher Education Service-Learning Directors: A Qualitative Inductive Analysis

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THE VOICES OF HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICE-LEARNING DIRECTORS:  
A QUALITATIVE INDUCTIVE ANALYSIS

Kelsey Woodard, Ph.D.
Western Michigan University, 2013

This research explored issues surrounding service-learning directors (SLDs) within higher education institutions, including who they are, how they became SLDs, and what they experience in the role. Qualitative data were drawn from in-depth interviews of 11 SLDs, as well as review of their vitaes. A qualitative inductive analysis was conducted in which important patterns, themes, and interrelationships that emerged from the data were coded into a category system of major themes and subthemes.

Data analysis revealed the following major themes: (1.0): all the SLDs came from various helping profession backgrounds, with interesting journeys to become a SLD; (2.0) many SLD’s embarking upon their professional carriers had a transformational experience and/or craved a deeper experience beyond the pages of the text book; (3.0) most SLDs have such a strong connection to their undergraduate/graduate institutions and its mission that they have continued to work at, or returned to currently serve at, this same institution; (4.0) Majority of the SLDs agree that service-learning should be housed, as research suggests, within Academic
Affairs; (5.0) all of the SLDs use the standard definition of service-learning, stressing the importance of the hyphen “-” to show the reciprocity between all key players; (6.0) values and beliefs vary among the SLDs, however they do centralize around the theme of holistic student growth; (7.0) many SLDs felt institutional support (upper level) was needed, not just in terms to say they approve of service-learning, but for them to be active participants in service-learning; and (8.0) most SLDs correlate their job responsibilities to align with the institution’s core mission, but do admit that there are “blurred lines.”

These themes were organized into a framework profiling SLDs, and 17 key findings were extracted. Comparison to the extant existing research is offered, as are recommendations for higher education leaders and future research.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First off, let me begin by saying there is not enough space to express my gratitude for everyone and everything in my life. I am most thankful to God for seeing me through. He did not say walking by faith would be easy, but it definitely is a must to make it. The beauty on the other side of through cannot be described—this is just the beginning.

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Kalamazoo, I feel like you raised me and taught me all of the most important lessons of life. I have made some amazing friends here. I will never forget you. Thanks for taking care of me these last few years.
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Last but not least, the 11 amazing service-learning directors who were a part of this study, thank you for your patience and your time. I really look up to each and every one of you, and often pray for you. I hope I captured your voice. Thank you for helping me contribute to service-learning research, and let the world know how amazing higher education service-learning directors are.

Kelsey Woodard
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CHAPTER I

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Higher education involves an intergenerational partnership of learning and discovery, with a compelling moral purpose responding to deep human needs (Koehane, 2006). Higher education, therefore, has a role in shaping students into productive citizens of society (Koehane, 2006). To be a citizen is to be a leader; and higher education has a role to play in preparing leaders across disciplines and fields. A leader is one who has influence and power; and being that higher education has students at such critical points in their lives; this ideal can be nurtured and influenced greatly. Now more than ever, higher education is challenged to educate the leaders of tomorrow and to connect those future leaders with the world of today (Boyer, 1994). The call is to empower civic engagement by fostering and building a service-learning community (Eyler & Giles, 1999, Zlotowski, 1999). Through such service-learning communities, institutions are finding that programs and curriculum, which require students to become engaged with the community around them, nurtures and brings forth leadership qualities within the students (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). All of this can be done through effective leadership and guidance by the institution and its faculty.

A form of leadership that can affectively foster the needed guidance to help produce active citizens and the leaders of tomorrow is transformational leadership. Burns (1978) defines transformational leadership as a process where leaders and followers engage in a mutual process of raising one another to higher levels of morality and
motivation. Formal leadership development programs, within higher education, place a significant emphasis on transformational leadership in their courses and on campus (Alger, 2008; Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000; Singh, Basom, & Perez, 2009). This transformational process can also take place through pedagogy and a learning communities called service-learning.

Service-learning, as defined by the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (2010), is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Service-learning can be an integrated part of an institution’s mission, part of a program’s core curriculum, and/or embedded within a course. One example is Virginia Tech Physics Department’s “The Outreach” program, which aims to fulfill the university’s mission of service-learning and allows for students with a passion, for helping youth learn about the fundamental aspects of physics, be fulfilled. Students go to surrounding elementary, middle and high schools to conduct activities and demonstrations. Another example is the University of Pennsylvania’s Anthropology Program’s Biomedical Science and Human Adaptability course, which views community health as the interaction between biological, environmental and socio-cultural factors (Dryfoos, 2000). Students design, implement, and disseminate an evaluation of the growth status of children attending an alternative school, which provides enriched resources to meet their learning needs. These are just two examples of thousands of university programs and courses in which service-learning is a core experience for students.
Within the realms of higher education, the service-learning movement formally started in 1969 when educators and those concerned with higher education and community service, met in Atlanta to discuss service-learning, its pros and cons, and the importance of it being integrated into universities and programs across America (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2008). From this conference, the following foundational themes emerged as to how service-learning should be incorporated into higher education: student community service should be exorted through the incorporation of academic learning and academic recognition should be given for the learning; funds should be made available by higher education institutions, private organizations, and government for students desiring to participate in service-learning; and students, community, agencies, and higher education institutions should all play a part in the planning and implementation process of service-learning. These same themes are still in place over forty years later (Jacoby & Mustacio, 2010).

The 1980s and on through the 1990s was a time in which many service-learning organizations were formed. A coalition, formed in 1985 and still standing strong today, is Campus Compact, the only national higher education association solely dedicated to campus-based civic engagement. The Campus Compact ideal is to promote public and community service that develops students’ citizenship skills, helps campuses forge effective community partnerships, and provides resources and training for faculty seeking to integrate civic and community-based learning into the curriculum (Campus Compact, 2010). Campus Compact also provides and creates campus support structures for institutions. These support structures are offices and staff that coordinate community
engagement efforts, train faculty members to help them integrate community work into their teaching and research, provide scholarships and other student incentives, and uphold the institutional will to make civic and community engagement a priority (Campus Compact, 2010). Embedded within this support structure are key players: students, faculty and staff, institutions, communities, and service-learning directors.

In reference to these key players, research has shown that service-learning has had a vital effect on students, as seen in areas ranging from personal, social, and learning outcomes to particular program characteristics, including reflection and exposure to diversity (Astin & Sax, 1998). Research concerning faculty reveals they are satisfied with the quality of student learning when implementing service-learning and are increasingly integrating it, and they also report commitment to research (Astin, Astin, Bryant, Calderone, Lindholm, & Szelenyi, 2005; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996; Gelmon, Holland, & Shinnamon, 1998; Ward, 2000). Colleges and universities report institutional commitment to service-learning and enhanced community relations (Campus Compact, 1998; Driscoll et al., 1996). Studies, regarding the impact of service-learning on communities, be it an agency, corporation, or group of individuals receiving the service, reveal that they are satisfied with student participation, and that such students provide useful service in communities and enhances community and university relations (Clarke, 2000).

In reference to the service-learning director, following an extensive search of the literature with a university librarian, it became clear that little research is available. We know that service-learning directors play a vital role in facilitation of service-learning
within an institution, and that successful programs almost always require the leadership of a professional staff person (Zlotowski, 1999). The leader also guides faculty development and is the one to create and maintain connections within the surrounding community (Ackerman, Carruthers, Shinnar, Young, & Young, 2007; Jacoby & Mustacio, 2010). But we know little about the details of who they are, what they do and how they do it.

Indeed, even those engaged in the community service-learning world have been concerned about the lack of research knowledge. At a spring 2003 New England Campus Compact Conference (NECC), Barbara Conyers, Executive Director of Massachusetts Campus Compact, asked those in attendance to address “what does it really mean to be a professional community service-learning director?” (Jacoby & Mustacio, 2003, p. 1). This question spurred a discussion amongst colleagues at the conference and around the country, and one prominent issue raised was that service-learning directors are people coming from a diverse background with varying types of knowledge and skills (Jacoby & Mustacio, 2003). It was also revealed that many directors feel burned out because there are no defined roles and expectations, the relationship between the institution and community is never concrete; and many find it hard to move into to new or expanded roles at their place of institution or at others (Jacoby & Mustacio, 2003). Thus the turnover rate among directors is high.

As a result, Conyers, along with Mustacio created a toolkit called, *Looking In, Reaching Out: A Reflective Guide for Community Service-Learning Professionals* (2010), to provide readers with the skills, confidence, and balance they need to be successful in
their professional and personal lives. Within the toolkit, readers discover what it is to be a reflective practitioner while performing the duties of a community service-learning professional. *Looking In, Reaching Out* is a great resource, but it is still not a research document which reflects who higher education service-learning directors are, what they do, and how they do it.

**Problem Statement and Research Questions**

As noted, there is little research on higher education service-learning directors, yet these individuals are the ones who make it all happen by coordinating programs, recruiting and training key players, and making sure the institution’s will for civic engagement is a priority (Ackerman et al., 2007). More needs to be done to look at the essence of who these individuals are, their roles and responsibilities, their values and beliefs, and their challenges and opportunities.

Therefore, the purpose of my study is to learn more about higher education service-learning directors by addressing the following research questions:

1. Who are service-learning directors at universities, including their values and beliefs regarding service-learning, and what career path led them to this position (e.g., education, prior experience)?
2. How do service-learning directors understand their role, and expectations (theirs and the institutions) for their role?
3. How do service-learning directors respond to challenges and opportunities, and what are some of their significant success stories?
Conceptual Framework

A framework can be thought of as a structure of concepts, which exists in the literature to serve as a ready-made map for a research study. When researchers use conceptual frameworks to guide their studies, you can expect to find a system of ideas, synthesized for the purpose of organizing thinking and providing study direction (Patton, 2002). The framework for my study, therefore aims to provide and direct the reader through the knowledge base for service-learning, as revealed in Figure 1.

This knowledge base encompasses service-learning’s origins, purpose, goals and aims. Within this body of knowledge are key players: students, faculty and staff, institution, community, and service-learning directors, who all take an active role in the service-learning process. As the reader will see in the literature review (Chapter 2), there is an established literature base on service-learning and its effects, impacts, and outcomes on students, faculty, institutions, and communities. However there is no knowledge base on service-learning directors. Therefore, my study takes a look at who service-learning directors are, how they became service-learning directors, and what they experience in the role. The following is the conceptual framework proposed for this study:
To address my research questions, I conducted a qualitative study using the inductive approach and involving interviews with 12 service-learning directors at various types of higher education institutions (i.e., 4 year private and public, Community College, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities) within various geographic regions (e.g., Mid-West, South, and Eastern). I gathered profiles of each participant through the exploration of their vitae (career path). These regions and types of institutions were chosen as a purposeful sample, based upon accessibility and areas in which the researcher would like to pursue work in service-learning. Details on these methods are provided in Chapter III.
**Chapter I Summary**

Service-learning can play a role in the nurturing of students, from changing mental models to birthing leaders who are active in the community around them. But in order for this to happen, institutions need a sound understanding of what service-learning is, create programs which reflect such, and know more about the key leaders who play the most important role in its implementation, service-learning directors. Understanding the essence of service-learning directors is very important to the area of service-learning in higher education. My study aims to describe and explore who service-learning directors are, how they became service-learning directors, and what they experience in the role. This information adds to the body of literature pertaining to service-learning and create a knowledge base for service-learning directors.

Next, Chapter 2 provides the reader with a myriad of studies conducted to assess service-learning in higher education, as well as its history, definition, and need for research on service-learning directors.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review chapter is to provide more details regarding the importance of my study, results of other empirical studies closely related to the topic, and to set the stage for the study (Creswell, 2003). Within this section, I provide the reader with a look into service-learning: its definition, history and significance in higher education, an overview of empirical studies about key players of service-learning in higher education, and the role of service-learning directors and the need for more research in this area.

Service-Learning

Understanding the definition, origin, purpose, and history of service-learning is an important starting point. The conception of this practice birthed from a concern about the disconnect between higher education and community service (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2008). Early pioneers and leaders of service-learning believed that within the realm of higher education, service-learning could bridge that disconnect and develop and matriculate students with the purpose of making a difference in the world (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Definitions

When one hears service-learning, one might question what exactly is service-learning; or for those who have an idea about what it is, they may wonder how it is different from community service or volunteerism. Let us take a look at some definitions.
Service-learning, as defined by the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (2010), is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. The focus is therefore placed on both service and learning.

A closely related concept is community service, which “denotes a particular form of voluntary action in which individuals and groups donate time and effort to benefit others” (Serow & Dreyden, 1990, p. 554). Community service is also described as “an immersion experience wherein one works with, rather than for, an individual or group” (Neururer & Rhoads, 1998, p. 321). In relation to higher education, the 1965 Higher Education Act, amended by the Higher Education Amendments of 1992 and 1993, explicitly defines community service as “services which are identified by an institution of higher education, through formal or informal consultation with local nonprofit, governmental, and community-based organizations, as designed to improve the quality of life for community residents, particularly low-income individuals, or to solve particular problems related to their needs” (Section 101).

Another concept is that of volunteerism, which is done by one’s own free will (Rice, 2010) and can be defined as “giving time, energies, or talents to any individual group for which [the individual] is not paid” (Safrit, King, & Burscu, 1994, p. 7). Volunteering allows for individuals to learn on their own, without a set structure or goal in mind.
From the above definitions, the reader can see that both community service and volunteerism are focused more on service and not learning, but service-learning stresses both service and learning. Sigmon (1994) provides a typology, *Figure 2*, which demonstrates that all participants, both the provider and beneficiary, can benefit from the relationship by collaborating to produce meaningful service and meaningful learning opportunities. This is illustrated through four different types of activities, service-learning being the latter: service-LEARNING, focusing on learning; SERVICE-learning, focusing on service; service-learning, with no connection between service and learning; and SERVICE-LEARNING focusing on both and connecting the two. Sigmon stresses that where there is significant, intentional, and balanced attention to both service and learning, SERVICE-LEARNING occurs (Rice, 2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Service-LEARNING</strong></th>
<th>Learning goals primary; service outcomes secondary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SERVICE-learning</td>
<td>Service outcomes primary; learning goals secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td>service-learning</td>
<td>Service and learning goals completely separate</td>
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<tr>
<td>SERVICE-LEARNING</td>
<td>Service and learning goals of equal weight; each enhances the other for all participants</td>
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*Figure 2.* Typology of Service and Learning (Sigmon, 1994).

Researchers have suggested that the special combination of service and learning, the connection to educational philosophy, and the contribution to pedagogical development, lead to the significance of service-learning in American education (Boyle-Baise & Kilbane, 2000; Lake, 2001; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000). Ackerman et al. (2007) state that “at the source of the service-learning concept lays John Dewey’s educational philosophy, which describes experience as a primary source of learning, in that connection between education and personal experience enhances learning” (p. 345).
The authors discuss that service-learning assignments must include two components, 
continuity and interaction. Continuity pertains to the connection between course 
materials and the assignment, and the application of skills and concepts learned in a 
course to real life situations. Interaction is the link between the objective nature of the 
assignment and the subjective experience, the impressions and thoughts of the student. 
Continuity and interaction are linked by reflection, which can take form of class 
discussion(s), journaling, research papers, or assignments (Ackerman et al., 2007; 
Good (2002) define reflection as

a process of seeking clarity about truth…truth in experience, thought, beliefs 
instincts, and relationships. Reflection can be accomplished independently or as a 
collective endeavor. Yet, however done, reflection demands consideration of 
one’s internal state (beliefs, feelings, assumptions) and external circumstances 
(actions, relationship, power dynamics, obstacles). Reflection also demands a 
self-honesty and humility that will hold its own against affront from any quarter. 
(inside cover)

Therefore reflection is vital. It is a major part of service-learning, allowing one to search 
one’self and explore, beyond the cognitive, the experience. The aim is to have a 
meaningful, significant, intentional and balanced experience. This within itself is a major 
part to be explored. Reflection demanding self-honesty and humility allows for those 
participating to search oneself and create a discipline, and or ritual of self-discovery. 
This act of self-discovery calls for one to pay attention to oneself, which is often
neglected in the college experience. Indeed, “something as simple as the act of paying attention has a power to shift our sense of ourselves and thereby change the world” (Vass-Lehman, Jamison, Holmes, & Walker, 2001, p. 44).

Reflection, intentionality, and paying attention are all concepts I will address deeper, in relation to service-learning directors, later in this review because these are important attributes to possess as a service-learning director (Jacoby, 2010). These three attributes are important for service-learning directors to possess as they efficiently lead in the facilitation of implementing service-learning into the institution’s culture.

**Service-Learning in Higher Education**

Traces of community service and civic engagement can be dated to the beginning of the 19th century. Greek-letter organizations and faith-based groups are often engaged in such activities, and have been a stable presence of community service on campuses for many decades (National Service Learning Clearinghouse, 2008). Events and groups such as the civil rights of 1960, and the start of the Peace Corps in 1961 and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) in 1965, sparked a passion for service (Cruz, Giles, & Stanton, 1999). Such efforts engaging students to be world changers, inspired early pioneers of service-learning to bridge the disconnection between service and learning (National Service Clearinghouse, 2008). This section offers an overview of the history of service-learning in higher education, and expresses to the reader the importance and need for service-learning in higher education.
History

In its early beginnings during the 1960s, a loosely connected group of practitioners sought to explore how community action and academic learning could be integrated (Cruz et. al, 1999). Government funds designated for service-based projects became available in the 1960s as well (Jacoby, 1996). Early on, practitioners observed and evaluated many social action movements sweeping across the nation to learn how to integrate community action and learning in higher education.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps, with authorizing legislation approved by Congress, to promote world peace and friendship by addressing issues of inequality overseas. In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson created VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) as part of the "War on Poverty” legislation. VISTA’s aim is to provide opportunities for Americans to serve full-time helping thousands of low-income communities, by working to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, and strengthen and create community groups. Also in this legislation, he created the National Teacher Corps, the Job Corps, and University Year of Action.

In 1969, educators and those concerned with higher education and community service held a conference in Atlanta to discuss service-learning, its pros and cons, and the importance of it being integrated into universities and programs across America (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2008). This conference was sponsored by the Southern Regional Education Board, United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the City of Atlanta, the Atlanta Urban Corps, Peace Corps, and VISTA. At the conference service-learning pioneers, Bill Ramsey and Robert Sigmon conceptualized service-
learning. Cruz, Giles, & Stanton (1999) documented Ramsey and Sigmon, stating that they used the term

because service implied a value consideration that none of the other words we came up with did... It was more of an attitude, more of an approach to be of service. It’s not just any experience that’s important for the kind of education we were talking about. It’s experience with value judgment involved... We were looking for something with a value connotation that would link action with a value of reflection on that action—a disciplined reflection. That was the model. It had to be real service—not academics, not made up, not superficial, not tangential, but real—and that’s why it had to be agency based. It also had something to that involved disciplined learning, not just casual learning. (p. 67)

In the 1970s and 80s, higher education institutions started to create projects geared toward service, but it was not until the early 1990s, with the establishment of the Foundation for the Corporation of National Service, created as an independent agency of the United States government by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 with the purpose to support the American culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility, that the idea of service-learning really came to the forefront (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

In 1971, the White House Conference on Children and Youth, which met yearly and hosted by the President of the United States and focused on improving the lives of children across the nation called for linking service and learning to improve through the support of healthy personality development. Also within that year, the National Student
Volunteer Program, which became the National Center for Service-Learning in 1979, was established. The Synergist, a journal promoting linking service and learning, was published as for the first time well. In 1979, Sigmon’s "Three Principles of Service-Learning," which focus on the reciprocal relationship of service provider and service recipient, were published in the Synergist, the National Center for Service-Learning’s journal, an early source for information on service-learning research, including: those being served control the services provided; those being served become better able to serve and be served by their own actions; and those who serve are also learners and have significant control over what is expected to be learned (Neal, 2003). These principles are important because the concretely define what service-learning is, therefore serving as a framework for institutions aiming to create service-learning projects.

In the 1980s, grassroots efforts took flight by launching several national service groups including, the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (1984), and Campus Compact (1985), which aids in the organizing and sustainability of service programs in higher education; and the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (1985), which helps replicate youth corps in cities and states by providing and training them on methods to change their lives and the community around them.

In 1989, the Wingspread Principles of Good Practice in Service-Learning were written and created through an extensive consultation with more than seventy organizations interested in service and learning. Taken from their preamble:

We are a nation founded upon active citizenship and participation in community life.

We have always believed that individuals can and should serve. It is crucial that
service toward the common good be combined with reflective learning to assure that service programs of high quality can be created and sustained over time, and to help individuals appreciate how service can be a significant and ongoing part of life. Service, combined with learning, adds value to each and transforms both. Those who serve and those who are served are thus able to develop the informed judgment, imagination, and skills that lead to a greater capacity to contribute to the common good.

In 1990, President George Bush, Sr. signed a preamble, the National and Community Service Act, a legislation which authorized grants to schools to support service-learning and demonstration grants for national service programs. It also charged the Commission of National and Community Service to develop four streams of service, youth corps, nonprofits, and colleges and universities. The legislation also authorized the establishment of the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, also known as Learn and Serve America, which serves as a dynamic resource by supporting the service-learning community in higher education, kindergarten through grade twelve, community-based organizations, tribal programs, and all others interested in strengthening schools and communities using service-learning (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2011).

In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, which amended the 1990 act to establish a Corporation for National Service, to enhance opportunities for national service, and provide national service educational awards to persons participating in such service. The legislation united Senior Corps,
AmeriCorps, VISTA and Learn and Serve America into one independent federal agency, the CNCS.

Service-learning gained momentum in 1996 when President Clinton requested the assistance of college and university presidents to challenge the nation in more service related activities (Jacoby, 1996). The growth of service-learning in the United States continued throughout the 1990s, and much of the credit can be attributed to organizations like Campus Compact and the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (Jacoby, 1996). The Campus Outreach Opportunity League works to encourage development of campus infrastructures, resources, and support for civic engagement. Mentioned earlier, Campus Compact was started in 1985 by a 23 group of administrators hoping to cultivate support for the implementation and institutionalization of service learning projects. Today, it is a national coalition of over 1,100 college and university presidents—representing about six million students—with a mission to promote public and community service that develops students’ citizenship skills, help campuses forge effective community partnerships, and provide resources and training for faculty seeking to integrate civic and community-based learning into the curriculum (Campus Compact, 2010). Campus Compact also provides and creates campus support structures for institutions. These support structures are offices and staff that coordinate community engagement efforts, train faculty members to help them integrate community work into their teaching and research, provide scholarships and other student incentives, and uphold the institutional will to make civic and community engagement a priority (Campus Compact, 2008).
Recently campuses aiming to make service-learning a part of their institution’s culture have gained national attention. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has started to award universities with a dedication to service learning and community collaboration with a prestigious Community Engagement Classification. First offered in 2006, as part of an extensive restructuring of The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, this classification recognizes colleges and universities with an institutional focus on community engagement. Schools must demonstrate through extensive documentation, their engagement with the community at the local, national or international levels. The Foundation’s goal is to highlight elements of institutional mission and distinctiveness that are not represented in the national data on colleges and universities (Clyburn, Driscoll, & Saltmarsh, 2011).

Service-learning is continuing to grow leaps and bounds throughout higher education. As evident in the 2008 Campus Compact Highlights and Trends, 94% of Campus Compact members had a dedicated office focused on community service, service-learning, and/or civic engagement. Also service-learning is growing across institution type as well, with faith-based institutions and historically black colleges and universities reporting the highest levels of student service, i.e., 61% of students participating in service and civic engagement activities.

**Role of Service-Learning in Higher Education**

The implementation and institutionalization of service-learning takes an active commitment by an institution to integrate it into the overall mission and vision, and intentional action to support such service-learning, leading to its sustainability.
Researchers characterize the development of service-learning at the institutional level as being a cycle that includes awareness, planning, prototype, support, expansion, and evaluation (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Howard, King, & Marcus, 1993). Over the years there have been a few studies which propose ways in which service-learning can be introduced and integrated into higher education. Three pieces of work, which are reviewed in more detail in the later, lay out how service-learning can be integrated and sustained in higher education institutions.

First, Holland’s (1997) research provided a proposed matrix of institutional commitment to service. Specifically, she pointed out the need for a method to assist other institutions in measuring their commitment to service-learning. Data was used from 23 institutional case studies to “propose a matrix that may be useful for faculty and administrators interested in exploring institutional effort in ways that can assist in planning, evaluation, dissemination, and institutionalization” (Holland, 1997, p. 45). This matrix explains the interrelationship between the level of commitment to service and seven key organizational factors that illustrate and characterize each level, essentially, serving as a rubric for institutions to assess themselves (Holland, 1997). There are four levels of commitment: low relevance, where service-learning is not mentioned, to full integration whereby service is an essential role and a defining characteristic of an institution’s mission. The seven key organizational factors are representative of important aspects of organizational infrastructure, policy, communication, and participation, including: (1) institutional mission; (2) promotion, tenure, and hiring, with rewards being
tied to either service-learning or community-based research; (3) organizational structure, representative of a campus-wide center for service-learning; (4) student involvement, with service-learning being an extracurricular activity to a course integrated into the curriculum; (5) faculty involvement, either individual research or through community collaboration and research; (6) community involvement; and (7) campus publications, with slight emphasis or mention to an explicit, broad range of service-learning in publications. These factors are a reflection of an institution’s efforts to define and implement service in its mission (Holland, 1997).

As a second important study, Ackerman et al. (2007) offer insight regarding strategies used by institutions towards the implementation and sustainability of service-learning, using Holland’s (1997) four levels of commitment. To do such, the researchers collected data from 12 service-learning directors to provide descriptions of common practices associated service-learning implementation and sustainability, focusing on organizational tactics associated with funding, administration, faculty recruitment and support, and student involvement and assessment. Using this sample of 12 service-learning directors, Ackerman et al. provides a description of common practices associated with the implementation and sustainability of service-learning at the institutional level, focusing on organizational tactics associated with funding, administration, faculty recruitment and support, and student involvement and assessment. Overall, a majority of the service-learning directors stated that their institutions started out at the lower levels of institutional commitment, but moved toward the higher levels by continuously focusing on the learning component of service-learning (Ackerman et al., 2007).
The third piece of work, which I believe provides the most insight and best strategic plan concerning the institutionalization and implementation of service-learning, is Bringle and Hatcher’s (1996) *Implementing Service Learning in Higher Education*. Bringle and Hatcher present a Comprehensive Action Plan for Service Learning (CAPSL), providing a comprehensive step-by-step action plan to introducing, implementing, and managing service learning at the institutional level. The CAPSL developed based on work with 44 institutions that participated in a three-year Campus Compact Project on Integrating Service with Academic Study. From the examination of these institutions, Bringle and Hatcher came up with four constituencies on which a program for service-service learning needs to focus its principle activities: institution, faculty, students, and community, all of whom are key players in service-learning. The CAPSL model also identifies a sequence of activities, tasks, and outcomes for each key player, except for service learning directors. Bringle and Hatcher, (1996) as well as Holland (1997) and Ackerman et al. (2007), provide information concerning this whole in the knowledge base on higher education service-learning directors, which I will address later in this chapter.

Overall, there is a consensus among researchers concerning the first steps of the service-learning implementation process and where the office of service-learning should be housed in academia. One of the first steps is for institutions to “identify a person to assume the leadership and administrative responsibility for subsequent program operations and to establish an office of service learning” (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000, p. 226). The purpose of such an office is to communicate to all key players its mission and
planned activities, provide technical and logistical support, offer monetary incentives, specifically for faculty, recognition of all key players, and recruit faculty to service learning (Ackerman et al., 2007; Bringle & Hatcher, 2007). The placement and or housing of service-learning in an institution is vital, with Ackerman et al. (2007) stating that “in terms of the tactics used for institutionalizing service-learning on a campus of higher education, the administrative location (meaning its reporting relationship in organizational structure) of the service-learning program is one of the most powerful” (p. 360). Though some institutions place it in Student Affairs, most researchers suggest it be in Academic Affairs, and or housed within academic programs. Indeed eight of the 12 service-learning directors in Ackerman et al.’s study strongly stating that “service-learning must be an academic program (and not Student Life) program in order to achieve academic legitimacy” (p. 360).

As mentioned previously, service-learning was heavily influenced by community service programs performed by Greek-letter organizations and faith-based groups on campus, which are typically placed in Student Affairs (Student Life). Through the start of organizations such as Campus Compact partnering with institutions and academia seeing the need to bridge the gap between service and learning, most experts agree it is vital that the office of service-learning be in Academic Affairs because “placing a centralized office under the chief academic officer is advantageous to the institutionalization of service-learning” (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000, p. 284). It is advantageous because it allows for service-learning to be integrated into the curriculum easily from the start and to gain legitimacy. This helps with faculty buy-in, which most research reveals to be one of the
hardest aspects in implementing service learning (Ackerman et al., 2007; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000).

So far we have reviewed the history of service-learning and how it should be implemented and institutionalized in higher-education. Let us now take a further look and gain an understanding of the benefits, impacts, and outcomes of service-learning’s key players.

**Research on Key Players**

The key players in service-learning are students, faculty and staff, institutions, communities, and service-learning directors. The following overviews a myriad of studies, which assess service-learning in higher education. From the literature, the reader will learn a great deal about service-learning’s impacts and outcomes on students and faculty, but there is limited literature pertaining to service-learning directors in higher education.

**Research on Students**

Service-learning has had a vital effect on students, ranging from personal, social, and learning outcomes to particular program characteristics, and in areas ranging from reflection and exposure to diversity. When it comes to personal outcomes, service-learning has had a positive holistic effect on student personal development, such as sense of personal efficacy, personal identity, and moral development (Astin & Sax, 1998; Astin et al., 2005). For example, Astin and Sax (1998) conducted a national study of 42 institutions using data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program Freshman (CIRP) Survey, SAT and ACT scores, and enrollment data, and for which thirty-five
student outcomes were measured in five student cohorts from 1990-1994. This study examined the impact of community service participation on undergraduate student development. The researchers found that participating in service during the undergraduate years substantially enhances a student’s academic development, life skill development, and sense of civic responsibility. This relationship remained even after controlling for individual student characteristics at the time of college entry, including the propensity to engage in service.

Service-learning has also had a positive effect on students’ interpersonal development and the ability to work well with others, leadership and communication skills, as well as facilitating cultural and racial understanding, and citizenship and social justice attitudes. Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, and Illustre (2002) conducted a study, involving 541 college students at Tulane University, of which 217 were engaged in service-learning and 324 were not so engaged. All students completed the Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire at the beginning and end of a semester, collecting both personal and social outcomes. Results indicated that students doing service-learning showed increases in their plans for future civic action, assessments of their own interpersonal, problem-solving, and leadership skills, and social justice and diversity attitudes. They also found that such students showed high course satisfaction, a learning outcome attributed to the service-learning they completed. Elyer and Giles (1999) reported similar learning outcome findings, in that students enjoy their service-learning courses, report substantial learning from them, and make efforts to seek out further service experiences. Their findings came from two national research projects, funded by the Fund for the
Improvement of Postsecondary Education, that include pre- and post-surveys of more than 1,500 university students, plus a number of personal interviews.

**Research on Faculty**

Research concerning faculty reveals they are satisfied with the quality of student learning when implementing service-learning and are increasingly integrating it; and faculty who integrate service-learning into their courses, commit to research and publishing their experience (Driscoll et al., 1996; Gelmon, Holland, & Shinnammon, 1998; Ward, 2000).

Gelmon, Holland, and Shinnammon (1998) conducted a long-term evaluation of the Health Profession Schools in Service to the Nation Program being implemented at various universities. The evaluation was driven by five research questions related to university-community partnerships, student readiness for careers, faculty engagement in service-learning, institutional capacity to support service-learning, and the impact of service-learning on community partners. The purpose of their program evaluation was to examine service-learning as a tool for curricular reform in schools that educate health professionals. This program was multi-site and multi-year, and was sponsored by the Corporation for National Service and Pew Charitable Trusts. Progress reports written by grantees, over six month intervals, provided the basis for a case study at each site. Case studies were enhanced with site visits, interviews, focus groups, observations, surveys, and document reviews. The evaluation found that service-learning is a powerful tool for influencing student attitudes toward the role of service in their lives. They also found that it was a fulfilling experience for faculty and community members.
Faculty also feel service-learning experiences serve as the foundation for research and other scholarly work (Driscoll et al., 1996). This finding resulted from a comprehensive case study model, at Portland University, on service-learning assessment as a response to the need to measure the impact of service-learning among four populations: students, faculty, community agencies and institutions. Through qualitative and quantitative measures, researchers were able to determine the most effective and practical tools for measuring the impact of service learning. Four service-learning courses served as the sample for the pilot study, in which three forms of data collection were used: in-person assessments, independent reflection measures, and reviews of existing documentation. Through analysis of documentation, the researchers found that faculty service-learning experiences greatly influenced their scholarship in the form of research, conference presentations, and publications.

These sample research studies illustrate how faculty benefit from service learning by aiding their pursuit of research, inspiring them to integrate service-learning into their courses, and giving them a sense of empowerment to make a difference in the community around them, both on and off campus.

**Research on Institutions**

There are a number of studies which focus on the impact of service-learning on institutions. For example, Astin et al. (2005) study on spirituality and the professoriate provides research regarding service-learning’s impact on institutions. These researchers found that colleges and universities, with a commitment to service-learning curriculum improved their community relations, and it affected their student retention.
Though some years ago, Holland’s (1997) study analyzing institutional
committment to service-learning is still telling and reflects the role of service as a valuable
priority of higher education institutions. This matrix served as a diagnostic to identify
levels of institutional commitment and evaluating organizing approaches and service
support, in regards to service-learning, within a framework of the institution’s mission.

Ackerman et al. 2007 study utilized Holland’s matrix as a means to offer insight
in regards to the strategies institutions use to implement and sustain service-learning at
various levels of commitment. The findings revealed that financial commitment from the
institution is vital in order to keep service-learning initiatives sustained. There was a
positive correlation between the number of years the service-learning program existed
and the size of the operating budgets, which indicates an increased level of institutional
commitment. A majority of the service-learning directors revealed they began their roles
within lower levels of institutional commitment, but their institutions moved toward the
higher levels by continuously focusing on the learning component, the academic
connection, of service-learning (Ackerman et al., 2007).

Research shows that service-learning has an impact on retention, by providing
academic challenge and student course content engagement (Gallani & Molli, 2003). In
this study, data was gathered from 317 students from a southern private university to
examine service-learning effects on college student engagement and retention. Data was
gathered through questionnaires, 142 participants engaged in service-learning through an
academic course and 171 not engaged in service-learning. Students participating in
service-learning reported that their courses promoted interpersonal, community, and
academic engagement; were academically challenging; and encouraged their continued study at the university (retention) (Gallini & Moely, 2003).

**Research on Community**

Service-learning’s impact on community members reveals they are satisfied with student participation, and they report enhanced university-community relationships and that useful services are provided. In 2003, the Engaging Communities and Campuses grant program was administered by the Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education. This grant program involved 13 private colleges and universities which developed and implemented campus-wide initiatives to prepare students to make a lifetime commitment to the community around them. Focus group interviews and small group activities were conducted with nineteen community leaders involved in service-learning partnerships. The goal was to capture community views regarding their partnership work with higher education and what it takes to develop a successful, efficient partnership. Two key findings emerged: good partnerships are created and sustained overtime. Through the cumulative effects of even the most routine interactions and outcomes; and community themselves must be equally accountable to institutions of higher education for nurturing the conditions that lead to the development of a good partnership (Furco, 2003).

To ensure healthy and sustainable partnerships, seven recommendations were offered by the grant program: allot time for continuous relationship building at the onset; discuss racial, ethic, and economic inequalities and incorporate them in the service-learning projects, identify underlying reasons, or hidden agendas, for formulating
partnerships; understand one another’s organizational structure and culture by discovering what is important to one another; invite community partners on to campus to share their expertise; and be meticulous about the details through strategically training all key players involved in the partnership.

Service-Learning Directors

This section will express to the reader the importance of a university service-learning director, the hole in the research, and why research in this area should be conducted. Service-learning directors play a vital role in facilitation and implementation of service-learning within an institution. The leader also develops faculty development and is the one to create and maintain connections within the surrounding community. Yet, as mentioned previously, there is little research on service-learning directors.

Role of Service-Learning Directors

Researchers agree that the leadership of a professional staff person, a service-learning director, is key to the implementation and institutionalization of a successful service-learning program (Ackerman et al., 2007; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; Zlotowski, 1998). It definitely takes a great leader to facilitate service learning within an institution; and these leaders have been termed “champions” (Ackerman et al., 2007; Wood, 1990). These champions serve as “vehicles for disseminating commitment to service across the institution” (Ackerman et al., 2007, p.361). Though literature concerning service-learning directors is scarce, it does provide information about the purpose and function of the office of service-learning in an institution. “Having a centralized office that provides technical assistance, logistical support, monetary incentives, and recognition…can assist
in recruitment of…faculty to service learning” (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000, p. 284). Taking a look at what the office of service learning does can shed light on what service-learning directors do.

As expressed earlier, Bringle and Hatcher’s (1996) study provided a heuristic that guides institutions on focusing their attention on important steps of planned change, while also outlining what offices of service-learning should be doing to facilitate and assure institutional change. Concerning institutions, they can serve the dual role of being data collectors while, also, being the object of the data collection for monitoring program development; evaluating institutional outcomes, and publishing their findings in scholarly and professional journals, all which the office of service-learning can facilitate because it promotes and expands the knowledge base of service-learning in academia (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; Eyler & Giles, 1999).

When it comes to faculty, offices of service-learning have their work cut out for them. Faculty buy-in is crucial because faculty are the primary means of delivery within academia (Ackerman et al., 2007; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; Holland 1997). Supporting faculty by showing them how to integrate service-learning into the curriculum is very important. Not only does it assure that service-learning will be administered correctly, but it forms a bond between faculty and service-learning. From such interactions, a common understanding and definition of service-learning can be created for the institution. Offices of service-learning can aid in the creation of a prototype (complete with a syllabus) with service-learning examples across the curriculum, learning objectives (which have continuity and promote interaction), and reflection activities.
Offices of service-learning can help recruit students who are advocates of service-learning.

In regards to students, it is important for offices of service-learning to understand the student culture and climate, especially in regards to student attitude towards service-learning. This will allow for such offices to develop creative ways to attract students, especially on large campuses where informing students is harder (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). Also forming bonds with students to empower them to be advocates of service-learning will help out immensely. Offices should also collect data, reflecting the growth in enrollment and add to the literature base pertaining to the impacts and outcomes of service-learning on students.

When it comes to community, it is important for offices of service-learning to be involved in the implementation of service learning programs. All involved need to remember that it takes time, commitment, and resources to form university-community relationships (Berman, 2006; Jacoby, 1996). Evidence of good university and community relationship is the mutual, beneficial interaction between university and community, guided by choice and strategy (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996).

**Importance of Service-Learning Directors**

Though we now have a view of what offices of service-learning should do, and the activities service-learning directors may have to facilitate, I want to further shed light on why researching service-learning directors is so important. In 2003, at the New England Campus Compact Conference, a discussion was sparked among attendees about the lack of professionalism when it came to service-learning directors. Many expressed
their growing frustration concerning their undefined roles, the lack of a clear expected core of knowledge and skills, and unrealistic expectations and demands, which in turn lead to a high burnout rate and turnover (Jacoby & Mustacio, 2003). This discussion caused an impromptu institute to be formed during the conference to address the lack of professionalism and explore what it means to be a professional service-learning director. Findings revealed that service-learning directors are in a continuous flow and practice of examining principles, standards, and models; they engage in regular evaluation, assessment, and research; and they have a strong sense of commitment of their work that is rooted in their personal beliefs (Jacoby & Mustacio, 2003). Jacoby and Mustacio’s (2003) feedback from this impromptu meeting inspired the creation of a toolkit or workbook, to help service-learning directors define their roles and ways to conduct their jobs in a more efficient way.

Years later, Jacoby and Mustascio (2010) created an edited reflective guide for community service-learning professionals, Looking In Reaching Out, through Campus Compact. This reflective guide went in-depth about the importance of reflection by service-learning directors. They indicate that reflection is important for students, but it is also important for service-learning directors, allowing them to facilitate and assure that all key players are executing service-learning properly. Service-learning directors, along with their offices of service-learning, serve as change agents and can expect to play many roles, such as catalyst, solution giver, process helper, resource linker, and confidence builder (Farmer, 1990; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000). To perform all of these roles
effectively, Jacoby encourages service-learning directors to become reflective practitioners.

So what does it meant to be a reflective practitioner?

It involves a surprise, a response to surprise by thought turning back on itself, thinking about what we’re doing as we do it, setting the problem of the situation anew, conducting an action experiment on the spot by which we seek to solve the new problem we’ve set, an experiment which we test our new way of seeing the situation, and also try to change the situation for the better. (Schön, 1987, p. 18)

It means being reflective about their,

“own personal views, visions, expectations, hopes, experiences, assumptions, and viewpoints—and how they are similar and different from those of [their own] institutions, [their] institution’s leadership, and [their] partners...,” which in turn will help directors acquire the needed skills to facilitate “quality learning, service, and partnerships” (Jacoby & Mustacio, 2010, p. 3).

Jacoby and Mustacio (2010) also shed light on the fact that being a reflective service-learning director comes with challenges, and that although reflection is not a required skills or capacities to have, integrating and engaging it into their already full job load will help ease the load at the same time.

**Chapter II Summary**

Service-learning connects the personal and intellectual as it helps students understand their world to become active, civic citizens to the community around them (Elyer & Giles, 1999). From its humble grassroots beginnings, to signed legislation by
Congress, service-learning has had a great impact on academia. To assure that service-learning is facilitated properly, it must first be supported by the institution, and implemented through the establishment of a central office, or the hiring of a service-learning director devoted to service-learning (Ackerman et al., 2007 & Bringle & Hatcher, 1996).

Service-learning directors are transformational leaders and change agents within an institution, but little research has been done in regards to the essence of who service-learning directors are, what they do, and how they do it. Through the vivid descriptors provided in Chapter 2 about service-learning directors, I have come to think of these “champions” as the “keepers of the scroll,” in a sense. I view them as keepers of the scroll because they hold all of the wisdom, and or keys, when it comes service-learning in higher education and how it should be facilitated. They also serve as the face of the institution in the community and what I would like to emphasize, more than anything, is everyone’s experience is not the same. In a sense, service-learning directors are change agents within the institution and the community. These change agents are also called transformational leaders. Transformational leadership, a leadership theory by James MacGregor Burns in 1979, is a process where leaders and followers engage in a mutual process of raising one another to higher levels of morality and motivation. Transformational leadership aligns perspectives and the direction of individuals and organizations by transforming the consciousness in the hearts of individuals themselves; and thereby, accessing and maximizing human potential by bringing the inner work of the heart into the outer work of service (Bell, 2010).
Institutions differ in size, mission, and resources, and knowing more about the essence of who these individuals are is important to the body of service-learning literature. The role of service-learning director is a vital and important one. I believe my research can provide not only service-learning directors with more information about their field, but also provide institutions with literature that would help them become aware of how to meet the needs and concerns of our “champions,” so that the burnout and turnover rate is lowered, and further adds to the sustainability of their service-learning programs.

Next, Chapter III lays out the research design, illustrating how I collected and analyzed data on the essence of service-learning directors, to add to the knowledge base of service learning.
CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

My proposed study aims to explore who service-learning directors are, how they became service-learning directors, and what they experience in the role. The information gathered helps add to the body of literature pertaining to service-learning and create a knowledge base for service-learning directors.

Research Design

Research design can be defined as the systematic process of collecting and analyzing data to increase understanding of the phenomenon being studied, adding to or improving upon the academic body of knowledge of a given issue (Creswell, 1998). Research can be qualitative, quantitative, or in some instances, mixed methods. Qualitative research can be defined as:

- an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed reviews of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. (Creswell, 1998, p. 15)

Such a qualitative research approach was implemented for my study. Qualitative research emphasizes the quality of understanding a process, which cannot be measured in terms of quantity, and stresses the vitality in discovering how a lived experience is created and given meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Qualitative research has five major traditions, and or methodologies, which are biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. The methodologies refer to philosophic frameworks, which
are the fundamental premises and distinctive quality of human science perspective (Van Manen, 1990). Qualitative research emphasizes the quality of understanding a process, which cannot be measured in terms of quantity; and stresses the vitality in discovering how a lived experience is created and given meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

For this study, the philosophic framework chosen for this study is the general inductive approach. The purpose of using an inductive approach is it to immerse oneself in the details and specifics of extensive and varied raw data in order to unearth important patterns, themes, and interrelationships in a brief, summary format (Thomas, 2003 & Johnson and Christensen, 2004). This is done by “exploring, then confirming, guided by analytical principles” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Using a general inductive approach also freed me from the “restraints imposed by structured [approaches or] methodologies” (Thomas, 2006). Table 1, developed by Thomas (2006), describes the approach in comparison some major and other known qualitative approaches.

Table 1

*Comparison of Qualitative Analysis Approaches*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analytic strategies and question</th>
<th>General Inductive Approach</th>
<th>Grounded Theory</th>
<th>Discourse Analysis</th>
<th>Phenomenology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome of analysis</td>
<td>What are the core meanings evident in the text, relevant to evaluation or research objectives?</td>
<td>To generate or discover theory using open and axial coding and theoretical sampling</td>
<td>Concerned with talk and texts as social practices and their rhetorical or argumentative organization</td>
<td>Seeks to uncover the meaning that lives within experience and to convey felt understanding in words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of findings</td>
<td>Themes or categories most relevant to research objectives identified</td>
<td>A theory that includes themes or categories</td>
<td>Multiple meanings of language and text identified and described</td>
<td>A description of lived experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description of most important themes</td>
<td>A description of the theory that includes core themes</td>
<td>Descriptive account of multiple meanings in text</td>
<td>A coherent story or narrative about the experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This approach allowed me to develop a “model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes which are evident in the raw data” (Thomas, 2003).

This general inductive approach was used, consisting of interviews conducted with 11 service-learning directors at higher education institutions in the Mid-West and Southern Regions. These regions were chosen, due to accessibility and areas in which the researcher would like to pursue work in service-learning.

**Research Questions**

The following questions directed my inquiry:

1. Who are service-learning directors at universities, including their values and beliefs regarding service learning, and what career path led them to this position (e.g., education, prior experience)?

2. How do service-learning directors understand their role, and expectations (theirs and the institutions) for their role?

3. How do service-learning directors respond to challenges and opportunities, and what are some of their significant success stories?

**Selection of Participants**

The population for this study included higher education service-learning directors across four institution types (i.e., 4 year private and public, Community College, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities). The researcher actively sought out at least three Service-Learning Directors per institution type to serve as participants for this study through a purposeful sampling. A purposeful sample is to have selected cases of study that are “information rich and illuminative; that is, they offer useful manifestations of the
phenomenon of interest. Sampling then, is aimed at insight about the phenomenon, not empirical generalization from a sample to a population” (Patton, 2002, p. 40). A good range for participants is from one to a maximum of 10 (Giorgi, 2003). For the purposes of this research, the researcher sought to have 10, and ended up with 11 participants. Within these participants, there were three Community College/2-year institutions; four 4-year public institutions, one of which was an HBCU; and three 4-year private institutions. Concerning the regions, 9 were from the Midwest and 2 were from the South two 4-year public institutions, one being the HBCU).

A final sampling criterion for the participants was that they had served been in the position of service-learning director for at least a year. A year of employment in this position was preferred because the service-learning director would have had time to understand the functions of the job, start to fulfill university needs, and form connections with students, faculty, and the community. Participants were pooled from the Campus Compact database and from an extensive internet search of institutions with service-learning offices and or programs, within the specified regions. Campus Compact is a national coalition of more than 1,100 college and university presidents - representing some 6 million students - dedicated to promoting community service, civic engagement, and service-learning in higher education.

Upon approval from the HSIRB, which protects the rights and welfare of human subjects in research conducted under the protection of the governing body, those fitting the sampling criteria and able to participate were contacted first by e-mail to again, review the scope of the study and to schedule an interview. Also in the email,
participants were notified that their interviews would digitally recorded, and a request for interviews to be conducted in their office or in a comfortable environment of their choosing. Participants were contacted by telephone, in the case that there is no response within a week. At this point, any questions regarding the letter of consent were addressed, as well as letting them know they are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

**Data Collection**

Three sources of data were collected and analyzed: (1) in-depth, semi-structured interviews and (2) artifacts (e.g., vitae, job description, and office of service-learning definitions of service-learning, and pamphlets/information). After the first initial contact and scheduling of participant interviews, I asked for their vitae for the purposes of understanding the background they come from, and for the purposes of conducting a career and education progression analysis.

In-depth, semi-structured interviews, using open-ended questions, approximately one to two hours in length, were conducted. In interviews, “open-ended questions and probes yield in-depth responses about people’s experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings, and knowledge. Data consists of verbatim quotations with sufficient context to be interpretable” (Patton, 2002, p. 4). The in-depth, open-ended interviews were direct and face-to-face. Interviews of this type enabled the researcher to get some of the subtle shades of meaning, such as facial expressions, blushing, and sound (Kleiman, 2004). These subtle shades of meaning were written in the margins (see Appendix B for observation protocol). I went into the interview with the goal to obtain concrete
descriptions of lived-experiences. In order for this to occur, I needed to be open and listen. Listening hopefully inspired participants to be themselves and allowed them to reveal their recollection in the present moment. Making sure that the interview is conducted in a comfortable environment for the participant and that my body language was relaxed contributed openness. I tried to always remember that the participants feed off of these elements and the vibe they present.

**Analysis**

I, as the researcher, served as the primary means of data collection. Before conducting an analysis, I acknowledged any bias and attempted to control for it by taking it into account. Bracketing is a practice that holds in account, or brings to light the researcher’s own presuppositions or pre-conceptions concerning the participants and/or focus of the study. As I went through this process, it allowed for me to analyze the data based off the participants’ feelings, not mine. All data were transcribed and evaluated using a general inductive approach for qualitative data analysis, as stated earlier. This approach aided in finding emergent themes and patterns of different concepts, insights, and understanding. Reflecting on essential themes throughout this process was important because it was vital to bring into nearness that which tends to obscure (Van Manen, 1971). I, as the researcher must take into account that the analysis of the information is very critical. To further explain, Table 2 below illustrates the coding process in the inductive analysis:
Table 2

_The Coding Process in Inductive Analysis_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial reading of text data</th>
<th>Identify specific text segments related to objectives</th>
<th>Label the segments of text to create categories</th>
<th>Reduce overlap and redundancy among the categories</th>
<th>Create a model incorporating most important categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Many pages of text</td>
<td>Many segments of text</td>
<td>30-40 categories</td>
<td>15-20 categories</td>
<td>3-8 categories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Adapted from Creswell, 2002, Figure 9.4, p. 266 (Thomas, 2003)

As seen above, and as with other qualitative analysis approaches, the purposes of this analysis process were to:

1. To condense extensive and varied raw text data into a brief, summary format.
2. To establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data and to ensure these links are both transparent (able to be demonstrated to others) and defensible (justifiable given the objectives of the research).
3. To develop of model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes which are evident in the text (raw data) (Thomas, 2003).

Research participants were provided the opportunity to member check to assure validity and credibility. Member checking allowed for participants to review their responses, fix errors, and approve the transcription. Participants e-mailed any edits back to researcher.

**Trustworthiness**

As Mertens (2005) noted, there are several measures to establish quality assurance within qualitative research. For the purposes of this research study, I used the criterion of
credibility and conformability to serve in the establishment of trustworthiness. The aforementioned of writing subtle shades of meaning, and listening and providing probes throughout the interview to identify salient issues are all ways to begin ensuring credibility. To further establish credibility, member checking, also referred to as stakeholder checks, can be conducted. This process allows for the research participants to review interview transcription and comment on or assess the research findings, interpretations and conclusions (Thomas, 2003). After the initial ensuring of credibility by way of the data collection process, I emailed the research participants the transcription of their in-depth interview, as well as their participant profiles, Chapter 4. Member checking was also done after the analysis process, by way of providing research participants with emergent themes, key findings, and the theoretical framework, all of which are contained in Chapters 5 and 6.

Emergent themes, key findings, and theoretical framework are all a part of another form of criterion to establish trustworthiness, conformability. “Conformability means that the data and the interpretation are not figments of the researcher’s imagination” (Mertens, 2005, p. 257). I created a unit of analysis of “segments of meaning or ‘salient points’ directly from the text of the interview [transcriptions] and [organized] them into groupings with other segments of meaning that create possible understanding” (Reeves, 2011).
Delimitations and Limitations

The purposeful sampling procedure decreases the generalizability of the findings. This study cannot be generalizable to all higher education service-learning directors.

Also, the research participants are not representative of all service-learning directors.
CHAPTER IV

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

The intent of Chapter 4 is to provide a profile of each research participant. The purpose of this is to illustrate how they came into the knowledge of service-learning, their position, and how they define service-learning within their institution. You will also learn of their values and beliefs, motivations and goals, how well they understand their job roles, as well as their challenges and successes. To be noted especially, is the diversity among the institutions, not just by types, but in reporting structure, support of service-learning, or office budget to name a few characteristics. Additionally, these profiles look at if and how the way they practice the key element of reflection within their own personal life and job role.

Service-Learning Director 1 – SLD1

Journey to Service-Learning

SLD1 is from [country] and much of her education and formal training is rooted in experiential learning, which she describes as being much different from what she sees occurring in America. SLD1 describes experiential education as being more of a hands on experience, than that of the use of textbooks in America. Though this allowed her to learn how to facilitate and foster learning through creativity and experience, she did have a hard time securing a job when she first came to America. She was not given a job in elementary education, but was able to secure a job in early childhood education through programs called Even Start and Head Start. She was able to provide parent and child education, and soon found herself moving up the ladder. These experiences led her into
earning a Masters Degree in Organizational Management, which is an area she truly loves.

Outside of experiential learning and six years of community service in the local community of [city of institution], she did not have any knowledge about service-learning. SLD1 came into service-learning after being at her [current institution] for a semester. Two AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers (VISTAs) from a local community organization approached her about an opportunity to connect students with an alternative high school service-learning project. SLD1 found and allowed some of her students to participate, and saw a great transformation take place within the students. It was at this moment that she came to realize that service-learning would be a great asset to incorporate in the classroom.

Service-learning first came “alive” on SLD1’s campus at a time, which she describes as being “sexy:”

Well they had a service-learning committee, well sort of an investigation group before I came here. But it had disbanded and all they had done, which was not bad, focused on looking at research. It was at the time when service was becoming sexy in higher education, I think in the 1990s. So, there were people who thought this was cool, we should do this, but they never got it off the ground. So in 2007, a service-learning committee was started to revive the interest and start incorporating it within the institution. From there, SLD1 says the grassroots efforts of service-learning were born and the administrators recognized her expertise and drive,
appointing her as the lead and/or service-learning director at the institution where she is approaching eleven years, with a dual position as faculty/adjunct professor and staff.

SLD1 believes all of her life experience, education, and chance encounter with AmeriCorps VISTAs prepared her for her current role. In particular, she believes that her Masters Degree in Organization management has really helped her along the way. She has a deep interest in leadership and organizational change, which aids in higher education, which she describes as being a “fairly staged sort of setting.” She went on to say that,

higher education institution is something very difficult to change…coming in with that background of organizational management, my own experience of being an administrator, and supervising people, and then my interest in education…I think they were a perfect combination for me to get into service-learning. Everything has brought me to this point in my career.

For SLD1, service-learning first started in a class, which was inspired by the two VISTAs, previously mentioned. She had every intention on growing as a faculty member, but soon she became the campus expert and go-to person for service-learning as mentioned earlier, and it went from a grassroots effort to an institutionalized program. She has put in a lot of work and is now ready to turn it over to an administrator who can take the program to new heights. She leaves on a high note, stating that she believes she has achieved the goals she initially planned, which were strategic planning with the institution service-learning community, having service-learning integrated in the college within 5 years, and having close to 100% participation. The institution started off
without any service-learning endorsements, service-learning classes, or any service-
learning training, but they now have a system for service-learning certification for faculty
or adjunct who want to teach, and they do the same for community partners. 100% of the
institution’s associate degrees in arts and science will have to do service-learning and a
service-learning experience within the next year. Also, all occupational associates now
have to complete service-learning criteria. Talking about all that she and the institution
have done made her smile, stating. “So that means everyone will be doing it. So I feel
like I’ve achieved a lot.”

Before getting into what motivates and shapes the work she does, SLD1 stated
that service-learning is something you do within a class context that involves community,
either direct, indirect, or through advocacy, and it has to include reflection. She stated:

The value of service-learning is related to personal growth; and that is a really
important aspect for me, in terms of how I see students developing and
growing…helping them to get careers. Make career choices, make choices about
their own lives, and make choices about how they are involved in the community.

So it has to include those three main aspects.

**Service-Learning Motivations and Values**

During the interview, she expressed over and over how much she really enjoys the
work that she does. When asked to discuss values and beliefs that help guide her work,
she briefly expressed how experiential, hands-on learning is the best way for students to
learn. She supported this belief by describing how instrumental it was in her own
learning as a student, then on to being an educator, whether it is through working with
students at birth or adults. What resonated most was how she feels service-learning plays a key role in helping students find their purpose:

I also personally have seen students make poor decisions, including my own two children actually have not necessarily made the best decision about career choices. And I have often felt my own children and lots of other students, and teenagers to do not get career support and adequate counseling at schools about what careers to go into. They don’t really understand the broad array of careers out there. They are not connected to their own communities to understand that. My passion is also helping students to find their way in their lives. Ever since I decided doing this at this college, I’ve never been failed to be amazed about how it transforms students. It’s just incredible how it changes and influences them. You know you get kids who say they are going to do business, and then they go into mentoring in a school. Then all of a sudden they are going to be teachers because they never have experienced it; and then they do that and they find that wow! This is my passion in life. A lot of kids haven’t found their passion and I really, obviously feel they don’t get support in that area.

When it comes to community need and also the role that faculty and education plays, she stated the following:

Because I’ve worked in social service agencies in the community, I’m really aware of my small communities needs and I felt that there is so much opportunity for us as educators to be able to support that. Education is often very separate
from real life and I don’t think it should be. Education is all about our real life experiences and that’s how it should be.

**Role of Personal Reflection**

SLD1 noted that reflection is very key and essential to service-learning, but it is also important to practice reflection within ones’ role as a key stakeholder in the process. She, with great passion, expressed how reflection is vital to her growth as a service-learning director, and as a person overall, stating:

> It plays a huge part in my work as a service-learning organizer, as a coordinator; and as a teacher we learn to reflect a lot in our work I think anyway. You always, if you are a good teacher, I believe you go into the classroom with a plan…you go in and do, then come out and review. So every time I teach and go into a classroom I am reflecting on how that went and the impact I am having on students, whether it is good or not. Then I am making relevant changes. As we’ve been going through and doing the service-learning, as it has progressed, we’ve reflected at every stage I think because every time we have a meeting, you write up meeting notes. You think about how the faculty were affected by the meeting, how the community partners were affected by the meeting. What you need to do to keep things growing, flowing, changing and improving…how to meet everybody’s needs, so it’s integral into every stage of what we’ve been doing. We wouldn’t be successful in changing this from such tiny piece of what the college does to becoming sort of broad based across the college, if we hadn’t been reflecting at all stages.
In reference to examples of reflections, she notes that she does a lot of reflecting on her own by doing a lot of writing and journaling, as well as an extensive amount of reporting to report the office’s progress, which is for her own benefit since the office does not do a lot of official reporting. She stated that they “integrated that because we want to learn from everybody. We wanted to make sure it was what people wanted to do b/c it would be pointless if it wasn’t meeting their needs.”

She also stated that:

As I apply for grants or if we apply for an AmeriCorps Vista you are always reflecting on how you’ve gotten or where you’ve gotten to in order to write a grant. You have to make sure that you are doing is of value. You have to believe in what you are doing if you are applying for a grant to take it even further…that’s my belief anyway.

Key Players and Institutional Support

SLD 1 works at Institution 1, which is a medium-sized, two-year public institution in a Midwestern state, serving a little over 14,500 students. Since 2007, the institution has grown significantly in regards to service-learning, with SLD1 stating

I think the setting of the system for our college and changing it from grassroots into institutionalization has been really the biggest feat that we’ve achieved. Having 70 faculty and adjuncts trained and 50 classes that have service-learning incorporated into them; and having 70 odd community partners and I think we have probably 60 community partners who have the certification. We have over 300 students a semester who do service-learning and I think those big picture
things have been the biggest success and then obviously there are individual stories of students.

Since the Higher Learning Commission incorporated service and civic engagement into its requirement for accreditation of colleges, the institution has become a member of [State] Campus Compact. The goal was to bring order to the disorganized and sporadic atmosphere of service and civic engagement on campus. Programming was needed to give it order, and being that SLD1 applied and was awarded the Serve 200 grant from [State] Campus Compact, it was only natural that they join. In a way, the institution did it because they had to, however they grew to support it after seeing, as she describes,

how passionate everyone was getting into it, how faculty were jumping on board and excited, and how I went to see them and had strategic planning with them, they began to really see the benefits of students too and they got on board with it. This, however, did come with limitations, mainly budget issues, implicating why she’s been in the position so long.

Since jumping on board with service-learning and making the new student requirements, the institution has decided to support training and service—learning endorsements on student transcripts, which is a positive, allowing them to comfortably navigate through departments to assure everyone is on board. While this is great, however, there was no initiative on the intuition’s part. She expressed this stating that,

we have this requirement coming up and I’m not really getting any institutional leadership in relation to asking faculty to become involved in this. I have been
asked to take the lead on that totally. So I have been asked to go to departmental meetings to talk to faculty, to connect with the departmental heads, and to encourage the faculty who are teaching core classes to get involved. It’s been left up to me to do it and I think it’s partly political because administrators don’t like to tell faculty. It’s sort of a big no-no in higher education. Because this has been grassroots and faculty driven, it’s been very successful and I think they are afraid that as soon as they say you have to do this, people won’t want to do it.

She also stated that the institution is very supportive and trusting of SLD1, in that they allow for SLD1 to take the service-learning program in any direction she chooses. Though SLD1 states that it makes her feel good to be entrusted with such a great feat, she stated

I have no accountability. I mean (laughs) the accountability has been are we or are we not successful? Are students complaining that they didn’t get the service-learning endorsements on their transcripts? Are any community partners complaining? I think it’s more to do with… just would it be a reaction to a problem that would be accountability rather than them being strategic as administrators about what do we want to happen here and how are we going to make it happen? What are the steps? What will [research participant’s name]’s role be?

**Faculty.** SLD1 expressed that one of the hardest parts about service-learning at her institution is getting faculty involved. As expressed earlier, there is a lack of
institutional initiative, or ownership, so to speak. In going back to the proposed fear that the institution feels that as soon as they make it mandatory, no one will want to do it, she stated that,

…I agree w/ that, they won’t want to do it if they are made to do it. It’s going to be a requirement for students to have a service-learning experience, not faculty. We’re leaving it so that we hope we’ll have enough classes that will have service-learning endorsements. The idea is to entice faculty to get involved in that. To make them see the attraction of it, not to thrust it down their throats I think. It might not be successful doing it that way.

With this being said, SLD1 words hard with her staff to get faculty involved. The process has evolved over the years since 2007, but currently she and her staff advertise through email and campus posting to attend an introductory informational about service-learning. Once faculty decide to sign up, they go through a certification which takes them through the history of service-learning, different types of service-learning and how they can incorporate it their classroom, as well as the appropriate way to facilitate and provide transcript endorsement for their students. The ability to give students recognition for their participation is what really attracts faculty even more. Through this process, they have 17 faculty and adjuncts trained in service-learning with on average about 35-40 classes participating in service-learning consistently year round. Every semester they usually get about 10 more faculty or adjuncts wanting to do the training.

**Students.** When discussing how she gets students involved, and the institutional support of such, SLD1 mentioned there is a lot more for them to do. However, some of
the highlights of what she does starts with a basic, yet key component of growth and learning, encouragement. Discussing with students the value it will add to their life, careers, and success and impact it can have if they choose to matriculate to four-year institutions, makes them eager to participate.

As mentioned earlier, the institution supports training, the certification and the service-learning endorsements on their transcripts. She also mentioned that it is key to make doing service-learning as simple as possible, stating,

we also have a volunteer and civic engagement fair every semester. That is quite a big event and we have about 25-30 community organizations that come to the college. They set up booths in the student center and we advertise it in advanced. Then students can visit the different booths, and then they find out what they are interested in, in terms of doing a service-learning project. We make it as simple as possible for students here to do service-learning by feeding them all the information we have got. We have about 75 different community partners that students work with and we are making the contacts with the community partners.

SLD1 believes that her and her team, which consists of herself and the AmeriCorps Vista (VISTA), could do a lot more to entice, not only students but staff as well. She believes this can be done by making it intentional to “create service-learning projects that are going to be worthwhile, meaningful, and deep for students to get involved with, and it will attract faculty because they really meet the outcome needs very well.” To assure this occurs, they are taking on the responsibility of communicating a lot more with their community partners. She feels that it has to be deeper than working independently here
and there. Yes, she gives them info about what they will be doing and connects them, but
it is her desire to make it a longer, impactful experience; one in which they can pass back
along to the class coming after them. To take this even further, to assure it occurs, she’s
applied for a grant with [Grantor] to “help get better projects going, to help really connect
our service-learning to the identified community needs we have.”

**Community Partnerships.** When first starting as the service-learning director,
she formed a relationship and created a partnership connection with a community
advocate who took on the responsibility for getting the community involved, while she
held down the campus end. They were in constant communication and from there, they
held informal meeting with the community. During these meetings they discovered the
community needs and most importantly, if they had an interest in working with service-
learning students. The next step was to find out the community’s student expectations,
which was done through survey, the results of which they used to train people. The great
thing about her office is that not only are faculty certified and trained, but so are the
community partners, and they even on occasion do joint certifications. A great dynamic is
built during these occurrences where they get to meet one another and discover ways in
which they can work together on projects. Also, in that that SLD1 and her team have a
wide array of community partners, they are in continuous communication with their
community partners through having weekly contact. To assure that community realizes
their importance as stakeholders, they are also a part of the service-learning committee;
however, they are not involved with the service-learning requirement portion, as not to
bore them.
As far as support, she stated:

I don’t think that they have specifically helped us with the community partnerships for service-learning. They’ve supported the whole program and they support…I get a small budget, so that helps me to have the community meetings. It helps and we can host them here and I can get refreshments b/c I have a budget and the same with the volunteer and civic engagement fair. They are very supportive of hosting the v and c engagement fair, but in terms of anybody else making those connections for service-learning their isn’t anybody.

**University Reporting Structure**

Because SLD1 is also a faculty member, she reports to her department chair, but for service-learning she reports directly to the Dean of Instruction, the Academic Dean (AD). The AD reports to the Vice President (VP), the VP to the President. She stated that being able to report directly to the AD was a positive because they were very helpful because I can get things done very quickly. I have also had very informal reporting or access to the VP who is now our President. When he was the VP, he was really instrumental in helping to get all of this off the ground, in particular the endorsements on the transcripts and now as the President the requirement. So I can actually go and talk to him if I am having problems getting things done if I want to.

The con to this is that

I don’t have access to strategic planning meetings, which is something I feel is very very important because we don’t have strategic planning mgs at our college.
We have a strategic plan and to be honest I don’t know what it is because I think our college is in the very early stages of being strategic about strategic planning. However, she did feel as if the institution was good at planning fairly well, though it is rather informal and it is primarily around the structure of the college, more like a building plan, i.e., business plan. Adding to how her institution is supportive and good at being planners she stated that,

for the college I think a lot of things have happened the way my initiative started, which is somebody is interested in something, they promote it. The college says, “Oh that’s something interesting. Let’s do it,” instead of being really strategic about the way they’re developing it. But somehow or other it seems to have work because you’ve got such a captive audience, you know because you’ve got students who need educating…you have a community who is asking you to meet their needs, so if you’re responsive to that it happens more organically than strategically. I do think strategic planning is very, very important and it’s lacking at our college.

Types of Service-Learning Work Activities

In discussing various aspects of her position, SLD1 stated that majority of her time is engaged in working with her VISTA, who converts a lot of administrative work (which is her only role) and assuring she fulfills it. Thus far, they have established a system for service-learning endorsements, smooth certification procedures and a community newsletter. As far as a typical process for developing service-learning
programs, and or courses, faculty go through a certification process. During this certification they get

sample syllabi, sample schedule, sample assignments, sampler reflections…that’s part of the service-learning certification manual. They get a manual when the do the training. They also get all the forms that they need, like a service-learning contract that the student has to sign w/ the community partner. They get a letter of introduction. So they get all of these forms and form-letters that they can use. So they have all the tools presented to them, that’s how we are trying to make this as easy as possible.

SLD1 said her team could improve upon getting more deeply involved with faculty and support them with syllabi matching their course, or to push it even further, look at their syllabi and restructure it, while discussing service—learning and community need.

Being part faculty while fulfilling this role, SLD1 takes great delight in being able to teach her very own service-learning course. She finds it very rewarding to watch end of the year semester presentations and watch how the projects progresses through the semester. This really encourages her and allows her to encourage faculty she works with to keep the fight because she herself has seen its benefits.

She also loves the community. Whether it be meeting or supporting their needs, she is all in. However she stated:

I don’t feel that is as developed as it should be for me, in terms of my involvement with the community. And that is why I’m really trying to focus on creating community decided service-learning projects. Also though we know we
are meeting specific needs of community organizations…such as, when they meet with us and when we have our trainings they talk to us about various different service-learning projects that students could do. That’s very rewarding and when you talk to the community partner after the service-learning experience and they say how much the love having service-learning students working with them, that’s great. But if you’re talking about longer-term, deep community impact, then I think it will be very rewarding to work with the community organizations on more systemic change types of projects. Currently that’s something we’re working on getting better at.

She and her team, as mentioned earlier, are working hard to assure this, hopefully through grant funded projects.

**Professional Aspects**

As this was a grassroots initiative, SLD1 has no job description, however it did not stop her from creating her own, and sharing it with those in her reporting structure. As stated earlier, she said it feels good to be trusted by them; but she expressed that the lonely road of autonomy, met with no accountability, caused her to have a dispirited state at times. She said this especially occurs when trying to make service-learning institutional, which can only be done through direction and support on many levels. She described it best stating,

You know I mean it’s not necessarily beneficial sometimes if you’re out in a peripheral area not feeling like you know what the strategic plan is or know when
they’re going to have a meeting about the academic cabinet and decide on certain things.

She expressed that, often times she is the only who gets the “big picture” and it should not be that way. Yes, it is a part of a service-learning director to be engrossed and know all the needs of each stakeholder, but to be left on your own to do it is disheartening for her. It is SLD1’s hope that with the transition to a new person, her role will be taken more seriously, due to the need for administrator accountability now that a lot more money is involved. Also the new service-learning manager will be a part of a budget, and not merely attached to a position as she has been with release time. She stated that, “there is so much potential for it to develop into a fantastic program for our college. It will cross from academics to student life and be really affective.”

Though there is a dim cloud hovering over her autonomous position, she does take joy in relying heavily on her state’s Campus Compact. She also frequents other conferences and institutional trainings outside of service-learning in areas such as, volunteerism and civic engagement to help guide her work.

She shared that a few years ago, the National Campus Compact sponsored an institute called Diving Deep which was, as she stated, “a phenomenal experience” and the best training she’s been to. Being able to meet field experts, and learning right alongside them, and doing a lot of reflection was very rewarding.

As far as her state Campus Compact support, they are always readily available, whether it be through phone or email, to help. The Campus Compact is also a great
network support for meeting other SLDs and provides guidance for grant projects, and working and guiding VISTAs.

**Success and Challenges**

SLD1 listed among her successes being able to move from grassroots to an institutionalized system, as her greatest feat. Also being able to witness student transformation and walk into their purpose, while setting meaningful life goals. She provided the following example,

So for instance a student who went to work at the [community organization] didn’t really know what career she was going into and she served at the front desk; and she got to job at the [community organization] It was just a temporary job while she was at college, but now she’s got a permanent job as a counselor there.

Also getting a $300,000 grant and being able to make her institution the service-learning hub in her community proved very rewarding and effective. From this accomplishment, strong bonds were formed with community partners, which trickled down into K-12 classrooms with about 50 teachers using service-learning in their classrooms. She believes,

it’s really transforming our community. Because it’s a small community, that’s probably easy for us to feel like we’ve touched just about every area of our community. Now we need to get deeper into what impact we are really having in the community, which I mentioned to you earlier…which is why I’ve applied for this other grant from [Grantor Organization].
Again, autonomy proves to be a challenge, causing her to feel isolated somewhat. Though she has a VISTA volunteer, who is a great worker and supporter, they are only there for a year and have a specific role. She shared that, if it was not for her love of service-learning and determined spirit, it would be even harder to push all the change and initiative in the college.

I think that I don’t let it drop you know …plus I felt committed to do. So it is really challenging. I think the isolation of feeling like unless I do this it’s not going to happen…that’s the most challenging…a lot. It’s a big burden to carry on your shoulder to feel that unless I was out there doing the certifications and encouraging faculty, they might…I think a lot of them have really converted to it now, but it wouldn’t have gotten this far and we wouldn’t be integrating it into classes and have it as a requirement if I hadn’t push and pushed and to know I’ve got to make sure that happens is a big burden.

SLD1 closed in saying that every service-learning director’s experience will be different due to colleges’ and universities’ diversity in mission, community need, size, and the role they will play there. She is on the academic side and feels that service-learning is often branched under student services with civic engagement. She expressed that, “it’s really a different kettle of fish when it does. I think it’s going to be really interesting to see how that impacts the ways that service-learning develops.”
Service-Learning Director 2 – SLD2

Journey to Service-Learning

SLD2 is a graduate of the institution she serves and her journey into service-learning was, as she describes, by default; but she would not change it for anything in the world. With a background in social work, her goal was not to work at her alma mater. She went off into the Peace Corps and had a heart for community organizing and development. She also worked in nonprofit organizations for many years. She found her way into her role as service-learning director by first being on the faculty committee to restructure and decide where to house the center of service-learning at her institution. During this time, she was the director of a youth program, a partnership between her institution and the local public school system, which developed a lot of service-learning initiatives throughout the district. Because of her expertise in service-learning, she was granted the opportunity. Prior to this faculty committee forming, there had been a longtime director of the center, but she had stepped down. While getting into the history of service-learning at her institution, she described it as,

…beginning in about 1999 [name of former director], who had been the longtime director of the center had stepped down. There was a review across campus about what should happen with service-learning at [Institution name]. There had been earlier in the 1990s, a provost committee on outreach and engagement and outreach in those days, in general…let me just back up just a minute. [Institution name] has a long history in service-learning, as you probably know. We have the oldest center in the country, etc. That center has always been housed, had always
been housed solely in Student Affairs and Services. However, at the time it had been founded in ‘68, there was a much more closer interface between Student Affairs and Services, and the Academic side of the university. I mean Student Affairs process student withdrawals, that kind of thing. So the original charter for service-learning at [Institution Name], board of trustees, looked at Academic and Co-curricular together in terms of service for students. It was always that way back when I was in undergrad here, not quite in 68, but not too long after that (smiles). Umm, I actually I surged through the center, once in a co-curricular and once in a course related experience. So yes, so it has always been that way. But over time, as you know, being involved in higher education, there has been then a sort of separation that has occurred b/w student affairs and the academic side. Many places, including [Institution Name], are trying to reconnect…over the years that did occur.

After an intensive review of the center’s history and future goals, the committee came to the agreement that the center should have an academic home only. But as she stated, “given tradition and respect to some very good things that were happening on the co-curricular side, it was agreed that it be a joint appointment.” So this prompted a search for a director. She was encouraged to apply by the, then called, Vice-Provost of Outreach. But due to the fact that faculty committee wanted to do a national search for a PhD, tenured faculty, she would not be considered for the position. After much time went by and because of poor position posting, the position was not appealing to most PhDs. So the university hired an Interim Director, but she was still asked to assist little by little in
service-learning. After a year, the Provost insisted on hiring SLD2 because as she stated, “You can’t get any better than [SLD2], hire her!”

Described by SLD2

One of the things that I see as a real blessing at [my institution] are that there are people that you work with that give you challenges, let you rise to those challenges. And though I’m not a PhD, it hasn’t stopped what I’ve done, they’ve recognize [my work] and moved it forward.

When asked to define service-learning, she stated:

Service-Learning is a no brainer term because it is what it says it is. [Our institution] uses the hyphen; it is service that connects to learning and learning that connects to service. So, it is intentional involvement with the community that is mutually beneficial and reciprocal; where students are able to take what they are learning on campus, apply it to the community, but then also learn from the community in the process and bring it…it has to be as worthwhile for the community partner as it is for the student…I think that is me having come out of community…it brings a balance.

She also stressed that service-learning should support issues-focused service and be adequately prepared, incorporate and expect both action and evaluation, and ensure that students are exposed to diversity. She illustrates the need for service-learning to focus on the “issues” within the following statement,

Why does the [city] school district utilize 2,057 [institution name] students in a year, and a suburban district maybe takes 10. It could be size of district, it could
be distance. But you and I both know it’s because of the issues in the urban that
we don’t have in the suburban. So students need to be apprised and aware of those
so that they can first of all be able to interact and grow in the process.

Service-Learning Motivations and Values

When asked what motivates her most about her position, she expressed with great
pride and gratefulness that,

…it is probably the best of both worlds. Working [here] is truly a privilege. You
get to have your feet in both community and the university, and see the benefits
on both sides of doing that. You are seeing what students and faculty, to be
honest, gain from it, how they learn and grow. But then you also see the
communities’ benefits…again we aren’t the great benefactor but the community
comes to us and asks. We work with 379 non-profits…it’s all driven my requests
that they submit, and then you mesh those together. Then it’s the opportunity to
really enhance learning through interaction, growth, and community.

A few of her aspirations are to meet the institutional goal, mentioned earlier, of
having half of the undergrads involved by the year 2012-13 school year, which they are
close to. She aims to do this in a way that does not sacrifice quality for quantity. She
would also like to increase the scholarly activity as well. SLD2 desires to utilize the
meaningful and beneficial assets of the institution to engage and aid in the creation of a
community voice. Her hope is that, through purposeful service and learning, there will
true engagement which allows for the community voice created to be equal to the
institution voice. She believes that this would be a win-win on both sides, while increasing scholarly activity around it.

She also discussed how a lot of students, some of whom come from very privileged backgrounds, come into the service-learning with the idea that they will save the world in just two hours a week. So, as she expressed, she would like to “rattle students’ cages in a way that is positive, but not in a way that will tip the cage over and can’t get it back up.”

SLD2 describes herself as a rebel rousing person of the 60s, routed and grounded in social and community development, using a social work model. She shared one simple, yet powerful perspective that is descriptive of her guided values and beliefs for her work,

We are all equal, but our society doesn’t necessarily deal hands to people that make them feel that way. So clearly we have disenfranchised populations….a lot of how I do my work is grassroots…we are all in it together. We are all equal, so we need to provide playing fields that do make us equal.

**Role of Personal Reflection**

For SLD2, reflection should be and is the key to service-learning. She expressed that the reflection was lost for while in the leadership of service-learning at the institution. She states,

I have to be pensive about everything I do…always take a step back to think about what I did and then decide how that is going to mold, shape what I’m going to do next. So, I do it by thinking about it. I have some 2 am awakenings where I ponder things, that’s part of my reflection time. I also talk to colleagues…we
work in service-learning very much as a team. My Assistant Director, [Name], is very wise...we reflect a lot if our conversations and I ask her to check me...

**Key Players and Institutional Support**

SLD2 notes that her service-learning center is the oldest operating center in the country with about 48,000 students and a little over 11,000 faculty and support staff combined. Though the term service-learning was not used, she described it as always being a purposeful element integrated within instruction and the culture of the institution, taking on different names throughout the years. There is also an instructional goal, mandated by the president that more than half the undergraduates will be engaged in the 2012-2013 school year.

The president of the university implemented a plan, once in office, which aims to enhance student experience, enrich community economic and family life, expand international reach, increase stewardship and research agenda. Service-learning is the foundation for this plan, meeting the need every key player. As she expressed,

This goes beyond rhetoric. Not only is it in the institution’s plan but we are required to measure and benchmark against it. We have faculty that embrace it, and we have students that embrace it and community that want it. So it is like a sandwich. You have the institutional support at the top, you have the more grassrootsy, student faculty…then community in the middle, not only by what they are requesting and need, but by what they bring….They know and bring in things that none of us can do. Budget wise, because it is an institutional priority, there is more than enough and great support staff.
**Faculty.** As far as faculty recruitment and promotion, SLD2 stated that, because of their “grassrootsy” beginnings, it allowed for an environment to be fostered that lets faculty feel safe to come to them. They readily make themselves available and because of that, there is assurance that we will deliver what faculty need, which is key in helping service-learning grow within the institution. SLD2 and her staff do a number of class presentations, which are done by request, which she described by stating the “proof is in the pudding,” and she went on to say,

because we build on things where people know, that we’re there and they can depend on us, then more come. So we do formalize things too like seminars for faculty, and our associate provost gives this talk at new faculty orientation and you know, but we’re just out and about a lot too. We did close to 1,000 class presentations last year and we worked with about 16 or more academic and co-curricular support units. So things like student athlete support services and offices support services and residence halls and that kind of stuff so.

In addition to seminars and class presentation, the office consults faculty on understanding service-learning pedagogy; and if the faculty wants it, they will even arrange meetings with them to meet and consult with community partners. She is determined to make service-learning as seamless, easy as possible by handling the direct placement of students. She stated that,

We go back to old fashioned paper forms and spread them out on the table to see who goes where. We’ll also, you know, help consult with faculty on how to take their service-learning and deal with it…you know you do more community based
research and how that works. Also how do they further their own academic career. I was just on email this morning with a faculty member who asked for a letter of support regarding an award. So we provide that range of services to faculty. We have to library that kind of stuff. So we find out then about what classes because faculty, when things go the way they’re supposed too, either I would have met with the department or people come and talk to me. Or an individual faculty member will contact us b/c they’re interested in sl and can we help them, that kind of think.

SLD2 serves as part of a committee of assistant and associates deans for undergraduate education, where she interacts with them and learns about their courses, and works one-on-one with them to show them how to integrate service-learning into their course. She and her staff honor her institution’s long outreach and service-learning tradition, so as she says, “We don’t say well, you know, we won’t count that because…we spend a lot of time around educated, quality practice.”

**Students.** As with faculty recruitment, SLD2 and her office make every attempt to make service-learning easy for students as well. The office is always open to student traffic and to help students learn more about service-learning. The Friday before classes start, students are allowed to log onto a web-based registration, which houses all of their approved community partners, to choose their service-learning option for the semester, along with particular duties. Having the database allows for students to select from some of the more competitive positions, and puts less stress on them before classes start. She stated that this option is popular among students who, of course, need to fulfill their
service-learning requirements, but want to continue a service-learning experience from the semester before or want to build strengths for their curricular area such as pre-med and pre-dental students. Students using the system are choosing to do so independently and must go through an orientation, just as a class would, before starting their project to make sure they are prepped and ready to go.

As stated earlier, if the students are doing the service-learning through a course, they register through their class and the office secures their placement of choice, with is a faculty selected community partner, and they are contacted with their start date, location and how they will get there, what to wear, and expect. To make it even better for the students, the SLD2 has a partnership with the institution’s credit union that provides transportation for students without vehicles and also the free bus tokens are provided by the merged university and city transit system. She stated:

the campus bus and city bus merged a few years ago. The buses leave from campus, but going into [City of Institution], the students have to transfer. A good bus run is 40 min one way because there are a lot of places in town that I could drive to in 15 min, but it would be 90 min on the bus. So then we’re not sending students there. So staff is also then looking at all these factors in terms of deciding where these students are going and that’s literally 100s at a time. Because it will be 20 sections of 250. There will be anywhere from 300-350 students in integrated studies and social science. So this is what we are doing. So then in the meantime…we’re doing that, we’re talking to faculty, we’re troubleshooting
because stuff happens…we have wonderful community partners, but even in good economic times, nonprofits are stretched and I know that.

She is grateful for community partners, who do not necessarily receive services from the service-learning center, but want to be of aid in helping the office accomplish their goals, such as the credit union.

Another way service-learning is promoted to students is through the institution’s new efforts to go back to more formal and informal living-learning options, which she described as the neighborhood concept. She stated, “we have a great presence in the residence halls and staff will sometimes have lunch in the café with a display table with signs saying, “Stop and See me!” for different service-learning opportunities available for them.”

Community Partnerships. SLD2’s campus does not shut down for breaks, so the staff is hard at work throughout the year; and as stated earlier, they are intentional about making sure community needs are being met and that they have a voice. So, at the end of each the semester, the associate director at SLD2’s institution follows up with local schools and nonprofit agencies to assess what the semester’s experience was like and if there were any challenges, and to continue assessing needs. Other staff, before the school year starts back, updates the database by making calls to update agency information and to see if they would still like to participate in service-learning.

As far as fulfilling community partner needs, SLD1 and the associate director go the extra mile to help out agencies who may have lost funding, and need the participation of students. She offered the followed example,
…we have wonderful community partners, but even in good economic times, nonprofits are stretched and I know that. I used to work at nonprofits and at these times they are more stretched. For example, I mentioned the refugee development center earlier. They usually utilize 100-150 students a semester. They are housed in a church. Some of them are students and serve right at the church. The center was partnering with the [Local School System] under a grant where we were doing some school based, afterschool tutoring for refugee and immigrant students. That grant was lost…But fortunately enough well in advance to tell us. For other situations like where all of a sudden, like with corporation for national community service money or AmeriCorps money, you have agencies dependent on them and then all of a sudden, there is no money. Then they’ll say we wanted the students to work with…writers to work without AmeriCorps person to update our website. We don’t have anybody or a person to help work with the students. So at the last minute it gets pulled, no matter how it happens. So then Nicole and I are doing some of that. Ok, what’s the backup plan. This faculty expects that X number of students are going to working with a nonprofit developing a website.

**University Reporting Structure**

SLD2’s office is jointly appointed and administered through University Outreach and Engagement, which is an office of the Provost, and Student Affairs and Services, which is under the VP of Student Affairs and Services. She explained that one of her goals “early on was to extricate us from Career Services…so we are no longer and have no longer and have not been since 2002 been affiliated with Career Services.” When the
office was first established in 1968, it was free standing and since 2002, continues to be so today. She stated that she and her assistant do their “own thing” and that they stand alone, reporting to the associate vice provost and the vice president.

In addition, she mentioned that under the Board of Trustees Policies, students are not identified by the University for service-learning, unless they are registered by her office, and that is either co-curricular or academic. Faculty are allowed to contact community partners on their own, but she and her office need to be advised, so that the service experience can count. She stated that they “do have courses that went through academic governance, as specifically to service-learning courses, so the course description is under the official university catalogue.”

Types of Service-Learning Activities

In terms of sharing a typical work day, week or month, she felt more comfortable discussing what happens in terms of a cycle. She laughed hysterically when asked because she said she just knew she would be asked this question because a typical day is no such thing. You never know what to expect, so it is more like typical cycles. She stated that, “the operative phrase that I always use is, ‘It’s going to be an adventure!’” She expressed that her team does good work and takes pride in their advanced reputation, however, no matter how hard and long you prep, you just never know what is going to happen and things change really quickly.

In describing what a typical cycle is like, she described the beginning of the semester. As shared when discussing community stakeholders, they hit the pavement running to do follow-ups with community partners to assess the previous semester
experience. The aim is to see if the partners would like to continue in service-learning, to discuss needs, and update agency information. At some point, they always have an issue where an agency may lose funding or something changes, so they work hard to accommodate the community need. They make sure that the database to register for service-learning is updated, they correct any placement glitches or choice errors, and send out placement emails, detailing duties and expectations and, most importantly confirm students’ orientation and travel scheduling to get to their specific destination. They take great pride in the student orientation because they “found that students are better prepared and actually persist better if they’ve gone to orientation.” In the past, they did interviews but found it was too nerve wracking for the students. She wants them to take it seriously, but it was too serious. She laughed stating,

The interview seemed to…it made them nervous. In fact we’re pretty fairly casual in our office. I probably dress up more than the others…I don’t wear any heels, but you know hey, we have staff who routinely work with students, so they’ll wear nice jeans and a sweater or something. Then we’ll have students show up for the interview with heels and a black suit, so it’s like No No No No! So getting past that was hard. So this orientation mode is very…it’s structure but works really well.

During this cycle, they also do numerous class presentations, as well as community presentations and are involved with different committees and opportunities outside of campus. In closing she states,
So that’s why it’s hard to say what a typical day is. So it’s a lot of balls in the air at the same time and some clichés. But they are pretty good to do. The whole time and again, you know I mentioned the sandwich. The other way I look at all of what we do, it’s like a table and it’s a table that’s got four legs. It’s got community, it’s got students, it’s got institutional expectation and it’s got faculty. And if the legs on the table… aren’t equal then anything you do when you put on top of the table, which is the work you do or the good intent you have, if those legs aren’t balanced, then stuff roles right off the table. So a typical day for me is making sure that stuff doesn’t role of the table. But in a planning and reflective way, how’s that!

**Professional Aspects**

SLD2 is strongly aware of and very confident of her job responsibilities and the role she plays at her institution. She expressed that, from day one, she was charged with building back up the reputation of the university and, being that she had such a long history with the institution, she knew “enough to know what some of this entailed in terms of you know, personal relations, but also institutional relationships, the scholarly piece.” However, she did make it clear, with excitement, that no one ever said to me, this is how you do it. Because they gave me a director’s job …and I never saw that as a challenge, that’s a gift if somebody says, ‘Here is your job, go for it!’ you know. I know I could talk to people, but no one ever gave me a prescription on how to do it. They just said, ‘Do it.’ And so we just…some days it’s like the Nike, We “Just Do It.”
In order for her to be able to carry out the daily functions of her job, she relies on the theoretical basis of her programs, colleagues, and networks. She states that her office does have some theoretical basis and eloquently explained how she views service-learning and the works she does, in light of Urie Brofenbrenner’s ecological theory.

So Brofenbrenner writes a lot about systems. We operate in a system and so, it’s a lot of the interconnecting and intertwining circles a lot of the times. And it’s also like the principals of Physics. Each action has an equal and opposite reaction. So nothing we do is in a vacuum. So if you always keep that in mind that no matter, you know what the touch point is or what the action is, it ripples out elsewhere. As long as you keep that in mind and see how abusing the system can harm it, in terms of you know environmental ecology, but also just in terms of family and all those kinds of things…and looking at students and faculty as in that context, negative action can harm everything but positive action can benefit. And so that’s why there is you know, there is so much hands on in grassroots and what we do and so there is theoretical underpinnings.

As far as networks, SLD2 is a part of two director groups, serves on numerous committees and boards, and holds many memberships. She is often asked “Isn’t that schizophrenic for you?” She responds that, by and large no because if you look at the university as a whole, if you look at it as a system, every single one of us here, at least for me anyway, the bottom line is the students…why are we here? So it doesn’t matter if we are teaching them in the class or if you are administering research and engagement on the provost level
or through student life for the res hall, ultimately, we want students to learn who they are and be active and creative citizens in the world. This world now and a bigger world later and so. So having those two directors groups actually has been helpful. I’ve learned a lot in both.

SLD2 is very involved with her state’s Campus Compact, having served an active role for many years and works with a local community university group which she describes as being a consortium of consortia. The consortium has progressed from a human services collaborative body, made up of leaders from every arena in the community, meeting community needs, such as healthcare and food stamps, to now implementing a program devoted to looking at resiliency factors in developing youth that will lead them to be successful adults.

Though she is a part of many networks and committees, and because she has to devote time to other, mandated activities on campus, she explains that, “I don’t see how you can be go to conferences every month and if you’re in too many, you can’t focus on what you have to do here.”

Success and Challenges

With confident affirmation, SLD2 expressed that she has, in fact, increased the reputation internally and externally and that her and her team has addressed some challenges and moved ahead as a result. Also, she indicated that, extricating the office from career services, was a valiant feat,

that was politically with some not a popular thing to advocate for. It has proven to be highly beneficial. So that’s a success. The growth you know, from 40, the first
year, to 17,842 last June…We have been really significant creating the body that will allow service-learning and civic engagement to foster here…

SLD2 does not take all of the credit. She expressed that it was the hard work of faculty as well. Being able to see faculty grow and become walking billboards of service-learning at the institution is very rewarding. Being able to award them and watch them be awarded by their state Campus Compact is even more rewarding. She also stated that being able to move to a more spacious facility and being able to help the alternative spring break grow have been great successes.

She closed by saying,

I have to tell you too…I don’t think what I do is hard. But I also have to tell you, over the years it’s gotten me in trouble a little bit, in terms of when I hired staff because if you know, “I can do it. Anybody can do it.” But then you find out, everyone can’t do it. It’s It’s…[seen] as ambiguous [to some]. For me that’s what keeps it exciting. If I were doing the same thing every day, it’s not me you know…I can’t you know… I have had days were I have put 100 miles on my car and I’ve never gone out of [city limits] you know because you go to a meeting over here and a school over here you know. You do that and that’s what makes it interesting and what makes it meaningful. And again, everybody who works in University has a vital role. Everybody does and none of us do our job without each other but there are some things that’s like you know…there are some jobs were I would sort of wonder…really? You know, but hey…

She further noted:
But that’s me and there are people that look at what I do and think I am nuts. Like, “why would you do that?” Then you have people that come back to you and what does that have to do with the university. Because they don’t see it…and we do define it as scholarship and that is key. It’s also a reason that faculty buy in and why we grow. It is engaged teaching and a form of scholarship here.

But…but hey you’ll have people that are more traditional faculty that think this is not of rigor…it is if you do it right.

Service-Learning Director 3 – SLD3

Journey to Service-Learning

SLD3 embodies what is meant by the saying “Don’t trust anyone’s research until you do your own.” Hailing as an alumnus of the community college he currently serves, SLD3 transitioned to a local university to complete his studies. He knew he wanted a deeper experience. Not knowing what his career field would be, he knew in his heart that it would be social services-related. Within, he knew he wanted to experience something deeper than what he was getting in lectures and textbooks stating:

I’m not one to necessarily believe everything that someone tells me, or what I read, or what other people tell me. I’m much more experience, in the sense of I’d rather not see a picture reflect the Eifel Tower and have people tell me what Paris is like. Let me go to Paris and experience for myself. Then I get my own perception and then we can have a conversation. Because what you’ve experienced and what you’re saying and how you’re applying and perceiving, you’re kind of voicing that, so to speak, into shaping my understanding and
learning of what that is, making it completely different that if I were to experience it.

He had a deep desire early on to shape his mental model based off of his own experience. As he learned of different social issues and injustices, he took this perspective and got involved in the community around him, putting, as he describes, “faces to the statistics he read about.” He truly sought to understand the environment and people around him. He stated that his early years illustrated his own version service-learning by applying what I was learning in my class and service and meeting a community need. The whole reflection peace wasn’t necessarily formally facilitated. That’s where I guess I started doing a little bit of that work. Then that involved getting a degree in Social Work. Then that involved into a degree in Public Administration. He was also involved in various volunteer and leadership activities, and alternative spring breaks, and even was a therapist in child and family services after upon graduation. All these experiences helped build a perspective of what it is like to jointly fit leadership, student perspective and learning, and community need together. He transitioned from the non-profit and social services field when an assistant service-learning position became available at his current institution. Over time it evolved from assistant director to community liaison to now, service-learning director.

SLD2 offered an operationalized definition of service-learning, stating that: My current operating definition of service-learning is a service experience that has been identified by a community partner. So if a community partner has said, ‘I
have a need, here is how somebody can help me.’ We simply take that experience and apply it into, it could be any kind of discipline, but it has to be fully integrated into that course learning objectives. So it’s up the faculty member, we would work with them to take the community need…line it with the course objectives….They also have to line up to one of the intuitional learning outcomes and provide a reflection experience.

**Service-Learning Motivations and Values**

Two things reign true for SLD3 when it comes to his goals, values and beliefs: efficiency and quality. Because his institution does not push for all faculty and students to be involved in service-learning, due to factors such as feasibility, he desires for there to be an understanding of the institution’s definition of service-learning, and to provide an efficient manner for faculty and students to do quality service-learning in any discipline. Ethically, he desires for there to be true balance and reciprocity, which he believes can be achieved by “minimizing any kind of stakeholder or constituency taking advantage…so that all parties, student, faculty and community, have equal risk and equal reward.”

Another reason why efficiency and quality is so important is because the institution is making it mandatory for all faculty and students to participate in service-learning, they are saying “We want efficiency and we want quality.” So because the institution is not backing the former, it is not feasible, so assuring that there is efficiency and quality through the efforts of the office is key. These efforts serve as SLD3’s goals as well: a good concrete definition of service-learning and understanding of it by all key
players to provide the most efficient way for service-learning projects to forth, and seamless alignment with standards and university learning outcomes.

SLD3 expressed that learning styles and community impact are huge motivators for him. With over a 100 different classes, he expressed that faculty could do a much better job catering to the diverse learning needs and styles of their learners. With so many different teaching styles and theories, it’s time to cut the traditional lecture, though he understands some classes need to be lecture. As far as community impact expressed that living in a democracy, it’s our civic duty to improve. To improve our community but to participate in our community. I think this kind of sums it up well. But I mean you have to know how to participate. I think that’s where higher ed comes in. It helps you to learn how to be a good participatory citizen. That you can gain the skills, you learn the logistics, the know how, the communication, the critical thinking. And the value of why you would want to be a good participatory citizen, so I think that those three things…

**Role of Personal Reflection**

SLD3 does not consider himself to be a “typical” journal writer. He chooses to be an active listener by continuously practicing being intentional when pondering and interpreting for understanding in the perspectives of his stakeholders. He feels that this allows for efficiency. He also shared that

There is quality and there is that kind of ethics think that’s happening. So it’s done…I wouldn’t necessarily know…it’s almost done naturally. I couldn’t even think of a time of when specifically I reflected. It’s very much a part of my
personality. I don’t like to do things just to do things. So there is meaning and all that stuff behind it.

**Key Players and Institutional Support**

The two year institution in which SLD3 services, located in a Midwestern state, is home to about 15,000 students. The institution strongly enforces their institutional learning outcomes, which is supported in the strategic plan, requiring that

Every single course at the institution has to figure out how their learning outcomes align to the intuitional learning outcomes. Institutionally we want all our students to be building these four essential skills…communication, critical thinking, social responsibility, and personal responsibility.

In regards to how service-learning is valued at the institution, SLD3 stated that

I think institutionally it is very, very valued. It’s in the strategic plan. As far as institutionalized service-learning, we have an office, we have space, we have staff, we have faculty that are doing service-learning. We have all of the policies and processes in place to do service-learning. I believe it is pretty well valued here.

However, this was not always the case. The campus culture of service-learning when he first started working as an assistant in service-learning was that:

…service-learning was kind of this watered down, very lose definition. Not much support nor much professional development for faculty. Then what happened was, they went the other way and they put a lot of strength, as far as standards and policy and procedure around service-learning and tried to offer professional
development. But because the two standards were too stringent, that despite how you were going to help me integrate it in my class, I wasn’t going to do it because you presented this rigmarole and all these hoops.

**Faculty.** SLD3 and his office do a number of things to promote and recruit faculty involvement at their institution. Target emails are sent out to faculty, postings of learning and project outcomes and results are displayed for faculty to see, and also large posters displaying faculty who are heavily engaged with service-learning, illustrating how service-learning is integrated into the course and its impact on students. The office provides a number of professional development opportunities for faculty and also a great web presence, hosting events and faculty service-learning trainings. SLD3 and his office also have a strong relationship with administrators, who are very supportive of faculty doing service-learning, which aids in the spread of the pedagogy.

One of the great things that SLD3 promotes and nurtures is the facilitation of service-learning training by faculty scholars who are considered experts on the campus. The faculty scholars meet with one another to review service-learning proposals, conduct trainings to offer support and tailor the course, as well as being available to guide the new faculty throughout the semester. This promotes faculty buy-in and really makes participating faculty feel like true stakeholders, not only in service-learning but in the institution’s mission and carrying out the strategic plan.

He went on to stress that when meeting with faculty, he and faculty scholars stress the importance of aligning at least one essential learning outcomes of the course with the service project. Also, faculty must illustrate this through measurable objectives, stating
“By this, the student will learn A by doing X.” The vital part of doing service-learning at this institution is to also assure that it’s aligned to the institutional learning outcomes as well, again they are: communication, critical thinking, social responsibility, and personal responsibility. Lastly, reviewing with faculty how to construct a meaningful reflection experience is of importance as well.

**Students.** Most students become aware of service-learning through their course; and those who have a great experience are eager to have another experience the next semester, but being able to do so proves dim in some cases. Getting students involved or even maintaining interest in service-learning has been a slight struggle and challenge for SLD3 and his office. SLD3 attributes this to the institution not having a system in place that allows for students to know whether a course has service-learning elements or not. The catalogue and online database does not specify if a course, or in particular, a section of a course is service-learning. Because doing service-learning is at the discretion of the faculty and not a main initiative of the university, there is no system set in place to assure students have any way of knowing when registering.

This challenge, however, does not stop SLD3’s passion for wanting to get students involved in service-learning. He stated that:

You have people come to college, because they want to earn a degree because they want to get a job, right? But once you get the job, you know you’re away doing your life… but there’s more to life than going to work and then going back home and going to work. Then you know, there’s us together, a democracy, have to work together to kind of make the society that we want. So it’s very easy for
people to get in that habit and they tend to forget how they can participate and what their duty is to do as a citizen to participate. And I think that’s part of this rule of service-learning, is to help and make that connection. But when you become you outside of college, this is where you need to go to continue to volunteer. So it’s just helping them continue that value of service

SLD3 went on to express that they have a very strong connection and relationship with United Way’s Volunteer System and the HandsOn Network for this very reason. He and his team can give you a great service-learning experience, but what about post-graduation? Putting students in contact with these agencies prove to be beneficial for them to continue service in the local communities.

**Community Partnerships.** At SLD3’s institution community connections are formed in two ways, through faculty involvement and relationships their office have built through networks, and by community agencies and nonprofits approaching them with a need. All of these community organizations sign community partnership agreements and are housed in a database.

Building strong bonds with these communities partners has evolved over the last 5 years. The office did not have any community partners, so students were sporadically sent out. Then the office streamlined down to 15 community partners they would work with strictly and have faculty sync their learning objectives with an organization that would fit. This proved to be ineffective, especially for faculty who had trouble aligning course learning outcomes to community needs, and vice versa. During this time, he did express it was great because he knew each community partner by name and met with
them frequently, but in order to grow the service-learning the office needed to expand, which they now have done.

**University Reporting Structure**

The institution’s office was originally a volunteer center, formed in 1994 and housed in Student Affairs, under Student Life. When service-learning came on the scene, there needed to be more faculty support around curriculum, so the center transitioned into an academic service-learning center in 2000, and is housed under Academic Affairs. SLD3 reports directly to the Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies and Instructional Support, who reports directly to the provost. SLD3 expressed that he has a good communication and support within the reporting structure. In addition to this support, he stated that:

> the board has signed off on our end goals and they aligned the strategic plan to those end goals and one of them is community outreach. And essentially I think that’s how it’s defined is that the college will maintain or something of that nature the number of students doing service-learning.

**Types of Service-Learning Activities**

SLD3 expressed that his days are currently chaotic due to the fact that his office is inheriting a new program, study abroad. So maintaining day to day responsibilities, on top of projects, and supervising staff is a challenge right now. One of the projects his office facilitates annually is Pay It Forward, which is a day of service, with up to 200 students participating in 20 service projects. Students do small group reflection, which leads to large group reflection, and a report out session at the end. SLD3 also oversees
students who have community service work study, which is the same concept as work study, but students work with one of their nonprofit organizations.

**Professional Aspects**

SLD3 expressed that he understands his job responsibilities and role as service-learning director very well. He stated that he carries forth his responsibilities with simplistic rigor, always assuring that everything is done with efficiency and quality. He did however state that within higher education there is so much diversity when it comes to how service-learning occurs and is carried out, which he finds to be very frustrating.

SLD3 is a part of his state Campus Compact and a Collegiate Network Consortium. He is also a part of a number of Comprehensive Partnerships within his local community, many of which he aids in writing grants for and with to receive community needs.

**Successes and Challenges**

SLD3 brought up some important factors, institutional priority and the economy, that present challenges for him, stating that due to the economy and “more” attention given to students success to increase retention, persistence, graduation and transfer rates, etc., my work (and other areas) has seen a shift in how the college values the work and reduced resources. When resources and money is tight and your work is not “priority” at the institution, it becomes difficult to know how to guide the work. Scope is very important! There is a balance of producing results while also “not” expanding
programming. Therefore, constantly demonstrating your value and need to the college.

He is very pleased with the new faculty buy-in and the way the faculty scholars take initiative in training their fellow colleagues, two great successes. He is also a member of the National Service-Learning President’s Honor Roll, which is a distinction he holds with one other college within his state.

Service-Learning Director 4 – SLD4

Journey to Service-Learning

For SLD4, becoming a service-learning director was her first professional job, going on two and a half years now. Having gone on a few retreats with the service-learning office at her current institution, she always knew she wanted the former directors’ job. Before attaining the position, she earned an undergraduate and graduate degree in Social Work, which provided service-learning opportunities within her course work. Through her practicum, she worked as a case manager at a dialysis center. She also worked a GLBT program doing grant writing, and working with student support groups. Before becoming service-learning director, she worked in a one-year grant funded position which placed out of work factory workers, due to the closing of a local General Electric (GE) plant, helping to transition them back into school. While in the last three month of her grant position, the former service-learning director was stepping down, so she applied. She interviewed immediately with the chancellor, who happened to recognize her from a previous GE meeting, and the rest is history.

In terms of outlining what service-learning means to her, she stated:
My elevator speech for service-learning is it is a course project that is done in the community, for the community that meets the core objectives for the class...that is the main point. Instructors forget about this main point. If it doesn’t meet the course outlined objectives, it doesn’t count.

She also expressed that instructors also get the importance of reflection. Not merely the importance, but the reflection piece overall. The common default she finds is to right a paper, but she is a big advocate for discussion. However, instructors struggle with the fact that they think a discussion is upgradeable. She works hard to encourage to use reflective discussion as a tool to facilitate and move student in the direction they need to go, or to attain the learning objected created for the class.

**Service-Learning Motivations and Values**

SLD4’s heart is in community and that the community college has an obligation to give back to their community. She explained that 90% of their students do and will work and live in their service area. They will bring their institution’s mission to fruition, carrying with them what they learned.

More than anything, she gets excited when a new service-learning project takes off, especially when it is with faculty who were totally against service-learning. Watching faculty becoming model leaders for service-learning is very rewarding.

Regarding her goals, she confidently stated that

Honestly, our program here has gotten so good that I just…I would like to see more projects that kind of thread throughout a couple of different classes. We’ve had a few that, where classes have collaborated together and throughout different
departments. Like we gave the sociologists collaborating with the computer science people…right now we have a class running a camp with disabilities. We have a science class creating projects that they could do in class. We have a visual communication class creating their marketing posters. An education class creating their curriculum.

**Role of Personal Reflection**

In terms of reflection on a personal level regarding her role, she mostly does reflection with faculty, asking questions like, A lot of that goes back to looking at the project and talking to the instructor. “What did it look like? What do we want to change?”

**Key Players and Institutional Support**

SLD4’s institution is a part of a large network of community colleges within the Midwest, in which her campus serves six county service areas, serving about 6,400 students. This institution works hard and upholds their reputation of supporting the community workforce and it’s economic development. In relation to service-learning, she expresses that,

Service-learning is one of the chancellor’s favorite programs that we run here. So, not only does he have my back 100%, but he’s pushing me forward in terms of what else could we be doing. For example, last year I want x number of service-learning courses, he said, ‘I want more!!!’

The institution has gone from 16 service-learning courses to 74, with the goal of have at least two courses in every subject area, since she started. She expressed that funding is
never a problem and there is always access to redevelopment funds. The office of service-learning is even able to offer faculty a $500 stipend.

**Faculty.** When it comes to recruiting and promoting faculty involvement within service learning, SLD4’s institution have what they call, Village Meetings, which consists of all fulltime faculty and staff, during which she gives a service-learning presentation. She also does the same at adjunct meetings and with newly hired faculty. Though often times she feels as if she gives presentation after presentation with no one really paying her any regard, she is hopeful because at some point it clicks for some and they are on board. So as she put it, “I’ll keep doing it because I’ll get new people every time!”

As far as institutional support for faculty involvement, she stated that the chancellor is all for faculty doing service-learning, but as far as assuring that she does not need much support when it comes to recruitment and promotion.

**Students.** SLD4 promotes service-learning amongst the student body by presenting at the new student orientation each year. She expressed that the presentation is very important because she wants to make students, especially those who self-select courses to be aware of what service-learning is, what to expect, and let them know what they need to be prepared. More than that, she wants students to be aware of the service-learning (SL) notification on courses within the registration system. She expressed that sometimes students will self-select, not realizing what they have signed up for and in turn are thrown off guard and often upset. She stressed that it is very important that students not only know of this notification, but the time commitment as well. She stated that:
We are a community college. Our students do work fulltime. They do have kids. So the projects we have, we really have to be mindful of that. We can’t just say, “In addition to class time…you know 6 o’clock on Tues, Nov. 7th” …that’s impossible, there is no way. So we try to do different things. Like, the classes will get into group, or they’ll do stuff in the class or they’ll make a site visit during class hours, you know those kind of things.

SLD4 also creates and disseminates service-learning flyers before the new student orientation and registration begins.

**Community Partnerships.** Again, the institutional support SLD4 is amazing, allowing her to go forth with her service-learning plan. An instrumental and essential part of service-learning is the community, which she states as being “the most important thing to be…I really want to have those good relationships…I don’t ever want to screw up a community relationship because I rely on them a lot.” Because she has worked in the community and she has a social work background, she knows a lot of the agency directors and truly desires for their needs to be met. Her having relationships, prior to this position has been very helpful in connecting faculty and/or courses. She takes pride in assuring that the connections are genuine and fit because “the last think [she] would want would be to send a class in then something horrendous happen and then like ruin this.”

Her campus has a volunteer fair, which she coordinates, and getting students to the fair is really difficult because so many of them work and/or have class. A lot of them do not have time to volunteer, so unless it is a course requirement or a service-learning
class it is hard to get students to attend. Unfortunately she had a bad experience with the community partner who is used to getting a large amount of volunteers from a local, prestigious four-year institution. They complained to all of the other vendors about the low sign-up count. She expressed that in cases as such, when it’s unprofessional and the community partner does not understand the population they are trying to target, she does not invite them back, which has been her only incident. She stated that, “I’d just about bend over backwards to keep people happy because I will need them in the future,” but in this case, she had to let them go.

SLD4 also works really hard with helping community partners understand what service-learning is and the difference between it and volunteerism. Often times she will get calls for bizarre needs, like rebuilding a bridge. She lets them know that she cannot risk the safety of her students, but helps guide them in a direction to being a part of meeting their need.

**University Reporting Structure**

SLD4 reports directly to the chancellor. During the summer her chancellor has a Chancellor’s Leadership Council meeting, in which he hears reports from all offices, not just academics, but offices such as workforce development and continuing education. They all get together and create goals and set a strategic plan, which service-learning is always a part of. They also meet every month to report outcomes and on how they are striving to attain their goals.
Types of Service-Learning Activities

In describing what a typical work day, week, or month entails, SLD4 decided to describe a week. Outside of checking in on the Masters of Social Work student she supervises at her alma mater, she goes to a lot of the course presentations and community agencies where students are doing their service. She meets with faculty to help get them started with restructuring the course to meet service-learning guidelines, then pass along there submitted proposal to the faculty committee who reviews and often times, as she laughs, will say, “Where is your reflection piece?!”

In discussing how she works with faculty and others who want to incorporate service-learning into their curriculum, she stated that she guides faculty to their service-learning library and online materials, so that they can familiarize themselves with the concept and then come with any questions, and hopefully are start on what they would want their course to look like. She states:

so we have a lot of really good resources on service-learning in the library. They have their own little, what they call a service-learning library. It’s not a library; it’s a shelf, ha! But it’s still really good resources up there and they also keep an online database. So, one of the first things that instructors to do is to kind of take a look at what’s online b/c there is a lot of really good stuff online. For example, sample syllable, sample projects, ICC publications. And you know after I do my little presentation, I point them in that direction and then they come down here and say I want to do this project.
From there she helps identify a community partner or with a non-profit they currently work with, or have in mind. Faculty then fill out a four question form that ask about the project and how it meets course objectives, and the reflection piece. Once the form and proposal in complete, it is designated an official service-learning course. From there, the faculty is responsible for making Academic Affairs aware that it’s a service-learning course, therefore making it official online.

One of the biggest responsibilities she has outside of service-learning. She is responsible for scheduling the building she is housed in. Local nonprofits are allowed to use the facilities for free. But even though it’s outside of service-learning, she makes connections and they get to host big service projects.

When asked what some of the best aspects of her job were, she expressed being about to take students around the world on spring break projects. She has gone to Antigua, Guatemala and Cannoli, Mexico, where they do service projects and build connections with peers through deep reflection. Typically, students who have never been out of the country are selected, and they pay a $150 earnest fee and the rest is covered by the institution. She expressed that being able to take students who have not been out of their hometown or flown on a plane before is very rewarding, and watching them transform in front of your eyes is even more rewarding.

Professional Aspects

SLD4 is very confident of her role as service-learning director. Her biggest role is to connect the faculty with nonprofits and better educate them on what service learning
is, especially the importance of meeting course objectives and reflection. She also stated that

three things that are in my job description are service-learning coordination, facility use and student-faculty-staff volunteerism. Not only do I organize it, I track it. We track service-learning, we track all the sections that are doing service-learning, all the students that are enrolled in the sections. Who’s teaching them, how many hours they take. So then we add up all of those service-learning project hours. Then we say “you know, last semester, we had 2,000 service-learning hours” or something like that. And we do the same with student faculty and staff volunteerism. We send out surveys that say, ‘Where did you volunteer?’ We had you know, 72…maybe it was 60 places in the community we have people volunteering. Then we have at least 50 boards that we have faculty and staff serving on. So we track that kind of stuff as well. So tracking is another big thing I do here.

SLD4 is a part of two large networks, her state Campus Compact and the Midwest Institute for International Intercultural Education, which mostly relates to the traveling she does with students. She expressed that she still does her state’s Campus Compact programming but because she’s being doing it so long, it’s not really of an asset, as far as guidance, to her anymore.

Success and Challenges

SLD4 is excited about the success in the growth of the service-learning program, expressing:
It’s been phenomenal to see the numbers increase in all those projects. I love a good successful project. It’s phenomenal to see a good successful project. I also like to of course always see the number of hours go up in service-learning and volunteer hours. And those are two big successes for me as well. And then I love seeing a really good successful spring break project because that always makes me really happy.

One of the biggest challenges SLD4 had was when she first got here. Because service-learning was not mandated, she had the responsibility of being a cheerleader of service-learning. She was able to get participation and she was able to double the amount of classes within her first year. The chancellor took notice and said, “This project, this this position has been around for eight years and we only have 30 service-learning classes, what the hell is wrong with my faculty?!”

So he sent out a mandate, which made it a lot easier for her, putting a lot of the responsibility on department heads, though she did have to go back an reeducate because no one was listening the first go ‘round. But she feels it was worth it.

In closing, she expressed that

You know that as a social worker, I always wanted to do macro practice, which is what this is, working with groups and communities…I could have never had imagined that I’d have a job this good. So there are some things that are tedious but there are some things that we get to do here that are really cool. I think that the program we have here is a best practice…kind of seen what goes on at other universities. I’ve seen what goes on over at [Institution Name]. They don’t have
the oversight that we do. They just give instructors resources, and then tell them
to come back to them if they want to. Know all these instructors are doing these
crazy things and no one knows what they are doing. No one knows if they are
following what service-learning is. So I really like the oversight that we have
here. The instructors don’t mind it and I really feel like it’s really good to be able
to know what going on in all these classes. I really like our program here.

Service-Learning Director 5 – SLD5

Journey to Service-Learning

SLD5’s journey into service-learning was actually a destination he was trying to
avoid. Not knowing that he’d be back serving in his alma mater some 15 years later, he
embarked upon a career laced with Student Affairs and Resident Life type positions.
While as student at the current institution he serves, he was a known entity by the former
director for being heavily involved in volunteering. When he was entering the
dissertation phase of his PhD, he was notified that both former directors were stepping
down at the same time. He was asked if he was interested and tried showing he was quite
the opposite on various occasions, but the persistence to get him on staff never stopped.
Service-learning was not a career path he had in mind, but after going through a plethora
of, as he puts, “both professional, personal, spiritual types of reflections, it became clear
to [him] that this was a good; a very good option and [he] interviewed and was hired.”
He describes service-learning as being something that pursued him, not the other way
around, and once he decided to look into it, it all made sense. He stated that:
The significant factors, really from my decision making, had to do with the placement of service-learning in between the nice, underdeveloped, unarticulated gap between Academic Affairs and Student Life in Higher Education. At that time, it seemed quite clear to me that colleges and universities did not know what to do with service-learning, in terms with how do you break it off from the volunteer movements and make it a pedagogical kind of niche, academic exercise, sort of under the Teach and Learning Center, or do you meld it at the risk of kind of watering it down, meld with the volunteer or ministry activities, in the case of faith-based institution. In my…my career, my interests, and my gifts are in that gap. So when I figured that out, I realized not only was it in the gap but also it was about to explode on campuses. I thought well, why not, it would be really exciting to be part of that.

SLD5 is very appreciative of and acknowledges that his undergraduate coursework in sociology and social work, studying social theory intertwined with the institution’s theological tradition, really prepped him for what was to come. He explains,

it’s hard to articulate but there’s clear lines between the course that I took in understanding the theological tradition that were in here at [institution]. So for example, the idea that all things are created and governed by God, ha! It factors into my interest in service-learning. I would never want to work in service-learning in a public setting, mostly because the whole narrative is different. The narrative is much more secular, which is a fine narrative. I don’t object to the
narrative there…I just don’t, I think it is incredibly limited in the matteing because it doesn’t draw on theological motivations and roots.

When asked how he would explain service-learning to someone who did not know, he would start off by saying it is a “slippery” term that does not have a clear definition. However, the standard definition has to do with an activity that meets several goals, including academic learning goals, including student self-reflection goals, clearly including participation of the community being served as having a role as teacher and participant in selecting whether or not the activity has merit in the community and the community has need in the community. So reciprocity is a part of the definition between community and the college, student and community. So there is basic hyphenated service-learning in that something is happening that matters in the community and that thing is fostering or facilitating learning, real academic, definable learning that is connects at faculty goals and the students.

In going back to the “slippery” descriptive, he expressed that it took him six years to agree to even write a strategic plan with a mission statement. He also said that at his institution, they are not afraid of the watering phenomenon. Service-learning is not put into a “small academic box.” They have chosen to let it float in a “bid pond” alongside volunteer activity. He states,

What we have is a distinction between academic service-learning and student based service-learning. And the student based service-learning, learning is…I still think it’s service…learning is happening. It’s harder to find, it’s harder to measure
but I think it would be foolish to say it’s not happening. So it’s still service-
learning, it’s just less academic, or measurable in terms of classroom goals. So we
make that distinction. So when faculty set out to do it inside their classroom and I
step along side of them to help them, that’s academic. We call that ABS
[Academic Based Service-Learning] now. And now we have another term for
what proceeded service-learning, which would be volunteering, we call student
based service-learning.

**Service-Learning Motivations and Values**

Overall SLD5 wants to make the world a better place. Though broad, he feels that
is it specific. He goes on to express that in his city there are issues of illiteracy,
immigration, poverty and hunger. He believes that all these things are
manifestations of a world that isn’t as it should be. And we have healthy bodies
and minds and times to do something about those things that are wrong with the
world. So it’s a goal of mine to work in a place or a position that speaks right into
those current and pressing needs.

He also gets to the current and pressing need of helping students find their meaning in
life, which is his own personal meaning in life. He desires to walk along students during
their identity developing years, aiding in the discovery and molding of their meaning and
purpose.

In going deeper with his goal of making the world a better place, he stated that
a reflection of a deeper value and belief you know being a Christian is sort of the
fundamental value and belief that makes me much more…helps me understand
why I care about hunger and illiteracy and integration. It’s not just because I’m a person. It’s because I am a person with an understanding of who made me and what I was made for. So yeah, there’s layers of my own identity that speak into it. A motivating factor about his job is its ability to feed his aspiration to be both a teacher and a scholar. His institution allows for him to “wear both hats,” exploring the academic side, which is why he pursued his PhD, after working 10-13 years in student life. Being able to have privileges of both sides is very rewarding, from traveling to conferences to his current sabbatical.

**Role of Personal Reflection**

When asked what role reflection play in his work, I was asked, “So you’re not asking what role it should play, you’re asking what role it does play, or both?” He then proceeded to discuss both, and the importance of distinguishing between the “does” and “should.”

Well it should play a role because it is part of the equation. It’s how learning is cemented; it is how learning is known. It fosters learning and it does come into practice in a variety of ways. My style of leadership with students is very interactive and flat…decisions get made collaboratively and in consensus, with a variety of inputs. So I’m reflective in my actual conversations with my student leaders and with my staff. Dialogue is part of my process and so I think reflection…well dialogue requires a reflective personality. Beyond that, in my own kind of time alone…I have a daily effort, a daily practice of writing reflectively.
He believes that writing is “is a way of understanding the world, understanding [his] own brain, is to put it out in writing.” Other reflective activities and disciplines he partakes in are prayer, meditation and the reading of sacred texts, which are both should and dos. He expressed, “I do them, but I should do them more productively and more regularly than I do.”

**Key Players and Institutional Support**

A resounding yes rang loud and clear when it came to institutional support. This small Midwestern, four-year private, faith-based institution, serving about 4,000 students has a strong history of academic excellence and theological tradition. These two pillars mixed with “the right person being at the right place at the right time to ask for institutional support way before other institutions were asking for it,” is why service-learning has such a strong, supported presence. SLD5 believes whole heartedly that they are an institution to be envied, especially for its size. They have a “healthy budget, strong and numerous professional staff, twenty or so unpaid students…”

In discussing changes in campus culture in regards to service-learning, since being the director, he believes it’s been more deepens. He gave the following example

So the changes I’ve seen have been more deepening, so for example right after I arrived, the nursing department really showed leadership in basically becoming a model, engaged department. So their whole curriculum was rewritten to center around a community based nursing practice. Rather than a hospital based, well in addition to a hospital based nursing practice. So that kind of thing, where a whole department has become engaged…We had a large grant in the early 2000s
through HUD and that helped, you know it was about a 3 or 4 year $400,000 grant that really helped to cement some partnerships in particular set of neighborhoods around the city…So, there’s been some deepening.

**Faculty.** When it comes to faculty recruitment and promotion within service-learning activities they do not have to do heavy recruitment because there is a lot of return faculty. The recruiting that is done is though the campus news source, in from of an electronic newsletter, which is sent out frequently. There is also a newsletter sent from his office twice a year.

He works alongside a student staff at the beginning of the semester who makes contact with each chair and administrative assistant of each department, and with every faculty member to invite them to inform the office if they are doing service-learning, or inviting them to contact them for service-learning information. SLD5 and his office provide guidance throughout the year and do class presentations and placements as well. He describes the communication with the faculty as being, “fairly rigorous and detailed sort of network…”

**Students.** Service-learning recruitment and promotion to students is primarily done through the faculty, since they are the ones creating the course. However, he did share a story about students seeking service-learning and student transformation a couple of years ago, two students, seniors, majoring in International Development looking back on their time in International Development and realizing how much more rich it would have been if there had been service-learning. Now these happen to be two of my staff members, so they were well
trained. And they, with the permission of the key faculty in that department, they developed a proposed set of service-learning possibilities for each of the major core courses in that major, ha! Ya know, which was just warms your heart when you watch your students taking actually taking action to change curriculum. That was a good example and that’s unusually high level and stuff like that happens, not infrequently.

**Community Partnership.** In describing the relationship with the off campus-community, he describes it as one of complexity with a diverse set of relationships. Over the past 25 years, the service-learning center has formed about 1,000 connections and partnerships, which are comprised of various agencies and churches, schools, and nonprofits. However, within the past 5 years, it is closer to 200, yet still diverse. Most communication is done during the summer via telephone, but SLD5 and his staff make an intentional effort to make site visits and assure needs are being met, and to obtain feedback.

During the summer planning, majority of the communication with community partners is to prep for a one day service event, which is a part of the institution welcome orientation. During this time they work with about 70 organizations, which he describes as being “good partnerships but they’re very sort of quick, in and out in one day.” He went on to state that they “try to make them sustainable and ongoing, and many of them are with our long-term partners…”

A good example of a deep connection is an advisory board, comprised of 8 close, long-term partners, both “men and women, folks from a variety of ethnic communities,
folks who’ve help us think on a somewhat regular basis about things like development of our strategic plan, or when one of our residence hall’s loses a community partner…we talk to the advisory board and seek some input.”

As discussed earlier, institutional support is strong. He shared that there are several of their community partners are [Institution Name] alumni and that this speaks volumes to an interesting symbiosis. He goes on to explain

Obviously we don’t just limit our service-learning with connections to Calvin through alumni. But they are there, but we do note them sometimes. We’ve had a variety of different iterations of community partnership award celebrations. I don’t know that if we are in a pretty, perfectly regular cycle now. I think that maybe, again, because there are so many and there are so many layers, we’ve had a hard time. I would say a challenge for us is identifying degrees of partnership, ok. So we’ve tried like with a bull’s-eye metaphor, or a pyramid metaphor like who are our key partners, who are our peripheral partners, who are our sort of midlevel partners. We haven’t settled on a great model for that yet.

Another example of great community connection is that fact that while he is on sabbatical, a community partner, who believes in the value of the institution, provided him with free office space.

University Reporting Structure

SLD5’s reporting structure is somewhat complicated. He is three levels down on the Student Life side or the organizational chart, he reports to the Dean of Student Development, who reports the VP of Student Life, who then reports to the President, with
a strong dotted line, as he describes it to the Provost, whom he reports to majority of the time. On a quarterly bases he reports to the President, who collects data for his information to show up on the Provost’s report and not the VP of Student Life. Though complicated, he reiterated, “Remember I mentioned a gap between those two that I love to be in.”

In discussing how his work support the overall strategic plan and institutional mission, he shared

So our mission, obviously, is to provide teaching and learning as a four-year private college, liberal arts institution with strong professional programs. We do. We’re in the business of preparing students for productive lives of service…So we’re not just developing their minds, we’re developing their souls and spirits and characters and bodies in terms of health practices. Part of what’s unique about [institution] is that it has a clear sense of its theological heritage and a clear commitment to continuing that theological heritage…that sounds so weighty…our Christian tradition is one that fully participates in the world because the world is something that was made good. It’s become less good or fully broken but there is a role for us to play in its rebuilding. Ok, we don’t have, the term we use is eschatology…our view of things isn’t that the world will burn and none of this will matter. Our view of things is that heaven and earth will reconnect and that this will be remade, but the things that we’ve made on it that are good will remain. So education, for example, will exist; will continue in that heaven, as it’s sort of…. So it’s very countercultural idea, both from secular folks and even
mostly from within the Christian Community. It’s not how folks mostly think about the end of things.

He went on to say that

All that means is for us, engaging with culture and engaging with society, those things matter. They matter because they don’t end…We help deepen the learning because that’s what happens when you’re engaged experientially in your learning. We help expose our students to things that are both wrong and right in the world. So when you tutor a kid in an urban elementary school, and that kid happens to come from a family that just immigrated here, perhaps illegally in the last year, you are faced with the realities of the world in a way that you couldn’t be through a text book… But, it isn’t just the brokenness that you’re face with. It’s the beauty! This kid teaches you things about joy or about learning or about perseverance you just…you can’t help but be amazed at it, you know, and a better person as a result of being around.

**Types of Service-Learning Activities**

When describing a typical work week, SLD5 illustrated how being in the Student Life division can be both a gift and a curse. Meaning what he would complain about, he is actually grateful for, stating:

So now you are reminding me of some of the more specific details or problems about being in the Student Life Division. A lot of meetings. A lot of collaborative, conversational meetings…I can complain about it like that. But the truth is that’s
what sustains what I described as part of the institution that gives meaning and show it cares.

A typical week for him includes various unit type meetings, respectively with each of the following: his advisor, five of his closest colleagues who all report to one supervisor, his own staff, and a larger staff meeting with his students staff. He also has about six or seven one-on-one meetings with either the student staff, or other students of interest. If he is teaching, he meets with his TA or holds office hours for students. His week allots for 12-18 hours of free space to reflect, write, communicate with colleagues, both nationally or within state, or preparing a conference paper. He also uses this time to stay up to date on current trends, literature, and daily reading of The Chronicle.

In terms of developing a service-learning course or working with faculty interested in integrating service-learning into the curriculum, SLD5 stated that it could take anywhere between 6-12 months. Typically the office will get cold calls from faculty, who are then invited to his office. During this meeting he consults with the faculty by allowing the faculty to describe the particular course, then he will follow up with “very specific questions about their learning, outcome goals that they’ll have for their students learning. I’ll ask…if they have pre-existing connections that they have for the community and could we use their ideas for service placements…I’ll offer them resources.” He then directs them to the office library, which houses various types of discipline specific service-learning books. Faculty then take these resources and notes back to review, and within about a month they will call and express, “Here’s what I want to do. Here’s what I need help with.” A meeting is then scheduled with a student coordinator to
discuss what information they will present to the class on behalf of the instructor. They will also discuss with the faculty who will make the contact with the community partners, the office or themselves.

Usually after this is decided, the student coordinator presents and the syllabus is present, then placements occur. However, sometimes they will have community partners come into the class or in the evening of the class to do what he describes as a broad meeting, or basically an “agency fair, where students can choose which placement they want.” Other times “the placements will come in…my student coordinator will often have a period of matching to do were they’ll send out students [letting them know], ‘You’re at this agency, here is how you’ll get there…how you’ll dress…how you should think about it…what you’ll be doing.’” Once this is done, the hope is that faculty conducting student progress checks and assuring the most vital part, as he puts it, “the value of service-learning is the class dialogue and the written journal reflection.”

At the end of the semester, evaluations are sent to the community agency, students, and staff. There are also online links to surveys for satisfaction polls and logistical feedback.

I would say at present our process of gathering a learning feedback is mixed...most of it is the responsibility of the faculty member, through their end of semester journal evaluation or presentation. They have a variety of ways determining how valuable this was for students and for the community.
Professional Aspects

SLD5 had this to say about his understanding of his job role responsibilities:

Yeah, so I have to keep in mind the main thing alright. Sometimes you could get off course. I understand my role is to make sure that [Institution Name] is present in the local community, in a positive service-oriented sense. So, all those ways that the society around us is broken, and we’ve contributed to some of those ways, we’re also part of the solution. We have our hands dirty in the community right next to our neighbors, getting their hands dirty. And my job is to make sure we continue to do that, on all levels, on a volunteer level, a service-learning level. Sometimes one a planning, or an organizational level with community. So that’s a fundamental part of how I understand my job.

Administratively he is responsible for the proper budget maintenance, and reports of progress and offices statistics. He is responsible for supporting the teacher and learning enterprise, as he describes, in a unique and interesting way. He is also charged with student leadership development, and collegiality, with both faculty and student life colleagues. He also stated that he must, “present a professional face, not just to [the] local community but to the national community.”

In terms of describing the role he plays in the institution, he chose the route of describing his office; hence they are a representation and an extension of him. He had this to say:

It’s unspoken. It’s basically… how should we say, aggressive gab fly, like I…you may, I don’t know how much you know about [Institution Name], depending on
your vantage point is either the most liberal and free spirited Christian College in
the whole country, or the most unbelievably conservative Republican center of
activity. George Bush goes and speaks there and it’s like, we’re obviously
incredibly connected to the republican, [Region of Institution]. We have both of
those reputations. We are both crazy liberals to most Christian College peers, ha!
And crazy conservatives to most, well, everyone else, ha! And our office is often
connected to the issues, for example, environmental stewardship…taking care of
the poor. We’re often associated to the left side of the political spectrum. Not, it
isn’t we don’t have it written into our strategic plan, it’s just students who are
attracted to service and social engagement are often at that place.

To guide the broader professional work that he does, SLD5 is a part of Campus
Compact and he is very involved with an outgrowth of it, called Midwestern. Though, as
he explained, it is not really Midwestern, it is a great national conference that takes place
every two years, since 2009, at Messiah College in Pennsylvania. This conference was
brought forth from a meeting that took place in 2007 discussing the relationship between
faith, justice, and civic learning. This discussion took place between Catholic, Christian,
and Protestant Christian institutions and Campus Compacts from Indiana, Illinois,
Michigan, and Ohio. He is also a part of the Lilly Network, which is apart of the Lilly
Foundation in Indianapolis, which also supports ‘innovative teaching and learning,
particularly in faith based, not exclusively faith based higher education.”

However, he is not a part of the major, national conference on service-learning.
He is in fact very purposefully conscious of being involved with it, stating, “I just find the
conversations to be narrow. They’re good and they’re important and I ought to be there, but you can’t do everything. And I tend toward—I’m much more interested in the big picture conversations.” These big picture conversations ask “theological and whole person kinds of questions,” which he explained are typically absent from large national convention. He also expressed:

You know…frankly Michigan is a leader’s state, but for places like [Institution Name] can be a little bit tough because we are a leader in a leader state. So we can learn a lot from The University of Michigan but mostly everyone else is trying to learn from us, which is fine and it’s great and it’s fine to participate. But we’ll go to the state institute or conference and it’s umm, you know, it’s good but it’s just not that helpful. But we’re always faced with the question of do we go because it’s a responsibility, a duty, and to share; or is that, does that make us arrogant, that be best to maybe use good judgment with how you use that because that’s pretty distinct feedback.

What he does find more interesting on a national level are conversations with the “game changers” of service-learning. These game changers are institutions such as, Messiah College, DePaul University, Azusa Pacific University, Baylor, and The University of Pennsylvania. He finds that these institutions have very challenging conversation because they are doing things we need to be doing. They’re the ones who show us how weak we are. Everyone else, kind of shows us how strong we are and that’s nice and makes you feel good. But it doesn’t actually help you improve.
Success and Challenges

SLD5’s institution transitioned from a volunteer center to a service-learning center is a major success. A Director of Academic Community Engagement is another, which solidified their link to the Provost Office. He believes that the office has been an on campus model office and is successful in developing student leadership, which he describes as a “strong, strong suit.”

A success that is both shocking and amazing to SLD5 is the fact that his institution has made the list of mostly every published US News Top Service-Learning Institutions stating it is “strange because we are so small. I don’t know how they found out how great we are, but we are on their list and it feels good.”

A major early on challenge, mentioned earlier, was determining an institutional definition of service-learning. He expressed that

I’m very adamant that we chose wisely in choosing not to put service-learning into a small box and just make it a litmus test of academic learning. So broadening the definition of service-learning to include what some people are afraid is just old fashioned volunteering. I think we’ve made a good choice in not being afraid of that. Have we sacrificed some quality? Absolutely true. But have we gained the breadth of the program, yes—how we changed that decision.

Another challenge for SLD5 and his office was a large HUD grant he says they failed at. He believes that they had high ambitions for it, “deep multi-disciplinary partnership, actual shared partnership, real sharing with community partners, [but it] just did not work. You know the actual sharing of money and decision making with
community partners; I’ve never seen it work.” He expressed that he has heard about it at The University of Pennsylvania but expresses that he does not know how to execute such. He believes it would require so much institutional buy in and so much time and patience, and real collaboration. I can’t say we’ve done that. We have done really well, but we’ve never forged an actual institutional partnership, I don’t think. I mean, I’ve heard about it.

In closing, he expressed that when thinking about the larger scope of this study, the position is uncharted and the path to it is still unclear. He expressed knowledge of a few masters programs he knew of geared towards it but he expressed that he likes the ambiguity, expressing, “I’m glad it’s not the only way you know.”

Service-Learning Director 6 – SLD6

Journey to Service-Learning

SLD6 has an interesting background and viewpoint from which she defines and utilizes her discipline. Her background is in theater and sociology, and she never saw theatre as a form of entertainment, but rather as a “tool to enhance the quality of life, conversations, or relationships or communities…that’s the cornerstone and essence of learning,” as she describes it. She actually, while as an undergraduate working in the career services center over internships, aggressively sought out theatre performance internships. She found an opportunity at The Arts Theatre Company, in Cleveland, Ohio, to work with children’s theatre in impoverished housing communities. To her surprise, the organization was impressed with her cover letter and actually had a close relationship
with one of her professors. Not knowing she would administer the pedagogy of service-learning some 20 years later, she already had a firm grip and understanding on what it was to learn while serving, and to use ones passion to transform lives. She described the opportunity as

... and I didn’t even have like the language or even understand what I was doing.

But I knew that this was the kind of work that I think could affect change. And I wanted to be able to take whatever skill said I had and passion, and be able to use it for something. It’s altruistic, I don’t know if it was...and so, doing this kind of work (pause) isn’t that far off at all from the kind of work we do.

SLD6 has been the service-learning director at her institution for the past four years. She came into this position through the encouragement of her mentor, which happened to be her department head and former service-learning director. Her mentor, who happens to be a renowned service-learning practitioner, both nationally and internationally, introduced her to service-learning ten years ago, when she became an academic service-learning faculty fellow. During her stint as a fellow, she had a full semester of release time to learn about various service-learning methodologies. She later went on sabbatical and had an opportunity to research ways in which university, or public scholarship, worked with community based practice.

In 2008, her mentor decided it was time to step down, but it was not without worry or hesitation. The issue with the position was that no one was willing to sign up for the demanding role and “she did not feel anybody could do it, in part, who would be willing to do it because it’s based upon faculty relations, and only have faculty release,
but candidly it’s a fulltime job.” Because much of SLD6 work and interest was focused on community practice, she was interested and also urged to apply. In fact, she was the only one who applied.

Personally, SLD6 views her work and defines service-learning as

Improving the quality of the student experience, but improving the quality of the life of the community. Whether it’s a nonprofit organization, whether it’s a small business, whether it’s particular individuals in a housing development. There is something progressive for wanting to make life better for those who are in need. That’s the essence of my work. I’m using theatre as a tool predominately. But the subject matters are vast.

SLD6 has a different approach and/or context on how she defines service-learning, which depend on if it is for faculty or community. For faculty, she defines service-learning as “having service or work within the community meet course or curriculum outcomes. That this is a way in which you can meet your course outcome is through engagement through service work or community practice.” Within this explanation she makes sure to explain and broaden service within the community, discussing issues and questions regarding student learning and community development and benefit. In responding to a community member or partner, she would define it as “an opportunity for students to learn about you and from you, and that they’d be able to provide something you might need; and at the same time simultaneously meet and outcome within a course and or something curriculum based.”
Service-Learning Motivations and Values

In regards to her values and believes, SLD6 had the following to say:

Indifference is much more harmful than love or hate. So I think you can’t be indifferent to the world in which we live--within this university situates itself, within the community. I think it is the responsibility of the university, a public university. Even if state funds don’t call it a public university. I mean only 25% of our operating expenses are from the state. However, I think it’s the university’s responsibility to provide resources, serve as a sounding board to collaborate, and work within the community it situates itself. It shouldn’t separate itself…it is of community.

With that, she went on to say that she does not understand the concept of the ivory tower, she never has and does not think she will. She expressed that fundamentally it just does not make sense to her, referring to herself as a practitioner, not an academic. However, she truly believes that individuals can make a difference and have an impact on the outlook of those around them. This is whether a community can impact how students view the world, and reciprocally, students can also make change within an organization and change the mental models of those around them.

What motivates SLD6 being able to create and bridge connections between community organizations or individuals with faculty; and watching them discover new paths of possibility. Being that she lived in the community, long before she got the position, she was very much engrossed in the community and its culture. She is fully aware of its needs and happenings, having been a part of a lot of political and cultural
events. She was able to take what she learned in the community and use it to make connections for the faculty so that they could become just as engaged outside of the classroom, stating, “I like making friends for making friends.” She also views universities as “canvas(es) to paint on,” meaning she loves to discover ways to grow, expand current projects they are working on, or most importantly create. Creation is key and exciting for SLD6, sharing that her office is currently working with a social entrepreneurism project, in which they are doing an incubator, and they want to find inexpensive and resourceful ways to replicate the design across the state. The autonomy she and her office has allows for them to be able to work on projects such as this.

SLD6 has a few goals she would like to accomplish as service-learning director. Though she describes the university as being supportive of her and her work, she has a desire for them to “be really deliberate in its collaboration or communication with the community” and to make it a charge. She provided the following example:

So for example, if the university would say, “’We are really going to focus on them and economic development.’ Well that’s going to be really helpful for our work here because what we can do here is to really help faculty cultivate service-learning experiences that focus on economic development within the community. Or we can look and initiate grant kind of programming.”

Other goals would be to sustain and maintain current programs and discover new faculty program initiatives, both course-based and scholarly.
Role of Personal Reflection

In regards to reflection, candidly SLD6 expressed:

Well in service-learning, obliviously one is not evaluated on the service itself. You’re not like, ‘Oh, I lifted that box. It was really great. I really thought that was phenomenal.’ It’s ones willingness and ability to reflect on the service is where the learning comes in, or the community act. And so reflection, whether it’s self-guided, whether it’s facilitated by a faculty member for them and really looking at specific kinds of questions in which to reflect, it enriches both the experience of both community and student.

Overall, she believes reflection makes the work relevant for all key players in service-learning, allowing them to explore all aspects of the service.

Personally, reflection is practiced by SLD6 through intentional self-discourse. She believes that reflection comes naturally, due to her arts background, expressing that is praxis. Reflection is a praxis in that it is in the experience itself, so as one is participating in an activity, or in this context a service-learning activity, looking within simultaneously. She illustrated this stating, “there is this philosophy that truth lives in interruptions and so I think that reflection is a powerful interruption within an act of anything. So I practice it within the actual experience itself.”

Key Players and Institutional Support

SLD6’s Institution is a public four-year institution, serving about 20,000 students. Overall, financially the institution is very supportive, with the Office of Academic affairs investing about $60,000-$64,000 a year. SLD6 also believes that the university is very
supportive of service-learning and the work of her office, as is evident in providing resources for faculty to participate in service-learning, whether teaching or participating as a fellow, and also for her release time. The benefit for the university is that the office is generating $300,000 in grant funds and gaining public notoriety, so these statistics provide a strong case for the continued and even increased support, which the institution has never deviated from. However, SLD6 did express, as mentioned earlier, that the university needs to make more of an intentional role and ownership in service-learning, and building an authentic relationship with the community.

Since becoming the service-learning director, SLD6 has seen a shift in the incoming faculty’s knowledge base of service-meaning, expressing:

Well, I think actually the faculty that come to the university, especially if they are out of PhD programs, MFA or MSW, in their graduate work they were doing some of this work. Where 10 years ago that’s not the case. It wasn’t part of, or certainly wasn’t revered in academic circles. It didn’t have as much legitimacy. Because there has been quite a bit of research, they have been able to validate their legitimacy because of the methodology. So the educators that come here, it’s pretty significant. So a lot of them were doing this work within their programs. I have a faculty member who came here 3 years ago now, he won an MCC award. His dissertation was on Language Acquisition through service-learning. So he came here, this was basically a lot of his work…So I think that’s been a shift.

**Faculty.** SLD6 and her office make it their top priority to make sure faculty receive information about their academic service-learning faculty fellow opportunities.
Information is sent out twice a year for fall and winter cohort opportunities to department heads, Academic Affairs through their bi-weekly newsletter, the faculty development center, ListServs, and to everyone’s campus mail box and email. Information is also given out during on campus conferences and special events. For past and current fellows, the office communicates with them through their ListServ as well about service-learning grants and opportunities. Opportunities such as the CASL, Community Academic Service-Learning, which SLD6 launched during her 2nd year as director, mini grant is offered to them to help in the aid of starting and completing projects, or to provide funds for resources. These mini grants can go up to $2,000. An example of a mini grant being used for an amazing service-learning project is with a Social Work professor member who is going to Jamaica with her students to do work with single mothers. The mini grant was used to purchase parenting guide booklets to train trainers there to work with the mothers, and have as a resource there.

**Students.** Getting students involved in service-learning is not really SLD6’s office’s responsibility. They do not work directly with students, being that students are involved in service-learning projects through the courses offered by the faculty fellows. The only way students are directly involved with the service-learning office is through projects they manage, business venture for youth, which is a youth entrepreneurial program, and a social enterprise, which is a digital inclusion working with youth in the community focused on teaching youth how to refurbish different technologies, which also generates funds. The latter program consists of all computer information system students and it serves as a fun way for them to implement what they have learned, and serve a
need while doing so. The office also works with faculty and honor students by providing different resources and service-learning opportunities, and they also run a youth voice theatre program at local high schools, in which students can get practicum credits as well.

What was found to be very intriguing and interesting was SLD6’s discussion of why she believes student’s involvement, or lack thereof, in the service-learning culture was due to a number factors out of their control. First, she believes that students are less willing to volunteer than they did five years ago because of the economy. The average student at her university is 25, with 75% of them working 50 or more hours a week. In addition to working, she believes expecting them to do an additional 20 to 40 hours a week in a semester is really difficult to do. Her solution to this problem she believes is indirect service, in which faculty and community organizations offer opportunities for students to participate in projects that are only 6 to 10 hours a week, with the mindset that “meaningfulness isn’t measured in hours, it’s in meeting the need.” She also stated that, “It’s hard to get student to believe its value and take the time.”

The second issue of concern is the changes within the federal government in regards to federal aid laws. A lot of the students are charged with the responsibility to make up for the family difference, stating:

The state bottomed out work study. We are looking for students to do service-learning, but they are the community in which we want to serve! There isn’t like this social capital—cultural capital, they aren’t that far apart. They are the community! It think it’s great because it allows them to look at the community and improve it in a way. But it is hard I think for students to see. You know when
the state government zeroed out work study. So federal government didn’t make up the difference, so state university had to make up for it. So you don’t have that many students…a percentage of our work-study requires that student work within the community because the federal law says you have to work with the community. We can’t increase the amount of people serving because we don’t have that much federal work-study.

The third issue is that the university stopped designating service-learning courses as ASL (Academic Service-Learning) in the course catalog, and has proved to be problematic. Her hope is that this will soon be reactivated, and serve as another way to promote and recruit student involvement in service-learning. She did mention that within General Education, it has been called LBC (Learning Beyond the Classroom), in which one of the options for students is to take an ASL course that has been approved by the General Education Committee.

**Community Partnerships.** Building and fostering community partnerships is a special part of the service-learning process that is near and dear to SLD6’s heart. As mentioned earlier, SLD6 is firmly rooted in the off campus-community. She has used her previous relationships, partnerships, and expertise, having served as the chair for the United Campaign for several years, to help build upon partnerships. Community based programming is really decentralized. In the past the office has attempted to be a “one-stop shop” for community partners in which they used a web-based portal for them to post their needs and have them met, but it never took off. She believes that this happened mainly because they were not focused on how they would do it and bet information out
Again, she wants that the “university as a whole to know and make a commitment to the priorities set for working with the community.” However, administrators are involved, such as the President opening their house for a local community fundraiser, and the Community Relations chair working on different kinds of community initiatives and working closely with the service-learning office to meet community need.

**University Reporting Structure**

SLD6 and her office are very supportive of the institution’s overall mission, which is to engage the community and help students learn through community engagement. Though they are currently working on one, unfortunately the university does not have a strategic plan, which would help provide guidance for the office. She reports directly to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

**Types of Service-Learning Activities**

As she put it, a typical day for SLD6 is filled with “20 million” projects. Not only is she the service-learning director, but she teaches two undergraduate courses and advises graduate thesis work. Most of her days are filled with meeting upon meetings, and office hours. A lot of her time is focused on grants and looking for ways to expand her programming, especially for the digital inclusion because it generates money, and her new service-learning entrepreneurship program for juvenile first offenders with the juvenile trail court and her state’s consortium workforce development program.

SLD’s main focus is working on the faculty development seminar for the faculty fellows, and helping them craft ongoing, effective service-learning projects. The academic service-learning faculty fellows program is a competitive opportunity, once
fellows are chosen, cohorts of 5 per semester, they are granted release time to participate in a 13 week seminar. During these seminars they are exposed to a various readings, participate in discussions, and listen to speakers and community partner panels. During the seminar, they are also asked to locate discipline specific material, as it relates to service-learning. To prepare for the seminar, SLD6 dives into the latest research, analyzes what worked and was most effective in the last seminar, and prepares a syllabus with reading most relevant to the field. Her main focus during the seminar is to promote discussion on the core concepts of service learning and talk broadly about engaged scholarship. During the discussion of engaged scholarship they will also address community voice within the service-learning process, learn about asset based programs and how to work with partners to build assets, and discuss readings dealing from the basic typology of service-learning to readings that challenge service-learning languages and approaches to learning of the teachings of basic theorists and activists. After the seminar is complete, the faculty fellows will implement the following year. So far there are about 68 ASL courses and 35 faculty.

**Professional Aspects**

When asked how well she understood her job responsibilities, SLD6 expressed that she did not know. But did say that she believes her job to be to facilitate the faculty seminar and as in the job description, to develop grant programs, support faculty, and be a voice for the university in the community. She also stated the following in regards to what she believes should be in her description:
You know that what is interesting…I don’t think is a part of the job description, is to work with how to deal with retention. We are looking to develop mini courses to spur that. There are tons of research on service-learning emersion and retention. So I want to develop 1 credit mini courses. We aren’t a course developer here. We are a support office and we are a creator office, but not necessarily of our own courses.

As far as professional networks, SLD6 is a part of only two networks Campus Compact and Imagining Miracle, which is an art and scholarship in public life network. She tried being a part of the IARSLCE (International Association for Research on Service-learning and Community Engagement) but it was not beneficial for what her office is doing. SLD6 beamed with grateful in expressing the support her state’s Campus Compact provides for her and her office. She appreciates being able to see what other institutions are doing and initiatives they are a part of. She really appreciates that she can learn something for every aspect of the service-learning process, even how to write a service-learning position for the human resources. When the federal government pulled a significant amount of funding, they were “amazing in the sense of grant work…very responsive and engaged.” SLD6 also finds a lot of support from the ListServ for the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Success and Challenges

As far as success, though she only listed one, it is major. She is proud of the fact that her and her office have been able to sustain, especially during the rough economic times. Within this sustaining, she is also extremely proud of being able to configure and
reshape her youth business project, which began with private money but now it is not, and they are able to generate funds to keep transforming the lives and learning of youth.

As far as challenges, she expressed that it is “money and grants…that’s the stuff that keeps you awake at night,” recalling what her predecessor said upon leaving, she know understands

She said, I mean to be quite honest, I’m glad to get out of the business of having to make sure I can…the thing I really struggled with in this position, I had to make sure I always wrote enough grants to make sure people’s livelihoods were taken care off, to make sure they have jobs. And that is definitely the case. Because if you start programs and they employ people, you have to work really hard to make sure. Particularly if the university, and many of them don’t have any kind of process on how to maintain grant funded programs when the course of the grant is done.

Also in regards to money, she stated that it is rough especially when you have a federal grant and on top of that, there are barely even any federal funds to apply for, expressing that

…private funding are one stop wonders, so you can’t sustain from that. How we learned, we downsized, reshaped, and reclassified. This is a union based school, so we reclassified jobs as unclassified to keep. We created more networks. We focused on parts of the networks that were generating actual revenue. So then it becomes I think just having like with anything, you adapt to shape it so it can survive.
Overall, SLD6’s love and focus is on community change through faculty. She had this to say about it:

I like the faculty seminar. I like to teach…faculty are siloed. Here is an opportunity for people from all different disciplines to come together and talk about pedagogy, the role of the university in the community. That is one of the first questions I ask. ‘What do you think the role of the university in the community should be?’ So talking about some loftier ideas versus just something about their course. I love watching the exchange of ideas among people who may be from different parts of the world. In any manner, I love that! So in that sense I like that and seeing if we can make some change.

Service-Learning Director 7 – SLD7

Journey to Service-Learning

SLD7 expressed that she was “in the right place at the right time” when she became the service-learning director at her institution. While attending her institution as an art education, doctoral student, she also worked in the Center of Teaching and Learning, focusing on faculty development, and worked with her major professor on various service-learning projects. The year before the institution created the office of service-learning, she was pegged to facilitate an interest group aiding in the development of resources for faculty teaching service-learning courses. When funding became available to go through with the opening of the office, she was moved right over into the position. She attributes this to her role in the Center of Teaching and Learning, her leadership with faculty, and her service-learning pedagogy expertise. Prior to her doctoral
studies, she was a graphic designer and did multimedia work. Also while working in the Center of Teaching and Learning, she did a lot of instructional technology before moving into faculty development. She expressed that the work she did with her major professor allowed for her to learn a lot about service-learning and art education, and she also did extensive research and writing, and curricular development for the local county school system in art education and service-learning.

SLD7 defines service-learning as the “application of skills and knowledge to address a community need and through reflection, students then learn more about their academic discipline, their personal values and how they develop as citizens.”

Service-Learning Motivations and Values

SLD7’s family has a strong tradition and belief system that is deeply rooted in education and public service. Being an active member in one’s community and really taking ownership of one’s civic duty is a calling she fulfills in her personal life, and very much so desires for each and every student, no matter the discipline. She expressed this stating:

Well, I’m a very big believer that we need to be involved in our communities as part of our civic duty. And I really believe that students need to be pushed academically to explore how they can be future leaders in their community and how what their learning actually has application to community issues. I believe that that is true in all disciplines. I do not think that there are some that have less application or connection to community development, as well as you know addressing some of the complex issues our communities face. So they, personally,
I think they, you know we all need to, be pushed to be more civically engaged and to…find your niche in your community and provide leadership where you can. She expressed that watching faculty and students really take ownership in this process and foster change is what motivates her most about her position, allowing for her to push even harder to aim for exciting, innovative work.

**Role of Personal Reflection**

SLD7 admits that she does not do a lot of service-learning, and feels that other service-learning directors do not do enough reflection personally as well. However, she does feel that being a part of professional networks is a great way to self-evaluate, expressing:

> it’s really important to be involved in professional networks because that’s a great way to take a breath and hear what other people are doing; and do some reflection...just in terms of hearing from people who are also in the trenches. I’m very involved in a number of professional networks and present quite frequently at conferences. So I think that’s another way to do some sort of professional reflection.

What her and her office does do a lot of is teaching reflection. Workshops are conducted to give faculty an understanding of reflection and how to construct reflection for their students, as well as learn how to reflect about the projects they create for their courses, in terms of bettering them each time.

SLD7 and her office do try taking advantage of the summer months’ down time to reflect over the past school year and gear up for the following, asking questions such as,
“What did we do well? What could we do better?” Asking questions like these allowed for them to create and successfully finish their first strategic plan (5 year), which was a first for the office. She stated that it “did provide a lot of time for the staff and [myself] to reflect on where we need to go, and you know personally the kind of leadership I need to provide.”

**Key Players and Institutional Support**

The institution where SLD7 is director is a large-sized, four-year public institution located in a Southern state, providing education to about 33,000 students. SLD7 expresses that though everyone on the campus may not know what service-learning is, there is, without a doubt, support for the pedagogy and her office. Since the office opened seven years ago, there have been six VPs, but they have all been great supporters and advocates. Service-learning is a part of their new university strategic plan, confirming that “there is just great belief that this is great good for our students and our campus,” she states. She also stated that by having service-learning as a major goal in the overall strategic plan, it provides mounting opportunities for the students. She went on to express that though some departments are more active than others, there has been a great resurgence of service-learning interest within the last year.

Changes she has seen within the campus culture regarding service-learning, since the establishment of the office has been very promising. Yearly, they conduct a program called Service-Learning Fellows, which is a select group of faculty, of about 80, who go through a yearlong extensive program and become the core campus leadership around service-learning. She stated that the program has been “a huge catalyst for change in
understanding of service-learning.” In 2010, her office and institution applied for and became successfully installed as Carnegie Community Engagement classification, “serving as the turning point in campus comprehension of how service-learning fits into the broader engagement movement.” Within the last year 300 service-learning courses were facilitated, stating that 170 of them were unique courses and “if you look comparatively to other institutions, that’s a strong number of courses.”

Faculty. A lot of how faculty is recruited to participate in service-learning, and some going on to serve as service-learning fellows, is by word of mouth. A lot of campus communication, such as the university weekly newspaper, listserv, the office’s website, and Facebook are some of the tools used to target faculty. The institution supports these efforts of recruitment by having a link for the Service-Learning Fellows Program on the Provost Offices website. The Provost and the President mention service-learning in their addresses, as well as the Provost giving out two faculty awards each year, in recognition for successful service-learning work.

Students. Service-learning at SLD7’s institution is heavily pushed through instruction, so the student involvement and recruitment really comes through enrollment in service-learning courses. However, her and her office staff do a lot talks and presentations within classes. Within in this next year, they expect to see a big push in enrollment into service-learning courses, due to a new service-learning registration application, making it easier for students to find service-learning courses.

Because another office on campus handles co-curricular service, primarily dealing with volunteerism and civic engagement, she stated that they “often say to students, ‘If
you’ve enjoyed your service-learning experience, here are some other ways to continue to be involved in the community.”

**Community Partnerships.** Though, SLD7 expressed that she would like to develop a community partner coordinator position in the future to handle all community partner tasks, her and her office take joint responsibility in developing strong bonds and working close with a great of their community partners. A lot of time is spent doing presentations with them and they even conduct small, in house groups with partners that they do consistent projects with. They also work diligently at fostering communication and strong relationships with faculty and community partners through workshops.

An example of an ongoing initiative is their food initiative, which was starting three years ago, convening all key players in service-learning, interested in community food issues. Another initiative within the office, headed by the assistant director, is the Latino Service-Learning Initiative, geared towards the Latino community of [city] to help develop and match them with service-learning courses.

SLD7 and her office also work closely with their Center of Leadership and Service to help promote volunteer experiences through there Volunteer Connect program and the HandsOn network, which serves as a database to connect all stakeholders.

**University Reporting Structure**

The service-learning office is a partnership between the VP for Instruction and the VP for Public Service and Outreach, operating on a memorandum of understanding (MOU), laying out what each will provide the office with support wise and also how they will collaborate. As mentioned earlier, there have been six VPs over the last 7 years,
having been three, respectively. Again, there has been great support from each but she did state that their next challenge is to:

encourage the VP for Research, the VP of Instruction, and the VP of Public Service and Outreach, and of course I report to two of them, to collaborate to develop and engagement plan for the university. Service-learning would be a part of it, but not the entire focus of it.

Types of Service-Learning Activities

A typical week for SLD7 is filled with on and off campus committee meetings, presentations and workshops, and teaching a graduate course once a week. One of her job responsibilities is to be visible in the community, so on Thursdays she participates in a program, a partnership with the local school district, which works with school teachers learning about service-learning. Every so often she is attends a conference, whether it be to learn more about service-learning, networking, or even hosting an event.

In regards to the process the process of developing service-learning programs and/or courses, special consultation is done with faculty who are outside of the Service-Learning Fellows programs. During the consultation, there in an intensive review of the syllabus to discover was service-learning could be integrated into the course, discuss ways to get students involved, and encourage faculty to execute good service-learning practice. She also discussed the S-Suffix, a special designation for service-learning courses, which was initiated and proposed by her office to be integrated into institution’s curriculum system:
we encourage faculty go through the course application process to get the S designation for their courses. That process is actually part of our university curriculum committee process. And we are actually kind of a link on the chain, so when someone goes to their department, they submit the course application, and it’s an online system, and it goes through the department’s curriculum committee, then to their college. Then once it’s approved there, then it comes for our approval. Then we look for...we require two things in the application that they have to include for it to get the S resignation. Then it goes to the University Curriculum Committee for the final approval.

SLD7 also has in place a mini grant program, in which faculty can apply for a $500 grant for their service-learning projects. The grant program also serves as a just in time funding source for faculty who’s department cannot fund their project, faculty who decided to implement service-learning later on in the semester, or for those who are redesigning their courses and just need help to fund certain aspects of the project.

Professional Aspects

SLD7 takes her role very seriously and believes that her office is a “really important part of the universities land grant mission.” In addition to the university being a land grant institution, they are also committed to public service, in which she states: working with constituents beyond the campus is fundamental to who we are and I think that you know service-learning was really the first time that we said we want to involve students in that land grant mission and get them out of the classroom and into the community.
She takes seriously her role in assuring that the institution stays focused on this goal and civic mission, and considers it to be vital to student development.

SLD7 is a part of various networks to help guide her work and aid in her growth as a service-learning director. She just closed out being a part of the executive committee for the Golden South Summit for Civic Engagement, in which her institution has hosted the conference in the past. The institution is also a sponsoring institution for the National Outreach Scholarship Conference, in which they have hosted twice within the last five years. She is a part of TRUCEN, which is The Research University Civic Engagement Network, whose membership consists of about 30-35 very high research universities, with the purpose of discovering how research universities can support civic engagement as a part of their mission, and better prepare and support their students and faculty for that kind of work. She is very proud to be a part of TRUCEN because not only is her institution a land grant, but they are a top research institution. SLD7 is also a part of the International Association for Research in Service-learning and her state’s Association for Women in Higher Education, which she says is “not really a part of my job in service-learning, but just in terms of being a women in Higher Education, I think it’s really important to be involved in those networks.”

SLD7 also tries to stay updated on the latest research and credits the Michigan Journal of Service-Learning as being an obvious way to assure she is in the know. Her institution is home to one of the oldest journals on outreach and engagement, which her and her office do a lot of work to support the journal. She and her office also conduct a lot of in house research as well, not just because her institution is a research institution
but because she believes it is important for an office to be research based and that

“You’ve got to know your context.”

**Success and Challenges**

Sustainability and growth in office staff are two successes SLD7 is very proud of. She expressed that every year, even in times of difficulty; they have maintained their funding and support, with it increasing over time. Her office has more staff members than it has ever had, now with an assistant director for the past two years who was put in position in one of those low budget periods. She stated “people saw the need and that’s where the resources went. I mean we’re looking at a budget increase over the next 3 years as well. So I think that’s been a huge success.”

Other success she is very proud of is the growth and campus reputation of faculty development programs, and the S-Suffix, mentioned earlier. She also mentioned the service-learning course survey, stating:

We also have the SL course survey, we do that every semester and we’ve done that since 2007 and we have really, I would say, comprehensive data about service-learning’s impact, which is one of the studies, we’re kind of wrapping up on now. I think we’re probably doing a better job with that, than a lot of institutions. So I’m really proud of our assessment with that. We really do take that seriously.

As far as challenges, she believes the office has face the same typical challenges most programs have faced, for example “making sure that their service-learning courses are viewed as academically rigorous, which has been a criticism.” Another challenge she
feels other offices can relate to is faculty and certain disciplines not grasping the importance of service-learning and engaging in the community. She chalks it up to being an education issue, and that they don’t mean ill will, the just don’t understand.

Leadership has also been an ongoing challenge, stating:

Our change in leadership has been an ongoing challenge as well because...we’ve had leadership shifts. It’s a constant education process and communicating with two vice presidents has it’s challenges at times, but you know we...I think you know we’ve been fortunate in terms of resources and support but we could have grown faster with more earlier, so I think that’s been a challenge.

She also expressed that her office doesn’t have a good handle on how to assess community impact.

In closing she stated:

I get to work with a lot of different people. I think that’s one of the very best aspects...we moved into this facility I guess two years ago, almost two years ago. I mean just having a dedicated place to meet with people has been wonderful and I think it’s given us more visibility on campus, and the community...I think I have a lot of autonomy, which is really great, so you know they really...the VPs that I work for are very interested in hearing new ideas...and every year is a little bit different because we get to kind of see that.
Service-Learning Director 8 – SLD8

Journey to Service-Learning

SLD8 is a self-labeled “starter” and has a heart for service and public health. In 1997, she moved to her current city as a trailing spouse with her husband, who is a professor at her current institution, and young child. After some years went by, she decided to find part-time work and ended up working at one of the city’s most prominent companies’ social justice center, housed at her current institution. The center was in need of a summer program, something they had never had before, and they needed someone to get it done. So she stepped in as the summer programs director, diving right in and networking with colleagues and friends of the institution and also within the community at a local elementary school. While networking, much of the conversation was focused on “why it would be important for [Institution Name] to have more community engaged courses and also take advantage of community federal work study opportunities and [Institution Name] has a long tradition of experiential education.

From these discussions, it was found that service-learning was not a foreign concept or pedagogy at SLD8’s institution. Nor was it hard to embrace, but there was a non-institutional place for it. So without pay, SLD8 and colleagues formed an ad hoc committee to create ways in which their institutions faculty could get involved with the local elementary school she had been networking with. She and the committee also found grant funds and “began to sort of help them figure out what the pedagogy was, what resources they would need, what a good community partnership would look like, and little by little we began developing these partnerships and programs.”
Not long after this, she became a program director for a community participatory research project, in partnership with two instructors of anthropology and economics from her institution. This grant funded position allowed for her to leave her job as summer program coordinator. However, the owners of the business governing her old position gave and endowment to the institution, which was geared towards service-learning, and because she had started doing the work, she was offered the position as service-learning director.

I would like to stress that service-learning, however, was not a foreign concept or pedagogy for SLD8. She was introduced to it while in undergraduate studies during the 1970s. She expressed that service-learning made sense to her, especially because of her Peace Corps work in Morocco, North Africa. She had this to say regarding Peace Corps and service-learning:

Peace Corps is a kind of service-learning and so it was just something that made sense to me that had characterized my own learning. It’s consistent with not only my values, but also I think it made sense at [Institution Name] and there were people here at [Institution Name], to whom had also just made sense. So I think it was, although it was familiar to a number of us, it really wasn’t until the late 90s that I think there came to be kind of sort of a vocabulary around service-learning and a national push in that direction that Campus Compact and organizations at a national and state-wide level. So, but I think that there is still sort of a lot of a lexicon there that people are still learning. But it just...it sort of makes sense, right.
During the 1970s there was a lot of social activism taking place, and she dropped out for a while to take part in the movement, but eventually went back, expressing that experiential learning was always a big part in what she did. She stated that she has a love an interest in diffusion of innovation, stating:

How do people learn about new things and apply them. The way I learned about that was in a journalism class that studied sort of communications, and in particular in public health. And that was when my interest in Public Health was sparked. I mean I cared about it in a way because I was a feminist because I cared about reproductive health. But I hadn’t really known about public health as a field. So, I did go into public health then, and public health is one of those fields that is interdisciplinary and community based by nature and so we did a lot of community based work there. And so I think that’s what kind of lead me in the direction of service-learning.

While in Morocco, she ended up making up her own program because she did not want to teach English, which was her Peace Corps assignment. Her and her husband wanted a different experience. Within the Burbur villages, she worked with women and designed a program to improve child nutrition and improve cook stoves. While there she became the Director of the Near East Foundation, which is a prestigious organization that heard about her work and wanted her to establish a foundation within the city, it’s first.

Before moving to the city of her institution, she received a Master’s of Public Health and did work in maternal and child health, then going on to work for The Institution for Social Research. There she worked on many studies, one in particular
focused on her state’s new rape law, which was the first in the nation and a model for other rape law revisions, specifically revising the way people interpret sexual assault and a shield provision, protecting victims from having to divulge personal information. She believes the type of work she did, the qualitative work

where the people who are the center of the issue are the ones who helped define the problem and work on it and figure out what should happen. That whole approach to things is something that is important to me that I think has always characterized my work, and that basically were studying at the Institute for Social Research.

SLD8 also worked on other studies, which she describes as epistemological in nature. One in particular looked the issue of definition in social science. The study looked at “all of the literature of social sciences on five social problems areas, in three different areas, and really looked at how social problems get defined and who gets to define them.” She expressed that thinking about issues in this manner, is one of the important principles of service-learning, stating:

I think people in ivory towers in a way shouldn’t throw stones in a way. Who gets to decide what an issue is? Who get to...who has the power to put it on an agenda and decide what its nature is? Who gets to be at the table when the solutions are being devised? Who gets the resources to solve the problem? You know, what is the role of the political economy in shaping issues?

She also went on to say:
What we tend to have, and I think what a lot of work perpetuates in the ivory tower, is this notion that it is basically sort of a victim blame approach to understanding social issues. Its focus is was too much on individual and not zooming out and looking at the larger structures that create the problem in the first place. So, I think one of the roles of service-learning is trying to bridge that divide and help people who are relatively more privileged because they are in college, appreciate and learn from those experiences of people who are in the communities where they are learning.

SLD8 and her office define service-learning as a form of experiential education that explicitly integrates academic study and community service so that each enhances the other. It connects theory with practice, and builds communities of learners through ongoing collaboration between campus and community partners. It requires of student both critical analysis and purposeful reflection on the structure and meaning of the experience. Faculty and their community counterparts design activities to meet the learning goals of faculty and students as well as the objectives of the community partner. Most often, the service relates conceptually to the content of an academic course and is closely guided by a faculty member who introduces a strong analytic, discipline- or theory-oriented component into the service activities.

**Service-Learning Motivations and Values**

SLD8 shared that she has “some basic optimism about change, even though [she] is really cynical in a lot of ways.” She expressed that she would be doing this work, even if she did not have hope and “if [she] didn’t believe somehow that a more just,
sustainable, equitable world is possible.” She also expressed that her institution, a liberal arts college, is a perfect environment to “learn to work for a more socially just world.” She firmly believes that students are colleagues, referencing a book called *Students As Colleagues*, and is a philosophy that guides the work she and her office does. She expressed that:

…there are some people that will actually fight with us about that. I mean, wait a minute, particularly some faculty that worked really hard to get their PhDs are against a lot of odds. They are not necessarily going to believe that students are colleagues. And we have different kinds of fights that come up on campus where people take a lot of different positions, along this continuum about the amount of power and voice students have. How involved should they be in governments, in the development of curriculum? There are lots of different questions like that. I know it’s nuanced and I know we will see that students won’t have the same voice as faculty on the issue, but in our work students are colleagues and so are our community partners. And those are I think bedrock values for us in doing this work.

SLD8 and her office aim to provide an environment in which students can grow and frame their world, and/or mental models by thinking deeply. She states that though they, her and the office, are very heavily involved in world and community issues and have their own views, they “want to make sure it’s a comfortable place to be but at the same time not be afraid to say what we care about. So we believe in a more you know, just and
inclusive, richly diverse world. We believe that learning from and with the community is one of the ways we can all get there.”

SLD8 expressed that though there are a lot of frustrations at times, the building and establishment of relationships and collaborations with community and students are what get her out of bed every morning. She also expressed that she loves the interdisciplinary of the work within those collaborations, explaining that “Setting up courses that end up having legs in that way and connect! Really this work is all about connections, that’s what this work is about, about connections of all different kinds. And that perfectly illustrates all different kinds of connections I think.”

One of the goals for SLD8 is for the office to be on “stronger footing in terms of funding and service-learning in the capital campaign for the college.” Right now she is a fulltime-11 month employee, while her assistant director is 10 months and the office coordinator is part-time, both of who are funded by the college but through and endowment, in which half comes from grants. Another reason this is a goal for her is because “75% of [the] students work in service-learning programs and over half of [the] students are involved in the community, and [they] work with 25-40 different partners every year. In reciprocal relationships [the] are really stretched.”

Role of Personal Reflection

SLD8 stressed that she and her office are not doing a good enough job when it comes to reflection and modeling it well. However, her and her office staff are very close and they have plenty of conversations concerning issues occurring within the world, campus, and community. She expressed that when it comes down to breathe deep and
sitting with issues, they do not do nearly enough and they do not model it well. However, she stated:

But at the same time because we’re working closely with students and faculty, we’re trying to help guide students to do reflection so we’re always working with them to help them develop their own reflection strategies and their own curriculum around reflection. So I think it happens, in that way. You know they come to us with questions...we have them reflect together on those questions. So yes we do some, but not enough.

**Key Players and Institutional Support**

SLD3 serves at a small four-year private liberal university in the Midwest with just under 1500 students, both graduate and undergraduate. This institution has a long tradition and purpose driven mission in social justice. Social Justice excites majority of the key players on this campus and they are very aware and supportive of it. However, in terms of service-learning, as expressed earlier there is not a lot of funding for it and they often do not get the credit for the work they do, due other offices on campus centered on volunteerism and social justice, with large budgets.

Changes she has seen in the campus culture since she has been there regarding service-learning, is that it is considered to be part of experiential education, stating:

The fact that it is considered part of experiential education is a big change. I mean that’s an institutional change and that service-learning is considered one of the elements of experiential and that is a big deal, and that is curricular in nature. I
mean that’s good…I think that there is awareness that it is not just service or just volunteerism.

The service-learning pedagogy is widely accepted and is a part of the promotion and tenure guidelines, due to the institution adopted the Earnest Bauer Scholarship of Engagement.

**Faculty.** For the most part faculty, whether new or continuing, are very much interested in service-learning. Getting them involved, as far as recruitment, is all relationship based and primarily one-on-one. To get faculty engaged, SLD8 and her office will do “faculty workshops, bring in an outside expert and have some kind of faculty study, a wine and cheese, that makes some people want to come at the end of the week, for example Friday at 4 pm.” SLD8’s campus only has about 100 faculty, so she expressed that often times ideas and projects are developed over coffee.

SLD8 expressed that it is really just “knowing what the person is interested in and knowing whether we might be able to help them have a relationship in the community.” Often times, people in the community reach out to them about wanting to work with faculty and she believes that service-learning courses are always the richest experience for everyone, and provide the highest quality experience. Once a faculty member is found, the process, often takes two quarters because of how courses are ran, to set up the service-learning course.

One of the great things done at SLD8’s institution are the creation of service-learning projects with visiting faculty who are looking for a community partner to work with. As with regular faculty, they help them “identify organizations and businesses that
might want to work with [their] class…help them with reflection and give them resources. If they have a question, we’ll do a review of syllabi. So I will do work on that and try to send them examples. So there are some formal aspects of it but a lot of it is relationship.

SLD8 and her office also provide faculty with $2,000 grants they can apply for, through one of their endowments, at least twice a year, to develop new service-learning courses. She stated that, “It’s never the case that we won’t give them the money in the end. But the incentive makes them work with us, so that we can talk about best practices in service-learning and help broker the partnership, than just mettle.”

As far as institutional support regarding the recruitment and work with faculty, SLD8 could not think of anything in particular. She believes that “administration is generally supportive of engaged learning.”

**Students.** Heavy recruitment is done to get students involved in service-learning. A lot of the recruitment is done for the Student Scholars Program, in which current student scholars are responsible for. In the beginning of the school year, student scholars, along with other organizations, fill the quad and provide student with opportunities for service-learning and community service. A lot of the students search for federal work study eligible opportunities, so that they are paid. SLD8 and her office have a work study contract with the community partner as well. Another form of recruitment is what SLD8 calls a “gateway drug,” in which certain courses are gateways for students to get involved in service-learning. An example of such a course is first year experience seminars, and
students working in the community through those, in which often time students will work
with them their whole four-years.

Students also approach SLD8 and staff with a good idea, such as
I am interested in the local water shed, how can we work with them? We’re like,
“OK!’ I mean we try to welcome student initiative an entrepreneurship even if it’s
not something we’re doing. Especially if it’s something we’re not doing.

**Community Partnerships.** SLD’s offices have relationships with about 60
community partners, but on a yearly basis, they work with about 20. When building
connections and working with community partners, SLD8 is all about forming unique
bonds and shared responsibility, stating, “You know there’s that mantra about shared
roles, responsibilities, rewards, and risks. So, I mean we try to do that in our
partnerships.” Though her and her office works with a lot of organizations, she did
express that it is a challenge to try and work with all the interested organizations because
they just don’t have the capacity to do so. She has also found that they work more with
schools than she would like to. She wants to work with more grassroots organizations,
hoping that this will cause the students gain more quality, reciprocal learning
relationships with adults versus symmetrical, “where the little person is expecting to learn
from the big person.”

SLD8’s hope for the future is to work more on empowerment and be “explicit
about the social justice aspects of [their] work” and also to “work more with community
development kinds of entities. So we’d be working more with the city, with the planning
department…stuff like that, so that we’re not always focused on service deliver, which has a lot of drawbacks.”

**University Reporting Structure**

SLD8 reports directly to the Provost and she believes that her office does a good job at supporting the overall mission of the university. She expresses that their “work is directly related to the main strategic initiatives of the college” and that they “provide enlightened leadership to a divers, democratic world,” which is apart of the university’s mission. She also expressed that their work is “explicitly connecting” to all of the following outcomes, stating:

I mean helping people have the skills to participate in democracy. Helping people be global citizens, helping people support, not just support, but help create more inclusive democratic communities…helping students learn from experience, helping the college be a resource to a larger community, connecting our college to all the communities for which we are a part. And then, in terms of the colleges, learning objectives, the learning outcomes for those students. I mean, it has to do with that citizenship stuff, but it also has to do with thinking critically, taking social responsibility, life, long learning, all of that.

**Types of Service-Learning Activities**

In describing the operation of her office, SLD8 says it really depends on the quarter. In the spring, civic engagement scholar recruitment is performed. In the summer, time is spent assessing the school year, gather statistical data, and determining what they want to do more of. In the fall, much of the focus is on getting programs started and
going and training the civic engagement scholar leaders who were selected in the spring. Overall, spring is the office’s busiest time, conducting faculty teaching service-learning courses, working with ongoing partnerships and assuring faculty and community relationships are strong, and working with the influx of students on campus back from study abroad.

SLD8 adamantly expressed that she wished more time could be invested in activities that would pay them back and promote their work, such as writing and publishing papers, but unfortunately a lot of time is spent on handling transportation issues, which she described as “ridiculous!” She also expressed:

I mean, if we had a fleet dedicated vehicles and a driver, we, the staff who work here could spend more time so much more productively. Instead, there is a huge amount of stuff related to that. And it’s made more complicated by the fact that we actually have some [local public school system] students who come to our campus twice a week and they learn on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons…how do we get kids home. I mean, we can’t drive them anymore. We used to be able to, now we can’t so how do we get them home, and the college said, well can’t their parents take them home?...Umm hello, are you paying attention to why we are doing this?

**Professional Aspects**

Being that SLD8 created her own job responsibilities, she understands them very well. She believes that she is responsible for a variety of constituencies and assuring they serve one another, explaining:
We’re at sort of a nexus, as are a lot of people in our university...a lot of us are at the nexus of different webs or networks and we all have responsibilities to those different constituencies and making those constituencies come together in a way that is mutually beneficial for everyone. And that means we all have to work with a lot of different people and entities. I think that service-learning may have to work with like more different entities every day, than any other department…I think on a daily basis, the number of touches that we have with students, faculty, and community members is the most and we’re responsible to all of them, and to make sure it’s reciprocal.

To stay abreast on current happenings in service-learning, SLD8 reads the Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning, references her state and national Campus Compact websites regularly, and tries to attend a conference once a year when money is available. She also reads the American Association of colleges and Universities (AACMU) for publications and conferences, which she finds very helpful. She thinks it is good to look at successful programs within her state as well.

The networks she is a part of are AACMU, her state Campus Compact, and public health networks to help her prepare for her course. She teaches a service-learning course on contemporary issues in public health and every year her students do a different project with different community organizations. Just this past year, her students worked with two local initiatives and the local county public health center to develop a free clinic for the community. She expressed the following about service-learning and public health:
It’s fun for me. You know what I get most excited about in the world, besides all the connections I was telling you about, it is women’s reproductive health in an international context. I mean, that what I really love. I get to spend a little time teaching about that when I do the course…I feel just so curious and intellectually excited about it.

**Success and Challenges**

SLD8 believes the work done with food justice is a success on many levels. This ongoing 8 year product, not only made an impact within the community but it also changed her institution’s food purchasing policy, encouraged the start and maintenance of community gardeners and raised awareness of migrant worker issues. She was elated in saying:

So I feel like the stuff we’ve done around food justice, I feel really proud of. I feel proud of the way all those connections work. I feel proud of the way it’s sort of ingrained in our campus life and consciousness, as well as having an effect in the community by helping to fill the food system capacity, locally, to just I mean you know helping people buy more food locally, helping our local economy.

She is also proud of the program working with the local school system’s minority students who are good in math and science, stating it is all about justice and sustainability. She stated that she feels that the “we really feel like we’re providing enrichment. It’s not remedial. It’s a program for kids, but for the most part somehow they didn’t get track in to advanced math, I wonder why.” However, this successful program has the challenge of transportation, mentioned earlier, which was brought on by an
instructional policy change about risk management, concerning who was allowed to
drive, causing students to not be able to do so. Thankfully, the Provost is using funds out
of his budget this year to hire a driver, but it is not a certain for years to come. The office
is only working with a $12,000 yearly budget, and the driver alone costs $7,000, so there
is a concern for next year. Also, her office staff ends up using their Saturday mornings to
drive students around to their service-learning projects. As SLD8 put it, “there is a lot of
crying babies in this place,” it is hard for the administrators to hear the dire need of their
vital, basic necessities to be met.

Service-Learning Director 9 – SLD9

Journey to Service-Learning

One could compare SLD9’s journey into service-learning like the perfect opening
scene to an amazing movie, even divine order or calling others might say. SLD9 was on a
flight back from a NCATE conference when she happened to open up the airline
magazine to an article with the glaring title, “20 Worst Colleges for Community Service,”
and to her dismay, her institution was on the list. As she puts it:

So I read the article. I went straight back to the Provost the next day and showed
him the article and I said, ‘I want to do something about this!’ And so, I wrote a
grant, a faculty development grant, to get some funds to get me some release time
to study service-learning and just learn about it, and then I was able to get an
Olive Grant…I end up having two semesters, with some release time to study
service-learning; and just felt called to that. Felt like that’s what I was supposed to
be doing.
After intense research and gaining knowledge about service learning, she knew that she could not have an influence on campus culture through community and volunteer service, stating but I knew I could do something to integrate service-learning because I knew there would be some faculty who would want to do this; and I knew that I could learn pedagogy well enough to provide trainings and workshops and support for faculty.

Thus, she wrote a proposal for a center of service-learning and endured a two year process until it was finally approved by her state’s Board of Regents. She started with just a small group of faculty, then wrote a HUD-HBCU grant from the Office of University partnerships and received $600,000 to do projects in the surrounding community. She received funding from her universities Title 3 grant, which paid her salary and allowed for her to become a full-time director.

Prior to becoming service-learning director she had been at her university for a total of 31 years, working in the education department. She has an intensive background on educational psychology with focus areas in child development, and wellness and stress management. She attributes her love for children and giving back to the community, and interest in discovering how others learn, enabling her to foster service-learning within her institution. She illustrates this stating:

I’ve always been very interested in how people learned and the whole idea of service-learning and experiential learning made so much since to me. That’s how people learn this and we know that, and so it fit perfectly with my educational
base and philosophical base. And then my love of children and wanting to work with families and children, and especially children living in poverty, and children who were at risk at not meeting their full potential. Ahh, just everything came together and it seemed like that was exactly what I was supposed to be doing.

SLD9 defines service-learning as “the integration of service projects into an academic course to increase learning, personal development, civic understanding, and it must be accompanied by ongoing reflection.”

**Service-Learning Motivations and Values**

Though SLD7 is ending her stint as the service-learning director, her hope is that she has increase learning, personal development, and civic engagement within the culture of the university. She also stated that she desires to have

a core of committed faculty who, who understand and implement best practices, and faculty who I thought would do this right… would work with community partners…that it would definitely be a reciprocal process, so that the community partners and the students and the university would all be getting something valuable and meaningful out of the experience.

What motivates her most about her work is that “beneficiaries of the service-learning projects are often children, majority African American, in a very poor community surrounded by free public housing.” She also expressed that “a lot of our projects make such a difference in the lives of the children’s families. I love that. I also see faculty get excited about this and really get the benefits of this for them and for their students.”
Over all, assuring meaningful student learning aids in guiding and shaping her work. “If it’s not meaningful learning, it’s not worth it.” Again, she aims to make sure all projects benefit the community partner; and she encourages faculty members to be committed to their students to foster meaningful student learning and build partnerships with the community to assure true service-learning is occurring.

**Role of Personal Reflection**

Incorporating reflection in her own personal life and as a service-learning director is a discipline she cherishes now. Mentioned above was the fact that she was ending her tenure as service-learning director, unfortunately due to illness. She stated that she did not reflect as much before she got sick. She expressed:

I was working so many hours and just working so hard, trying to get everything done, I didn’t make the time and top and reflect nearly as often as I should have. Now of course, I had to do that as I was working with faculty because I think it’s so important to model that when working with faculty. But I guess I didn’t do that, the way it really should be done because I was just pushing too hard to get it all done and didn’t often stop and look back and say ok, let me think about this. Let me see how this feels, umm, what have I learned from what I just learned? How can I do this going forward?

**Key Players and Institutional Support**

SLD9 serves as at a notable HBCU in the Southern region, serving about 10,000 students. Though the service-learning pedagogy was not a part of the campus culture before SLD9 institutionalized it, service has always been integrated within classes,
whether through an educational field experience or nursing clinical, there has always been a strong focus on student learning. As far as the institution’s role within in the off campus community, the mentality or the route was done in a way where they decided what they community needed and what they were going to be in the community, instead of asking the community what they needed and providing that service. She illustrates this stating:

Well we’ve had a legacy of service for a long time. We’re a land grant university and have a Cooperative extension, and they do a lot of service. But it’s very much just they decide what research project they want to do and kind of what service goes along with that. They just tell the community, “We’re doing this for you.” It’s not a process where there’s a real partnership involved. And we’ve been trying to work with them for quite a few years now. To help Cooperative Extension understand it would be great if they had more partnerships, rather than just tell the community, we’re going to run these workshops to you...we’re not going to ask you if you want them or not (laughs), we’re going to give them to you anyway.

The change she has brought to the campus regarding thing issue is conducting town hall meetings, mostly done in churches, to investigate the community needs. She said when she first started out attendees where very pessimistic and bitter, expressing, “Oh yeah [Institution Name] comes to us all the time because we have such bad statistics. They come to us and say they’re going to get this grant and they are going to do something to help.” They also expressed that the grant never helped them; and SLD9
expressed that it did not help because the grants where always research grants, which helped the university, not the community. So SLD9 made it a vow and told them that when she wrote her first grant, “this is going to be different. This is going to be something where you all get most of the benefit. We will work with you to do it. But I promise you this is going to benefit the community.” From there, she got the ball rolling, with the first few grants going towards renovations for an after school program computer lab and thrift shop for a youth community center and daycare. This facility serves 60 children, who are all on state support. This is one of the many great projects SLD9 and her office has done to help make a change in the community and to change her institution’s reputation. She had this to say when expressing how projects like this make her feel:

…those are the things that will matter to me that we get done and I think bringing service learning to campus has raised people’s awareness of how we are part of this community. And if we make the community better, we make the university better.

Also in discussing institutional support, SLD9 stated that though the university is very supportive, in terms of Title 3 funds for infrastructure, staffing budgets and extra project funds for projects, the university and campus view service-learning as something she does and if they want something done, then they will opt for her to do it instead of “taking ownership of and believing it’s their job too.” Since 2005 the office has had $5 million dollars in grants in which they conduct projects off of. But again, the service-
learning is not done by the campus as a whole, and she feels she has not found a way to change the campus culture concerning it.

**Faculty.** As far as recruiting goes for getting faculty involved in service-learning, SLD9 laughed stating that she “sends out notices saying, ‘We’re having workshops and I’ll feed you, and I’ll give you lots of free materials!’” Title 3 funding also allows for them to provide $1,000 mini grants every semester to the interested faculty who go through all the training and teach service learning courses, and who allow them to collect data from the course.

**Students.** Promoting and getting students involved in service-learning has been a challenge for SLD9, only because students do not realize they are in a service-learning course until they actually attend the class. SLD9 has struggled getting service-learning courses designated within their Banner System. The personnel who is over Banner promises, but never gets around to it. The service-learning office has even offered to do all of their documentation, manage the web portal for students to log their hours, and even a full-time AmeriCorps Vista to be over it, but no success. She has just chalked it up to “people have their own things and they are busy with their own thing and this is not their thing, even if we will do it for them.”

**Community Partnerships.** Building relationships within the community has been fairly easy for SLD9. The early on town hall meetings, mentioned earlier, and the proving to the community that they are working for them, has made the connection building worthwhile and painless. Working relationships with the schools, churches, and even having legislature and metro council support has been phenomenal for SLD9 and
her office. Community partners feel free to come to them, whether it be for a program or just simply tutors to work with their youth, knowing that they will have their need met. Most of SLD9’s focus now is helping faculty build strong relationships with the community.

Regarding institutional support for community partnership efforts, SLD9 articulated that there is no real structured support, expressing:

They like that we are doing it mostly. But when we invite the President to go to meetings off campus in the community, that doesn’t happen very often. Especially with our current President. The President who left about a year ago, we were more successful, we were more successful in getting him, although that still…he didn’t do it very often. Our current President, we don’t get her out there much.

**University Reporting Structure**

In regards to the university reporting structure, SLD9 and her office report directly to the Academic Affairs Vice President. Currently the office is staffed with 10 people and everyone, accept one who is fully funded by the stated, is funded by different grants, 40% on state funds and 60% from Title 3 funding. “Think, Work, Serve” is the institutions motto, and service and lifelong learning is part of their mission, which SLD9 believes are office supports fully.

**Types of Service-Learning Activities**

A typical workday for SLD9 was spent in and out the office from about 8am to 7pm at night. These days were field with meetings and doing fieldwork in the community. She also devotes time to research and preparing for conferences and
workshops. Most of her time was spent on managing grants, which she describes as stressful because every three months quarterly reports had to be submitted for each, which all had to be formatted and submitted differently. She describes managing grants as being the most stressful part of her job.

As far as working through the process of developing a service-learning program and/or course, SLD9 and her office offered workshops every semester. Faculty could attend either two full day workshops or five workshops, which were about two hours each. The five workshops covered the following topics, in order: introduction of service-learning, integrations of service-learning into the syllabus, working with community partners, process of reflection, and assessing the learning in service learning.

Announcements are sent out to faculty to illicit interests in the workshops and service-learning in general. During these workshops, SLD9 and staff help faculty with discovering who their community partners could be, help them visualize what projects their students could do related to the course, service-learning logistics, and a lot of time was spent on develop insightful and transforming reflections, which many faculty struggled with. After the development and facilitation of the course, surveys are sent out to students and faculty. Upon receiving the survey results, contact is attempted with faculty to offer opportunities to meet with them to discuss the course, and if they would like to teach it again and if so what they might include. Though many do not take them up on the offer, she feels that it is important to do so to let them know that whatever they need is available to them.
Professional Aspects

SLD9 developed her position, so her role and understanding of job responsibilities became whatever she was doing at the time and it really became “responding to a need when they arose.” Also, her role is very autonomous in that she has no one telling her what to do, stating:

The Provost would say, well you’ve got to get your annual report in…no one was telling me. “Here are the goals we want you to accomplish.” They would say, “Send your goals you want to accomplish and align them with the overall university.” It was so easy to do and make them align with the mission and goal of our university. So basically I ended up just doing what…I would go where the need was greatest. If somebody was calling and really needed a program or tutors, I would spend whatever time doing that. Or I would get a faculty member to take that on. If I saw a grant that looked like it was a possibility, I would jump on that and try to do that.

Being a part of professional networks is one of SLD9’s favorite aspects of her job. She thoroughly enjoys reading about other service-learning directors and what they are doing, researching best practices, and staying up to date on the current trends. SLD9 values the relationships she has built with other service-learning directors because it allows for her to get her “fix” on looking for new ideas and projects to incorporate at her institution. She also frequents the National Campus Compact site to look at updates and syllabi for new ways to learn how to incorporate service-learning into different disciplines. SLD9 currently serves on the board for the International Center for Service-
Learning and Teacher Education and she learns a great deal from their conference call
discussions and conferences. Though she cannot recall all of the conferences she has been
to, she usually frequents 3 to 4 every year, and thoroughly enjoys the research in service-
learning conference held at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI.)

**Success and Challenges**

SLD9 beamed with joy when describing some of the successful programs of the office and faculty. For example, an occupational therapy faculty member has a handwriting program for one of the local elementary schools. She stated that other schools are saying, “Is there any way we can get him to come to our school with the students?” She believes that having grants has allowed for them to transform the surrounding communities, stating:

I think with our grants we’ve made some great changes with the [Name of Area] communities. We’ve renovated over 30 homes of senior citizens. We’ve renovated several physical facilities of non-profits. We have a mentoring and tutoring program at a high school, that’s one of the lowest performing in the city. We just want these kids to be successful, to graduate from HS and go to college. We want them to avoid high-risk behaviors, so it’s a grant focusing on that. And I think we’re having some success with those kids. It’s really hard. You have a little bitty program and such a small piece of their lives. But when so much of their lives has taken them down the wrong path and we’re trying so hard to pull them down a better path.
As far as challenges, SLD9 again stated the disappointment of not being able to change the culture of service-learning on campus. She has just not been able to do it very well, nor did she get the response she desired from faculty, staff or students. She also stated that working with deans and department heads has been very challenging. They are ok with faculty doing service-learning, but there is no support nor is it recognized in the tenure process, which she describes as a huge problem. As mentioned earlier, not being able to get courses designated as service-learning has been an ongoing challenge, stating, “It just takes one administrator doing this thing; and it’s been a real challenge and I have failed getting that done so far.”

In closing, in discussing the best aspects of her job, overall SLD9 loves working with faculty and doing faculty workshops, solving community problems, and the process of writing grants. She characterizes this with the following:

I love working with faculty. I love doing faculty workshops. I love kind of solving problems with the community. You know, looking at something we might be able to make a difference in and figuring out how we might be able to make a difference with it. I actually kind of like the process of writing grants. It’s really stressful. But it’s very satisfying. All the pieces together and when it’s approved, it’s very satisfying.

Though SLD9 loves her job, the long hours have taken a toll on her body, causing her to have to ease out of her position. She expressed this stating:
I do/did love it but I can also say it was super super stressful because I would work so many hours. I never felt like I was getting it done. I could never catch up and get it done. So that’s one reason I got sick and having to ease out of it.

Service-Learning Director 10 – SLD10

Journey to Service-Learning

As a graduate of the institution he serves, SLD10 carries the legacy of faith and service his founders built upon. He obtained his undergraduate degree in Sociology and Religions Studies, with a minor in Spanish. He also completed his graduate studies in Management from the institution as well. During his time as an undergraduate he was very involved in campus, working heavily with student affairs and through the lead of his director, he stepped into student leadership as well. Service-learning was birthed on his campus the year after he graduated, but he was away teaching high school theology, working in youth ministry, and doing some coaching on the side as well. It was not until a couple years later that a friend notified him about a resident director position, that he applied for and obtained, that he came back to his alma mater. Looking back, it was the perfect fit because he was reunited with his fiancé and there was another opening the following year to be a resident director with program housing and oversee service-learning. He seized the opportunity and he has been serving whole heartedly for 17 years. SLD10 stated that his past experiences of “working with teams or groups of people, seeing students both inside, holistically, seeing them inside the classroom and outside the classroom, and having that experience—that really I think led into my openness to service-learning.”
SLD10 institution definition of service-learning is based on the CAS (Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education) standards, which states that “It’s a form of experiential education, in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development, and that’s our official definition.”

**Service-Learning Motivations and Values**

SLD10’s personal faith is the very thing that motives him, expressing:

I strongly believe in what I do and I think it’s great to have a position that’s not a job, it’s a vocation. I mean it’s what I’m called to do and to also engage other people in that work. And while we may have different issues or different areas, or different options on different topics that we’re all engaged in sort of rolling the ball forward, and making progress. It’s all for the common good… just seeing that connection, especially with community. And to see that as an integral part as one’s education. I think that is one of the things I love about service-learning.

In regards to one’s education, students really inspire SLD10 and he takes great joy in working with them. Their energy and drive to make themes happen and bring forth change really inspire him and keep him going. Community also motivates him, stating:

I mean looking around at our community and seeing…there are so many needs out there, and there is people hurting out there. And then on the other side, there are so many strengths out there. There are so many assets in the community and so many passionate people and how do we organize that? How do we bring that together? So that’s something else that motivates me.
The creation of high quality programs and exposing students to high quality opportunities those programs offer is a major goal and motivation for SLD10. It is very important to make sure that the programs are meeting the CAS standards and also support the overall mission of the institution as well. Because service-learning at the institution was birthed from the Student Affairs side, the office is housed in Campus Ministries, which he finds to be a very unique positioning. Though it has its challenges it allows for him to offer a wide variety of different program and opportunities. He really wants to focus on formalizing academic side of service-learning, and create more ASL courses and encourage faculty buy-in.

His values and beliefs are based within his faith and the Catholic foundation of his institution, which shapes the work, focus, and mission of his office. SLD10’s serves at a Dominican college and he views service-learning as a tool to push its mission and integrate its principles, such as fostering diversity, living and working with integrity, and working towards a sustainable and just global economy in his work.

**Role of Personal Reflection**

Reflection is a key element in service-learning and SLD10 believes that it main purpose is to harness learning. Reflection harnesses learning by allowing an opportunity to maybe correct some stereotypes or some misperceptions. And allows an opportunity to process one’s experience, and really to take that experience and integrate it into ones person—into to one’s ideas, in terms of moving forward. And so that’s…it plays a huge role.
The forms of reflection SLD10 uses in his programs ranges from group discourse to journaling to the creation of artistic work. As long as the form of reflection “allows people an opportunity to personally talk about their experience and to share their experience.” He believes that “[one] learns as much from [another] than [one] does perhaps outside things that [one] is working with.”

Key Players and Institutional Support

Again, SLD10’s institution is a four-year private faith-based, rooted in Catholic and Dominican tradition, serving little over 2,000. Nestled in the Midwest region, SLD10’s institution is known for their great service within the community and holds it in high regard. Though service-learning is not a requirement, there is a strong culture of service campus wide. SLD10 expressed that this is due impart to their Dominican sisters and the founding of the institution being based upon their hard work and sacrifice to fight for social justice and commitment to a school to provided education for all. Also the legacy they carry of how they “…really put their lives on the line for what they believe in [and] stand up to protect another human beings life where there is an injustice. That’s really admirable and I think that really shapes our community quite a bit.” However, what SLD10 has found is that though they continue to carry this torch of service, the university does a handful of service.

In conjunction with a strong history of service, SLD10’s newly appointed President is very supportive of service-learning and ASL, not only making it known through his speech but through his actions. Only time will tell how much service-learning
will grow on campus, but SLD10 is very hopeful and having the President as an advocate means a lot to him, stating:

…we have a new president, fairly new. He has been here for about a year, and I think he is a huge advocate of SL, including ASL and I think we’re only starting to tap into some of those—that vision and we’re right now beginning strategic planning, and I think that that’s a piece that he’s personally said, ‘I am supportive of,’ and that means a lot, so that will help a lot.

The simple fact that the Office of Service-Learning has an office and a budget is a blessing, SLD10 stated. Also being housed in Campus Ministries, though unique and has its challenges, and having the support, through encouragement and involvement, of the director is beneficial as well.

**Faculty.** Faculty recruitment on SLD10’s campus is mostly done by word mouth, believing that it is the most effective way to promote ASL. Utilizing other forms of communication, such as personal invitations, emails, posters soliciting participation in workshops or to learn more about ASL, and invitations to listen to various speaker in the field. Also, SLD10 makes it a point to have conversations with department heads to make sure they know what service-learning is and its value, in hopes of promoting it throughout the department, but most importantly supporting participating staff, proves effective as well. He also deems it important to highlight and make known to the campus the accomplishments of participating faculty, seeing that this really encourages other faculty to participate and see real-life examples of how ASL can change not only the community and campus culture, but the life and learning experience of students, which
assures that the heart of service is an everlasting process beyond their maturation through college. It is also SLD10’s hope that he can have participating faculty serve as the service-learning champions and grow into becoming mentors for incoming and current faculty on campus who want to be a part of ASL.

SLD10 believes networks, such as the Institute on Service-Learning, and what they offer to faculty, is also crucial in the process of getting faculty involved. He really encourages them to become part of the culture and search its resources for “outstanding work in ASL.” SLD10 makes it a point for faculty to know he honors and supports their work through nominations to his state’s Campus Compact, and making sure the campus is aware of their achievements.

**Students.** SLD10 expressed that, over the years he has learned that, “students are the ones who get students involved.” Providing, formal and informal, venues for students who are able and enthusiastic to express their life changing, meaningful experiences have been the main avenue for promoting and recruiting student involvement in service-learning and ASL experiences. He provided the following example to support this:

You know to know to have someone talk about their experience in service-learning, for example, we have a group that’s going to the Dominican Republic later, and quite a few of those students have said, ‘I heard from another student who went ant they had an amazing, transformative experience and I am really interested in that; and I liked what I heard about some of the work they did. They did some medical work and working with the community. How can I be a part of that?’
In addition to personal storytelling, the office uses Facebook, posters, ListServes, and highlighting leadership opportunities are also methods of getting the student body involved. In discussing leadership, SLD10 expressed that student leadership and student ownership are the crux to student involvement and his program, stating:

I think student leadership and student ownership are big keys in that, so when you come, we, you know we are looking to give you a role in that, and to offer you an opportunity to step into more involved roles, and I think that’s appealing to students because students want to do…they want to do things that are meaningful. They don’t want to just waste their time. They really want to do things that are meaningful, and opportunities that they can grow, and we challenge them. So I think we provide those opportunities and it is part of what we do, it’s build into our program.

**Community Partnerships.** Before delving into describing the relationships formed with the community, SLD10 expressed how most of the relationships proved to be relatively easy, natural fits, being that his institution is already well known and engrained with in the community. He also feels that the best relationship ones are the personal ones, where you understand the community agent, in terms of who they are and where they come from, in conjunction with knowing the same about their organization, and that it’s reciprocal. He stated that, “I think we are really looking for that fit—that overlap. You know, what are those areas that are mutually shared areas we both want to go in—that direction…that naturally fits.”
In terms of developing deep relationship, SLD10 expressed, that “the deeper partnerships and relationships—really take time and spending the time cultivating those can be challenging.” He makes an intentional effort to meet that challenge head taking the time out to go into the community and visit agencies, or just knocking on doors and really listening to what their needs are. He explained that listening is vital and it is a huge, huge part of [building relationships] because there can be a tendency to be involved in what we’re involved in here. There are so many resources on colleges and university campus, but how much time do we go into—do we spend in the community and really listen to those broader needs, those societal needs and the issues that come into play. And so I think that’s just critical.

Also, when the office has organizational fairs, they make it a point to invite the community partners so that they can continue these types of conversations, and check on how they are doing.

**University Reporting Structure**

SLD10’s office is housed in Campus Ministry, which is a part of Student affairs. Therefore, Campus Ministry reports to the Dean of Students, who then reports to the Provost, the latter bridging them with the academic side of the university. SLD10 expressed that is nice to be a part of Campus Ministry because it allows him to talk about faith, which is basis for the work that he does and the institution’s purpose, stating:

The nice thing is that faith is a huge part of it and being able to opening up the possibility of talking about faith, and faith and truth and ethics and all those different things…Meaning, some of the things that we have is just universal
human issues. I really feel fortunate to be in a place that we can do that and to talk about how God fits into the picture. And if someone has a really strong faith that they aspire to live out on a daily basis, or if people are in a place where they don’t or they’re questioning or wondering about or wrestling with it. You know, ‘I don’t know where God fits in or if I even believe in God.’ So it is important that students feel welcomed as a part of that process, but that we’re on this journey together. We are having a conversation and we walk together and work together as community and we learn from each other’s experience that way.

SLD10’s institution supports the institutions overall mission and strategic plan by upholding the intuition’s five values of commitment to excellence, conscience, compassion, commitment, and community by making students feel welcomed to discuss questions they have about community mankind and service, the existence of God and his purpose for their lives and service, providing service-learning opportunities and venues to tell their personal stories, and means to obtain participative cultural awareness

Types of Service-Learning Work Activities

Most time is spent reviewing, implementing, and then evaluating the program, respectively in the summer, fall and spring year-end; and it is with those seasons that SLD10 described his and his office’s workload. The summer is designated for running programs, such as international programs, and orienting those groups, in terms of forming communities and logistics. Also during the summer time is spent prioritizing and finalizing things for fall and the rest of the school year. During the fall the office orient resident assistants, and also the challenging duty of going out into the campus community
to get to know the students, new and old, and “get a feel of who wants to be involved,” describing it as being “kind of a ministry of hospitality or a ministry of presence.” Also during, majority of SLD10’s programs launch and time is spent “getting groups together, publicizing, promoting, building student teams, getting people on board with what we’re doing—what [the office] all about, and spreading the word…then getting those groups together and orienting them, and engaging them.” Also during this time, he and his office take the time to perform the vital tasks of listening, as noted earlier, for the purposes of discovering their interests.” SLD10 makes it a point to also connect and communicate with “community partners and as well as with faculty who might be interested in a course and engaging their students in a particular topic or that. But looking, not knowing what might be the community partner to work with for that.”

SLD10 closes the school year out by evaluating the programs and the office as a whole by asking the following questions:

What was the experience? What do we do? How did we do it? You know, what—how can we do it better? What needs to be changed? What really went well? What new vision do we have? What could be new other ways? What direction could we be going? Is this a good fit? So that constant kind of cycle implementing and then evaluating. We spend a lot of time with that.

In terms of working with faculty in process of creating a new service-learning course, SLD8 will, whether through conversation or personal email correspondence, will sit down with faculty one-one-one and first discuss what they do or do not know about service-learning to make sure they are on the same page. From there, they will review
their course syllabus, objectives and learning outcomes in lieu of discussion about how
service-learning could be incorporated. If the faculty already has knowledge of what they
want to do, they will share that and discuss the same. After the discussion, faculty will
then work on their own constructing their course, and then reach out to the office to let
them know how they want them to play a part, whether it be through finding a
community partner or requesting needed resources. The office will also make available
online resources and encourage faculty mentoring, with those already participating, to
help guide them along the way as well. The latter is especially helpful when a faculty
member has already done a project or course along the same lines. As mentioned earlier,
faculty are also encouraged to become a part of the Institute on Service-Learning
because, stating:

> Depending on their time as well, I think things like the Institute on Service-
> Learning are real good opportunities to provide or to invite faculty to, just to
> make sure they know they’re welcome or this might be a great place to ask people
> more questions, or from a specific discipline. And go to and attend sections that
> are focused in those similar areas. Also there is a lot on the web too, so we can
direct and give them links to different articles and things like that.

In the future SLD10 would like to create a faculty handbook to help make the process of
create service-learning classes smoother; and also strengthen strategic planning by
starting a faculty service-learning scholars program and rewarding them for work and
mentorship.
Professional Aspects

SLD10 expressed that part of his role is to foster and further the culture of service through the service-learning pedagogy. Furthering service-learning within the academic side of the university is of high need and priority. He believes must first and foremost be done through developing and nurturing a common understanding of ASL and how it might be utilize. He also understands that part of his role is to stir conversation in regards to ASL, asking questions like “What are some of the ways we can build infrastructure to be able to support our faculty to do [ASL]? Whether it be a different variety of resources, whether it be time or funding…those type of things”

SLD10 is a part of several networks which have a profound impact on the work that he does. Again, SLD10 is housed within Campus Ministry and he finds it a blessing to be able to participate and have support from a Dionysus Group of campus ministers. He is also a part of his state’s Catholic Campus Ministry Association and a Dominican Colloquium, which is formed from several different universities and colleges within his region. Though this network is not focused on service-learning, being able to connect with like-missioned schools and have conversations about the work they are doing to fulfill those missions helps greatly in SLD10’s work.

In regards to service-learning he is a part of his state’s Campus Compact, National Campus Compact, and the Institute on Service-Learning networks. He believes these networks, both its through formal and informal programs, steer the direction of his professional work. The network he finds most helpful is a being a part of his regions’ collegiate network, which is comprised of a broader not work of not only service-learning
directors, but community organizations as well. He expressed that it is great to merge and connect network of service-learners with the community because it “is a great opportunity to be able to get to know people and get to know the organizations and what they are all about. So, it does take time but it’s definitely been worthwhile.” He also expressed:

I think that really helps us stay grounded and kind of give an assessment or a fresh look at, “Ok, this is what we’re doing. What are other people doing? What’s the feedback? What are the different areas we are missing? Are there new directions we need to go to? And how do we respond to the broader world or societal issues that are out there? What are the bigger trends that are coming? What are we seeing and how does that impact us? I think those groups are great.

**Success and Challenges**

SLD10 absolutely loves his work and being able to be a part of life-changing experiences and growth in students and faculty, and being a change agent within the community. His deep love and passion is what enables him to be grateful for his successes and discover solutions to the challenges he faces. SLD10 expressed with great joy that watching students discover their passions and find meaning in life is a great success and what makes his job worthwhile. He stated that:

My life has meaning; everything that I do is important and has consequences. To have an experience, to have students eyes open up and see issues for the first time, whatever that issue might be... to be able to see them come into that realization and then to reflect on it and...just to acknowledge it and say this is part of our
reality; and what I love about it is once you have that experience, once you’ve walked through that door, you can’t undo that… You have this new awareness and I think that’s really essential.

SLD10 sees his programming as a great success as well. Specifically, he referenced an example of a student who went to the Dominican to do medical work with a doctor and sister, and virtually change their own life and the lives of those in the community he worked it. The student came back to [Institution Name] and wanted to take students back with him, and has been doing so ever since he graduated. This student also created a sister organization in America with a 501c3 status. From transforming a dilapidated building to a senior citizen center to nursing back to health malnourished children, all while the student is having the experience, building connections and learning a new language and culture, it is being done.

Sometimes there is a “downside” to something great, which is how SLD10 has experienced his great programming. He has had the challenge of trying to get the campus community to not see the great service-learning work his office does, outside of ASL, as being something that just his office does. He really desires for everyone to take ownership and see that it is more than just his office making these programs flourished, it is the dedicated students and faculty and staff he is so grateful for. It is especially a challenge for him because he is faculty as well, expressing “[I] see it as a pedagogy and see it as an affective pedagogy and [am] able to recognize it as academically rigorous” and it’s a challenge to get others to see the same.
Other issues like time constraints and limitation, financial resources, liability and transportation have been great challenges. Also being able to manage the intricacy of service-learning amongst disciplines is a challenge. But thinking outside of the box and recognize that some disciplines will take a little more time to structure creates efficiency.

Service-Learning Director 11 – SLD11

Journey to Service-Learning

SLD11 is what you would call a traveling saint. Upon graduating from the institution he currently serves, SLD11 went to graduate school in Washington DC to obtain a Master’s Degree in Urban Planning. He went with the mind set of “wanting to change the downtowns of the world.” Though he did not complete his program, in order to take a lifetime opportunity elsewhere, he always carried in his heart and interest for urban planning, “particularly the site of that word.” He described what he meant by this, stating, “You’re always looking at revitalizing urban areas…so I would say that probably my interest started there but it evolved over a long period of time.”

Being a member of the United Church of Christ, which is very social justice oriented and an association the institution is a part of, SLD11 has a mission in side of him which he believes was birthed from childhood and unleashed within while at his alma mater. Attending a progressive institution with roots in the Abolitionist Movement, changed the mental model and life experience of a young man from a racially divided community. Some of his first encounters and firm friendship with individuals of other race happened in college. Being exposed to such diversity and culture fostered understanding and prepared SLD11 for the position of service-learning director.
SLD11 accepted his call to ordained ministry at the age of 50 and obtained his Masters of Divinity degree. This came at a time when he had settled back in at his Alma Mater, first serving as the Director of Church Relations. During his time as the Church Relations Director, he was able to form relationships with other directors within The Congregation of Christian Churches. During these conversations he learned of and started to participate in alternative spring breaks. His first alternative spring break, serving at a heifer ranch and taking students through third world living simulations, started as an experiment, and surprisingly students participated and his been doing it ever since. Upon completing his Masters of Divinity, he was asked by the Academic Dean and President of his institution to become a fulltime faculty member teaching Religious Studies and direct the service-learning director, which is part of Interdisciplinary Studies, where he also teaches service-learning courses.

When asked how he would define service-learning to an asking individual, in particular faculty, he was quite frank stating, “What I think it is, is it’s a pedagogy and if you don’t see it that way, I’m not sure you really understand it and there are a lot of people who don’t see it that way.” He went on to say that many, in particular, faculty understand it to be community service. He is sure to let them know that it is one of the most affects ways to teach, and that he does not serve under the perspective that it is the only way to teach. He understands and relates to faculty because service-learning “can be an immensely impractical way to teach because we’re not trained to teach that way and it can be more expensive…obviously more time consuming but it is experiential learning in a way. It adds much to anyone’s academic career.”
He also expressed that though many faculty do not like to hear it, out of all his 20 years of serving at his institution, he has never once had anyone comeback…and tell me about the fabulous lecture that somebody delivered in a classroom that they remembered the rest of their life, but what they do remember is the things they did outside of the classroom. Those are things people never forget.

He is also sure to tell them that not only can students, but they will learn about race, social economic issues of the communities of a family generation who have lived there, their whole life and have never left.

**Service-Learning Motivations and Values**

What motivates SLD11 the most about his position is that it affords him to fulfill and live out his personal calling. He also enjoys the experience of being able to watch students transform through the a service-learning experience and environment, having what he calls “aha” moments, which he believes service-learning can provide more than in a traditional classroom setting. He also expressed being a part of their transformative experience is an “an amazing thing,” and that “I really love what I do and I really enjoy doing it and it’s not always perfect.” The imperfections blossom into beautiful experiences as well, stating that students who are a challenge to deal with eventually have their “aha” moments as well and having them and others come to his office to share their pure joy is very rewarding.

SLD11’s spiritual beliefs aid in him fulfilling his calling and also shape and guides the work that he does. His spiritual beliefs also align seamlessly with the
institution’s mission, in particular their educational vision of educating for individual and social responsibility. To assure this occurs, students sign compacts, which will be discussed later and he also sets new goals every year and also wants to continue to grow in the areas of participation and meaningful experience when it comes to opportunities serving within and outside of his direct community. This past year he fostered a Greek component, where all pledges devote one day of their pledge process to go to a community somewhere as a day of service, and that community continues to be a part of their pledging process. Currently with his overnight service trip, which he does once a month, he has seen participation grow from 12 when he first started about three years ago, to this past year a record high of 34 students. He is more determined than ever to continue developing relations with missions and service organizations, and be able to have significant, all inclusive trips so that students can not only participate whole heartedly in service but commune with and serve one another by being able to stay in a sleeping facility where they can cook and reflect with one another. Being in a place like this also helps out with the budget. His goal for next year is to create a platform for an hour program where students can present what they did, their findings, and reflect on their service trip to the campus community.

**Role of Personal Reflection**

When discussing the importance of and the role reflection plays within the work he does, SLD11 stressed the need for service-learning directors to have an venue or means for them to be able to reflect with one another. He expressed that a small element of his state’s Campus Compact conferences allow for such, but they are within “very
structured environments where [they] are dealing with things like grant writing and other things that are certainly necessary. But [he] really think[s] it would be helpful for [them] to have an opportunity to come together and to that.”

Reflection plays a big role in the work that he does, and he does not take reflecting with colleagues for granted. He believes the advantage he has over most service-learning directors is that he has a strong service-learning relationship with the newly appointed Provost, who he once co-taught service-learning courses with. There are also two mission oriented, ordained congressional ministers on his campus, which he takes full advantage of. He often meets with them and other colleagues at the school’s leadership center to discuss and reflect as well.

**Key Players and Institutional Support**

Birthed out of the Abolitionist Movement, SLD11’s institution has sustained through the years despite early on prejudice against their beliefs in a quality education regardless of sex, gender, or financial ability. This small four-year private, faith based institution serves a little over 1,000 students and is located in the Midwest. The overall campus culture in terms of the support of service-learning is mixed. The institution’s progressive efforts have carried with it a long history of committed leaders and such is the case for the current administration. The fairly new President and Board of Trustees are very supportive of service-learning, having ratified the current strategic plan, with service-learning being a vital part of it. Though the school is not a wealthy institution, SLD11 does have his own budget and is allowed to take service-learning in any direction he chooses, and to have administration be able to trust and respect him is worthwhile.
The institution also shows its commitment to service-learning by mandating that all incoming students sign a compact. This compact is two-fold, with one being that they agree that they are responsible for service to the greater community, and the other is meaningful service-learning requirements where students must fulfill 40 hours of service and write a 10 page reflection paper on the project.

Unfortunately, SLD11 does not feel faculty have the same sentiments nor show support the same as the administration. He believes it is mostly impart of their fear to try something new—“teach in a different way. There is a sense of complacency with faculty and some campus organizations thinking that service is merely raking someone’s leaves. While that is a nice gesture, it is not intentional service, nor is it service-learning. Most of the time it is done to fulfill community service hours and SLD11 stated that he will ‘never go down that road.” The former service-learning director allowed for such, or in a sense fell into that mentality of complacency.

Currently there is still a service day, which SLD11 describes as more of a campus improvement day, which is held once in the fall and the other in the spring. SLD11 detests these days and believes that the community around the campus is too small, and 1,000 people trying to do service with nothing to do is pointless. He believes it would be better for it to serve as a day of awareness.

Faculty. Again faculty are apprehensive when it comes to service-learning, however that does not prevent SLD11 from trying to promote service-learning and recruit faculty involvement. He speaks at faculty meeting regularly, and makes it an effort to discuss with them the type of work that they would be interested in and the current
programs the service-learning office is putting on. His hopes with the latter are that it will persuade faculty to participate, especially on weekend service trips, but very rarely do they. SLD11 found that because faculty are not financially rewarded for it, they do not see the reward or incentive. Ironically it is a part of an unclear tenure track policy, but it is not being stressed, which SLD11 charges to the institution as an area of needed improvement.

**Students.** Student involvement in service-learning is increasing, and SLD11 found that the most effective way to recruit student participation is through word of mouth from peers. He stated, “So rather than me, you know trying to twists someone’s arm to go, have the students come back and tell everyone what a great time they had.” Students come along, get hooked, and are fired up, often offering suggestions saying, “You know I think we should be doing this or I wish we would be doing that.” He also had a freshman student trying to plan his own service-learning trip to a Native American Reservation in South Dakota, and this was only two weekend trips in. Many of his students have gone on to be a part of AmeriCorps and/or serve as Vistas, and Peace Corps.

All of the trips and programs are promoted through email, and students know that if they want to participate they must check their university email. SLD11 and his office take advantage of the campuses text messaging system, which has proven most effective, Facebook, and there is a television monitor in the student center displaying information as well. Flyers were placed in freshman orientation packets for the first time last year, and he saw an increase in their involvement.
Students have been blessed to travel to the Heifer Ranch in Pennsylvania, New Orleans every December, since Hurricane Katrina, and even Plant City Florida. Taking students on these trips are the highlight of SLD11’s job, and a joy. They are also life changing for the students. In New Orleans for example, students get to participate in service projects and learn why it is so important to restore New Orleans, when so many people have turned their backs. The students dwell amongst the poorest of the poor, and are able to see what they are objected to day, as well as count their blessings. They also get to learn about the French culture, the language, the food and the influence of slave trade on it, and New Orleans as a port influencing a culture. All things you can see, feel, and touch and could never learn in a classroom.

**Community Partnerships.** In describing his relationship with the off campus-community, SLD11 again expressed that the community is very small and has its own set of issues, which will be discussed later. But for the most part, SLD11 makes it an effort to form strong bonds and connections with organizations that he and his office can learn from, especially in cases where they see a service project can fulfill the need of their direct, outside local community. Being that SLD11 was in church relations, he found it natural foster relationships with organizations familiar with the institutions affiliate church and congregation associations. For example, he has a strong relationship with Hosanna Ministries in Rochester, Pennsylvania where they do service work much like Habitat for Humanity. He and his students were able to reroof a 1800 square foot, one story house for an elderly woman who could only afford the shingles to mend her roof.
Hosanna Ministries provided tools and supervision, and the students served as laborers, completing the job in 6 hours, saving the woman $9,000, which she didn’t have.

SLD11 hopes that one day Hosanna Ministries can come down and facilitate a training so that they can renovate the houses of the elderly and low-income families of the campus’ surrounding community, so that they can become homeowners rather than renters. SLD11 shared that there has been a change in ownership in terms of housing in the off-campus community. Many people have moved for various reasons, the economy being one, and many who move in want a new home and do not want to renovate lower homes. Therefore, investors come in and buy them and rent them out, often times for very low prices. The good school system and low prices are appealing to many of various socio-economic backgrounds, but most of the rentals should be condemned. Because the town is so small there is no building inspection law or codes being followed, or inspected for that matter. Sadly, people get away with it, and “[he] would much rather see [his office and students] take these older homes, renovate them, and turn some of these lower income families into homeowners, rather than home renters for the rest of their lives.”

**University Reporting Structure**

SLD11 explained that he has a multifaceted position and therefore reports to a lot of people, but in terms of service-learning he reports directly to the Provost, which he describes and the best situation, especially since they have worked together and she knows the value of service-learning. Again he has his own budget and as long as he stays within it, no one has to sing off on anything. He stated:
I think in terms of reporting structure that’s as good as it gets in higher ed. The worst thing you can do with me is micromanage me and I don’t have anybody doing that, so I am very thankful for that. And we are, in fact, my meeting with the President on Monday was talking about the fact that he sees our program as being a part of the strategic plan….in terms of what we do, I feel like we’re well supported that way and certainly in terms of reporting structure. I feel very good about where we’re at.

Types of Service-Learning Activities

Before describing what a typical work week and day was like for him, SLD11 explained that there is seasonality in service-learning work. He chose to describe the current season, so in late spring he starts planning for next year, and even does some two-year advanced planning for some programs, such as international travel and alternative spring breaks. Also during this time he appoints who his new assistant will be, which is a very important position. Majority of the time it goes to a graduating underclassmen who will be going immediately into graduate school. The position provides a stipend and an apartment.

Weeks vary with him teaching between 6 and 9 hours, either two-three hours classes and one-one hour seminar, which he gets to teach in a newly renovated, technology infused classroom right next door to his office. He also monitors a couple independent studies. As mentioned earlier, once a week he may have a weekend service-trip, in which he leaves 6 am Fridays and returns on Sunday at about 11 pm. He has driven 12 hours plus on several different occasions to various places. He explained that
traveling is the biggest part of his job and that there is nothing like “driving a college van with a bunch of students in it, and people fighting over what’s on the radio.”

In regards to service-learning course development and helping faculty navigate through the process, he expressed that this was an area he was diligently working on. There are a few departments on campus that have service-learning courses, but a majority of them don’t. When in faculty meetings and working one-on-one he makes it a point to express to his colleagues that he does not want to be the “service-learning czar…but at the same time I do want to try to help them because I do think that ideally we do need to be to a point where every major here has its own designated service-learning course(s).”

In helping faculty get started, he provided an example of working with the mathematics department chair. The chair expressed that the department doesn’t have service-learning, and believes that they should, but is unclear how to get started. The first meeting is set to share ideas and discuss their service-learning and how it can be integrated within their course. Before meeting with them he is sure to have ready a plethora of resources for them to take back and do further research. Once they decide for sure which direction they want to head in, they discuss further and pinpoint similar models from other institutions they can use to shape their course.

**Professional Aspects**

When asked well he understands his job responsibilities and the role he plays at the institution, he explained that he has much freedom and autonomy. He describes it as such:
You know, interestingly enough I don’t really have a job description that I’ve ever seen. I think it’s pretty well left up to me to do what I think needs to be done. As a faculty member, it’s very clear what my responsibilities are. In terms of service-learning, I’m giving a lot of leeway, which I appreciate. But I don’t think I’ve ever had anyone coming to me saying, ‘You should be doing this, you should be doing that.’ So it’s been pretty well up to me and my program to decide what that’s going to look like.

So to help him navigate along the way, SLD11 is a part of his state’s and the National Campus Compact. Also, as mentioned earlier, he is a minister so he is affiliated with his church organizations, and he is also able to connect with a lot of missions who attend the national associations of the churches. He networks with a lot of missionaries, many of whom are a part of a program at his institution that allows for their children to get an education. These students bring awesome perspectives to the table, having lived in the field, one being his current assistant.

**Success and Challenges**

SLD11 expressed that he believes a success has been his ability to create a culture of service-learning on campus. Many of the students that participate in service-learning are active members in other areas of the institution as well, and are able to bring great inside and ideas to what more he and his office could be doing. He is proud of the fact that his alternative spring break program, Katrina and international trips are “solid institutions—creating programs that work and have become an integral part of the campus.”
Challenges he has face is dealing with students who are dismissive or last minute in fulfilling their 40 hour, meaningful service-learning requirement. Getting the students on board does prove to be positive in the end once they let go of their “I can do it later” or “Why do I have to do this, it’s a waste of my time” mentality. Once students get started, they see how important and worthwhile it is. Another challenge has been in trying to rid the service day done twice a year, the issue that has always come up is transportation and how will they transport all those students to the meaningful service projects they hope for.

Overall, SD11’s high level of patience to work with diverse groups of people, gentle, yet affirming boundaries with students, and his love to fulfill his calling is what makes his job so fulfilling. He expressed that he loves the fact that no two days are alike and getting to travel makes it even more amazing. At first he had to let go of his apprehensions and get out of his comfort zones and learn that when in the trenches, there is no such thing as modesty. He is making it a goal and effort to get faculty to learn the same and get them to get their issue of not being able to “stomach the idea of lowering the wall between faculty and students.”

Chapter IV Chapter Summary

You are at the conclusion of the research participant profiles. Let us now proceed to Chapter V, whereby an inductive analysis was conducted of the collected data, to discuss the major themes and subthemes.
CHAPTER V
DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

After completing the data collection process, I utilized a general inductive approach to examine my data. Again, the purpose of using an inductive approach, or as some may call it, inductive analysis, is to immerse oneself in the details and specifics of extensive and varied raw data in order to unearth important patterns, themes, and interrelationships in a brief, summary format (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p. 362; Thomas, 2003). This is done by “exploring, then confirming, guided by analytical principles” (Johnson & Christensen, p. 362). Using a general inductive approach also freed me from the “restraints imposed by structured [approaches or] methodologies” (Thomas, 2006 p. 2). Another aim for this process is to present a “developed model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes which are evident in the raw data” (Thomas, 2003, p. 2). As mentioned in Chapter III, it is important for the researcher to establish and maintain trustworthiness for the quality assurance of this research. All of the above, the emergent themes, key findings, and theoretical framework establish conformability, and were also a part of the member checking process, establishing credibility. As mentioned in Chapter III, it is important for the researcher to establish and maintain trustworthiness for the quality assurance of this research. All of the above, the emergent themes, key findings, and theoretical framework establish conformability, and were also a part of the member checking process, establishing credibility.
As I went through the analysis process, shown earlier in Table 2 of Chapter III, I was able to sift the many segments of text down to 39 coding categories. Once I reduced the overlap and redundancy, and also processed which segments could be summarized into a brief, summary format, I was left with eight overarching themes, many of which contain subthemes (see Table 3). These overarching themes and subthemes are coding categories in which five or more of the eleven research participants responded with a similar experience, (see Figure 3).

Table 3

*Top Themes and Subthemes of the Study*

1.0: All the SLDs come from various helping profession backgrounds, with interesting journeys to become an SLD.

1.1: Many SLDs had someone, be it an instructor, mentor, or in some cases the previous service-learning director, encouraging them to head toward this path.

2.0: Many SLD’s embarking upon their professional carriers had a transformational experience and/or craved a deeper experience beyond the pages of the text book.

3.0: Most SLDs have such a strong connection to their undergraduate/graduate institutions and its mission that they have continued to work at or returned to currently serve at this same institution.

4.0: Majority of the SLDs agree that service-learning should be housed, as research suggests, within Academic Affairs.

5.0: All of the SLDs use the standard definition of service-learning, stressing the importance of the hyphen “-” to show the reciprocity between all key players.

5.1: All of the SLDs felt Serving-learning should be meaningful; and meaningfulness is based off of community merit

5.2: Not all SLDs themselves are practicing reflection/reflective practitioners

6.0: Values and beliefs, and goals and motivations vary among the SLDs, however they do centralize around the theme of holistic student growth.

6.1: In general, what motivates all of the SLDs is to get every key player to have that “aha” moment.

7.0: Many SLDs felt institutional support (upper level) was needed, not just in terms to say they approve of service-learning, but for them to be active participants in service-learning.
Table 3 – continued

7.1: Most SLDs have autonomy, but while it is an amazing experience to create and feel empowered through having so much trust, it can seem lonely and provide a sense of feeling unsupported.

8.0: Most SLDs correlate their job responsibilities to align with the institution’s core mission, but do admit that there are “blurred lines.”

8.1: All SLDs rely on professional networks, peers, and follow high performing programs to learn from and set personal/office benchmarks.

The major themes are: (1.0): all the SLDs came from various helping profession backgrounds, with interesting journeys to become an SLD; (2.0) many SLD’s embarking upon their professional carriers had a transformational experience and/or craved a deeper experience beyond the pages of the text book; (3.0) most SLDs have such a strong connection to their undergraduate/graduate institutions and its mission that they have continued to work at, or returned to currently serve at, this same institution; (4.0) majority of the SLDs agree that service-learning should be housed, as research suggests, within Academic Affairs; (5.0) all of the SLDs use the standard definition of service-learning, stressing the importance of the hyphen “-” to show the reciprocity between all key players; (6.0) values and beliefs vary among the SLDs, however they do centralize around the theme of holistic student growth; (7.0) many SLDs felt institutional support (upper level) was needed, not just in terms to say they approve of Service-Learning, but for them to be active participants in service-learning; and (8.0) most SLDs correlate their job responsibilities to align with the institution’s core mission, but do admit that there are “blurred lines.”
Figure 3 shows these themes at subthemes, and which of the SLDs offered ideas that lead to the creation of the themes or subtheme. Markings, X, shaded in red are explained within the theme narratives.

**Major Theme Narratives**

The following sections describe the major themes and subthemes identified from the eleven interview transcriptions.

**Theme (1.0): All the SLDs Come From Various Helping Profession Backgrounds, With Interesting Journeys to Become a SLD**

SLDs come from various backgrounds, in regards to degrees and careers.

However, these degrees and careers have all been in helping professions and studies.

Figure 4 illustrates SLDs’ education and career progression. The blue indicates where the SLD served or is serving their alma mater, which will be discussed in Theme (3.0); yellow shows positions held at the same time, different locations; and the gray show
positions at the same organization and/or institution. The length of time, shown in parenthesis, is representative in number of years, unless otherwise noted, and if still presently working there, it will have the year with a dash afterwards (e.g., (3-)).

As you can see, Figure 4 shows, in detail, the following dynamic helping professions of SLDs: Family Literacy Program Coordinator, Educational Consultant, Peace Corps, Youth Program Director, Director of Experiential Learning, Assisted Living Caseworker, Resident Director, Missionary, Rural Sociologist, Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology, Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies and Religion, and more. Some of the helping studies of SLDs are: Social Work, Public Administration, Psychology, Sociology, Educational Psychology, Urban Planning and Historic Preservation, Secondary Teaching, Higher Education, and Divinity.

All of the SLDs hold two or more degrees: 2 Associates, 11 Bachelors, 12 Masters, 1 EdD, and 2 PhDs. There is no specific degree one can earn in service-learning, and this impacts the professionalization of service-learning or becoming a service-learning director, which will discussed in Chapter VI. Instead, the SLDs expressed how their helping professions and studies helped lead them into service-learning, have had a life impact, and/or influence how their current roles as service-learning director.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Field Level Position</th>
<th>Career Progression</th>
<th>Year-Served</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000-2011</td>
<td>MA in Educational Leadership</td>
<td>(\text{Assistant Professor (Adjunct)})</td>
<td>2000-2005</td>
<td>(\text{Assistant Professor (Adjunct)})</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006-2011</td>
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<td>2016-2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021-2026</td>
<td>M.A. in Educational Leadership</td>
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<td>2021-2026</td>
<td>(\text{Assistant Professor (Adjunct)})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Education and Career Progression.
The following are some excerpts about how their educational and career backgrounds, and personal life journey played a role, or are relevant to their current positions, as SLDs.

SLD2:

My undergraduate degree is in Social Work, so I...as a result of that...my trajectory when I left [Institution Name, Currently Serving]...was not to work here. I never had really even thought about working in higher ed at all. I wouldn’t say I ruled it out, but it never crossed my mind. I graduated in 72’, so it was the rebel rousing days of “we’re going to save the world.” So I went off to Peace Corps. I never intended to do case work, I always intended to do community organizing...kinds of things. So as a result of that I had worked in the nonprofit world for several, many years before I ever came to [Institution Name]. And that was a result of my Social Work degree. So when I came to work here, I came as an academic advisor and that is where some of that kind of casework...came in handy. As a result of that, having that sense of community and sense of the university, lead to things like being tapped to do the [Youth Program Director Program Position], then on to service-learning. Then my graduate work was in HE administration. So obvious service-learning, understanding student development, history of HE, and that kind of thing became helpful.

SLD8, who had some exposure to service-learning as an undergrad:

…I did service-learning as an undergrad at the [Institution Name], long ago in the 70s. And so it was something I was very familiar with and it was something that
made sense to me because I had been a Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco North Africa. And Peace Corps is a kind of service-learning and so it was just something that made sense to me….that had characterized my own learning and it’s consistent with not only my values but also I think it made sense at [Institution Name, Currently Serving]…although it was familiar to a number of us, it really wasn’t until the late 90s that I think there came to be kind of sort of a vocabulary around service-learning and a national push in that direction that campus compact and organizations at a national and state-wide level. So, but I think that there is still sort of a lot of a lexicon there that people are still learning. But it just…it sort of makes sense, right.

SLD9 was well into her career when she came into service learning, stating:

I heard little bits about service-learning, was very interested. I was very busy teaching my classes and doing all of my accreditation things and didn’t really have a lot of time to investigate it…my background is child development and also wellness and stress management, educational psychology in general. So I’ve always been very interested in how people learned and the whole idea of service-learning and experiential learning made so much since to me. That that’s how people learn this and we know that, and so it fit perfectly with my educational base and philosophical base. And then my love of children and wanting to work with families and children, and especially children living in poverty, and children who were at risk at not meeting their full potential. Just everything came together and it seemed like that was exactly what I was supposed to be doing.
SLD 10 discussed how his experience with a few education courses and theology, coupled with working as a youth minister, played a role:

…Sociology major and Religious Studies, and Spanish minor…masters, a couple courses at [Institution Name] in Theology. Then I came [back] to [Institution Name, Currently Serving] and I completed the Master of Management Program. I taught in HS theology for two years. Then I did youth ministry work, then I did some coaching as well. That was really interesting because I had taken some courses in education, but I wasn’t certified as a teacher. But because it was Theology, it was a non-certifiable area. So it was really interesting to able to work with students, both in the classroom and then outside the classroom in youth ministry…So I think that experience of working with teams or groups of people, seeing students both inside, holistically, seeing them inside the classroom and outside the classroom, and having that experience…that really I think led into my openness to service-learning.

SLD1 is from England, and her misfortune of not being able to use her credentials in America, turned out to be a blessing and aided in the preparation of her current position:

My background is in education, and I’m English, so I had a very different education from American trainee teachers. In England, when I was at school and at college, we were really into hands on learning…we weren’t familiar with using textbooks for elementary students for instance, which you do in America. We had to sort of make it up ourselves and it was really experienced-based. And I myself, as a student, learned much better through experiential learning than through book
learning. So I already had an affinity to experiential learning…So I had this background in education, then I couldn’t get a job as an elementary teacher in America…So I ended up going into early childhood education, which again is very experiential. And I soon progressed and became a center director… Then I worked with the Head Start program for six years; and prior to that, I worked for Even Start…I was spending a lot of time in administration, it seemed like a sensible thing to take a Master’s Degree in Organizational Management. So I did that and that really helped. …All of those experiences have really brought me to where I am today…so coming into a fairly staged sort of setting, which a higher education institution is something very difficult to change, coming in with that background of organizational management, my own experience of being an administrator, and supervising people, and then my interest in education…I think they were a perfect combination for me to get into service-learning. Everything has brought me to this point in my career.

SLD11’s past in urban planning and historic preservation, and his alma mater’s roots in abolitionism had an impact:

…every professional experience, outside of education has been helpful to me. I’m an [Institution Name, Currently Serving] graduate…so that’s very helpful I think. And then I actually went to grad school at [Institution Name] in Urban Planning, and I wanted to change the downtowns of the world, and I got about half way through that program…somebody offered me the opportunity to go to Raleigh, NC and build a Residence Inn…So I dropped out of the masters program and
didn’t finish. So I’ve always had an interest in Urban Planning, particularly the sight of that word, you’re looking at revitalizing urban areas and those kinds of issues, and so I would say that probably my interest in this started there but it evolved over a long period of time…I’ve been very active in church most of my life, so there is a mission side of me, and then the United Church of Christ is a very social justice oriented church. So I think that there’s that side of me there that probably came really from being a student here. When you go to a school that was founded in the 1840s, out of the abolitionist movement and very progressive in a lot of ways, those things get instilled in you maybe otherwise.

Two SLDs, 6 and 7, standout with unique backgrounds and experience. SLD6 has a theatre and the performing arts, and SLD7 has a background in studio art and art education, and instructional technology. While these two seem not to be connected to helping professions or even along the path of flowing into service-learning, it is all about the intent in which one desires to use education, and also the exposure and connections one receives and experiences during your studies. Discussed more in Theme 2.0, SLD6, since embarking upon undergraduate studies, always desired to use the arts as a tool to heal and build community, as illustrated by this quote:

Ok, my undergrad was in actually theater and Sociology…So my interest was always in theatre as a tool, not as a source of entertainment necessarily, though it could be entertaining. So I always worked at the idea of using something as a tool to enhance the quality of life, conversations, or relationships of individuals or
communities and so umm to me that’s, that’s the corner stone and essence for learning.

On a personal level, SLD6 has always been involved in the community in which she dwells, and currently uses this life aspect as a faculty and community connection builder in her current position, stating:

I love to be able to make connections between a community organization or individual and faculty member to see if they can find new paths of possibility. I actually live in the community and I’ve been in a lot of community initiatives prior than being in the office, where as my predecessor did not live here locally…So I took those types of things that I had done outside of work and found ways to make connections for faculty, so they are more engaged in the community beyond the classrooms. I think that is what motivates me, but making friends for making friends…I always think universities are a canvas to paint on. I get so excited about what we can do now or next.

SLD7’s educational background is in studio art and art education, and instructional technology. She has held positions as a graphic designer and illustrator and new media strategist. These careers do not scream community or service, but the person underneath, due to her familial influence and exposure during graduate studies does. SLD7’s family raised and instilled in her, through example and intentional involvement, to be engaged in education and public service. From this background, she leads with the mentality that:
we need to be engaged and involved. I think you can’t just stand on the sidelines and complain about what’s going on…I also think that as people here who have had access to education, and not just a basic level of education…we have more responsibility to provide that leadership. So, you know I have family that is very much an advocate of public education as well and I think that is helping to strengthen it as well as to provide more access.

She also stated:

I’m a very big believer that we need to be involved in our communities as part of our civic duty and I really believe that students need to be pushed academically to explore how they can be future leaders in their community and how what they’re learning actually has application to community issues. I believe that, that’s true in all disciplines. I don’t think that there is some that have less application or connection to community development as well as…personally, I think…we all need to be pushed to be more civically engaged…find your niche in your community and provide leadership where you can.

During SLD7’s doctoral studies, she was exposed to service-learning through art education and a dynamic major professor stating:

In art education there is a lot of research and writing about service-learning and so my major professor at the time, she’s written extensively about service-learning and art education. So we were dealing with a lot of programs in [Local Public School District], with our arts education students. I was doing a lot of assisting, wrote curricular development for the schools.
Also during her doctoral studies she worked in the Center for Teaching and Learning doing faculty development, which lead to her current position as service-learning director. Being exposed to service-learning during her doctoral studies was blessing, stating:

…at the time I was really the only person in the center for teaching and learning who was familiar with service-learning pedagogy and this was meant to be started as a partnership between instruction and public service outreach at [name of institution], but they wanted to focus on faculty development. And so the year before the office was formed, I was asked to start leading an interest group and develop some sort of resources for faculty teaching service-learning courses. And so it was really a case of being in the right place at the right time. When they decided to actually form an office and have the funding for it, they essentially just sort of moved me over into that position.

**Subtheme 1.1: Many SLDs had someone, be it an instructor, mentor, or in some cases the previous service-learning director, encouraging them to head toward this path.** Eight SLDs expressed having an influential figure present in their life, whether that figure served as an example during an undergrad period or prior to taking the position. SLD6 expressed:

I had a great teacher who basically empowered me to risk and to try things. But I don’t think there was any kind of language for the kind of work I was doing. I remember seeing this internship job description…it was Arts Education Theatre
Company, and they were doing works within low-income areas, using theatre as a tool and I was like, that’s my job!”

She also had a mentor, who happens to be one of the top service-learning gurus in the country, encouraging her to take the position. Her mentor expressed to her that she was ready to step down, but absolutely did not trust anyone else with the position.

SLD1 had the unique experience of being influence by two VISTAs stating:

During the course of teaching an introduction to Psychology class, I was y two AmeriCorps VISTAs…they asked me whether I could provide any students to participate in an alternative high-school service-learning project…I had no understanding of what service-learning was…when I got to the college, I really felt that our college hadn’t closely enough connected to the community and there was a great need for resources that we had at the college to be shared by the community…I saw [working with the VISTAs] as just a fantastic opportunity to share the resources of the college’s wonderful facilities: the experts we had at the college, and the student body [matched] with the needs of the community.

While in graduate school, it was SLD8’s instructor whose involvement with the Peace Corps in Nigeria influenced her own pursuit of being involved in the Peace Corps, particularly in West Africa. SLD3 expressed a similar situation in which the prior director of Community Service-Learning Center at his alma mater was very inspirational through his leadership and administration:

He was very inspirational, as far as serving the community…he had a plethora of programs at [Institution Name] that students could participate it in. They were
actually like alternative spring break. There were leadership type programs where you could kind of hone your skills and participate. And there was a lot of these programs that were comradery focused. So it wasn’t just kind of you isolated…they facilitated it in a way that you’re grouped together…you achieve this! You could do this! So it was all pretty cool.

**Theme 2.0: SLDs Embarking Upon their Professional Careers Had a Transformational Experience and/or Craved a Deeper Experience Beyond the Pages of the Textbook**

In some form, five SLDs explicitly stated that during their undergraduate tenure they desired to have a deeper experience outside of the classroom. For these SLDs, learning went beyond sitting in a large lecture hall and memorizing information just to pass an exam. As SLD3 stated:  

I wanted to have a deeper experience, as far as what was being shared with me in lectures…So you would have your own personal experience that you could relate to what was being talked about in class and in the area and textbooks…So I took it upon myself when we started talking about homelessness and things like that. I started volunteering here just down the street, where majority of our homeless population are being served. So I would volunteer to the shelters and the soup kitchen and then it was I was putting faces and statistics together and helping to shape, you know, what are the: Why are people homeless? And what are the textbooks saying, so I could help shape my own perspectives. But that’s when I first started doing, I guess, my own version of service-learning.
In the crave for the deeper experience, as with SLD3, active learning allows one to discover not only the meaning of life, but bring understanding to the world and its systems. One could even say you find your mark, start your race and run your “leg,” or find the purpose you play. SLD6 illustrated this:

My interest was always in theatre as a tool, not as a source of entertainment necessarily…So I always worked at the idea of using something as a tool to enhance the quality of life, conversation, or relationships of individuals or communities. So to me, that is the corner stone and essence for learning…I think service-learning is about improving quality of life of the community…use theater and performance as a tool to give a voice to those who didn’t necessarily have voices…I didn’t have the language or understand what I was doing. But I knew that this was the kind of work that I think could affect change. And I wanted to be able to take whatever skills I had and passion, and be able to use to for something. It’s altruistic, I don’t know if it was and so, doing that kind of work isn’t that far off at all from the kind of work [SLDs and Service-Learning] do.

Being a part of national service organizations, such as Peace Corps and AmeriCorps, and other service experiences, such as Urban Plunge and Alternative Spring Break also allowed for SLDs to have enriched experiences outside the classroom and understand systems at play in the world. SLD2 and 8 were a part of the Peace Corps, post and pre graduation, respectfully. SLD8 had this to say in regards to her Peace Corps experience:
I did my undergrad at [Institution Name]…and did service-learning through that time. I took some time off for part of that time because it was the 70s and things were in an uproar and I just kind of dropped out of school for a while but I went back…so I went into the Peach Corps because I really wanted to do an International Health Career…I went to Morocco…it was a maternal and child health program…designed to improve child nutrition and also improve cook stoves...I was able to help make women’s voices be a part of the projects that were planned and ultimately the project continue to this day and hundreds of thousands of people have been involved in Morocco, and it has had a lot of impact.

Naturally, SLD11 has mission/social justice side(s) and going to a school founded by abolitionist played a huge factor in influencing life direction. He also resonated with the institution’s founding purpose, as did SLD 2, 3, 5-7, and 10, stating:

I’ve been very active in church most of my life, so there is a mission side of me, and then the United Church of Christ is a very social justice oriented church. So I think that there’s that side of me there that probably came really from being a student here…And I grew up in [City], but I lived in the white suburbs and [City] was and is still is a very racially a divided community. So my first real close friendships with an Africans and African Americans were here at [Institution Name]. My very close relationships with international students were here [Institution Name]. The first African I really knew as a friend was Major Kula
Samba and she was assassinated in Sierra Leone back about 12 years ago and so I think all of those things come into play.

While SLD6 was on a one year sabbatical as a service-learning faculty fellow, she was able to travel and explore parts of Chicago and California, discovering ways in which public scholarship and practice were integrated into institutions through an arts lens. She expresses that this experience provided her with a “motivating road” into becoming a service-learning director.

Theme (3.0): Most SLDs Have Such a Strong Connection to Their Undergraduate/Graduate Institutions and its Mission that They Have Continued to Work at or Returned to Currently Serve at this Same Institution

Signified by the blue shading in the Figure 4 column, an astounding seven of the SLDs work at their alma mater (five solely undergraduate, two undergraduate and masters, one doctoral, one masters and three undergraduate). Four of seven were internal appointments (SLDs 2, 3, and 6-8), two of which were from university/community projects they were coordinating (SLDs 2 and 8), one of which was an Academic Service-Learning Faculty Fellow (SLD 4), and one was a doctoral student already working with faculty on implementing service-learning (SLD 7). SLDs 5 and 11 were asked personally by administration to come fill the positions, which reflects a commitment to university’s mission.

Below are two examples of SLDs strongly expressing how serving at their alma mater has been an awesome experience, and they would not have it any other way. SLD5 stated,
So for example, the idea that all things are created and governed by God, ha! It factors into my interest in service-learning. I would never want to work in service-learning in a public setting, mostly because the whole narrative is different. The narrative is much more secular, which is a fine narrative. I don’t object to the narrative there…I just don’t, I think it is incredibly limited in the mattheing because it doesn’t draw on theological motivations and roots.

SLD10 had this to say in regards to working at [Institution Name] and also the atmosphere and opportunity it provides for students to open, shared discovery of their faith and meaning in life:

The nice thing is that faith is a huge part of it and being able to open up the possibility of talking about faith, and faith and truth and ethics and all those different things, all those different topics. Meaning, some of the things that we have is just universal human issues. I really feel fortunate to be in a place that we can do that and to talk about how God fits into the picture. And if someone has a really strong faith that they aspire to live out on a daily basis, or if people are in a place where they don’t or they’re questioning or wondering about or wrestling with it. You know, ‘I don’t know where God fits in or if I even believe in God.’ So it is important that students feel welcomed as a part of that process, but that we’re on this journey together. We are having a conversation and we walk together and work together as community and we learn from each other’s experience that way.
Theme (4.0): Majority of the SLDs Agree that Service-Learning Should be Housed, as Research Suggests, within Academic Affairs

Overall 10 SLDs believe that service-learning should be in Academic Affairs, which is also a reflected within their institution’s reporting structure; however, there are two that are housed within both, Academic Affairs and Students Affairs, one of which is due to institutional tradition. But on a personal level, the SLD sides with research’s suggestion that it be housed in Academic Affairs; while the other likes the “space” between Academic Affairs. He believes service-learning is the link between Academic Service-Learning and Student-Based Service-Learning.

For example, SLD2’s service-learning program being jointly housed, in Student Affairs and Services, and Academic Affairs, is primarily based on the institution’s rich tradition and mission to drive student community involvement. SLD10’s is housed within Campus Ministry, which is a part of Student Affairs, where the Dean reports to the Provost. The positioning is described as unique, but it is also challenging. The set-up provides a connection to the academic side, but he would definitely love to see it formalized into Academic Service-Learning, which he believes would lead to more faculty ownership.

However, SLD5’s belief, and even the deciding factor in taking the position, in SL being housed in between Academic Affairs and Student Life, is a very strong one. He had this to say in regards to taking the position:

The significant factors, really from my decision making, had to do with the placement of service-learning in between the nice, underdeveloped, unarticulated gap b/w Academic Affairs and Student Life in Higher Education. At that time, it
seemed quite clear to me it that colleges and universities did not know what to do with service-learning, in terms with how do you break it off from the volunteer movements and make it a pedagogical kind of niche, academic exercise, sort of under the Teach and Learning Center? Or do you meld it at the risk of kind of watering it down? Meld with the volunteer or ministry activities, in the case of faith-based institution. In my…my career, my interests, and my gifts are in that gap. So when I figured that out, I realized not only was it in the gap but also it was about to explode on campuses. I thought well, why not, it would be really exciting to be part of that.

As he put it with the, “Student Life side of the tree,” he reports to the Dean of Student Development, who reports to the VP for Student Life, who reports to the President. However there is a “strong dotted line” to the Provosts Office, which he happens to report to more than the VP for Student Life.

**Theme (5.0): All of the SLDs use the Standard Definition of Service-Learning, Stressing the Importance of the Hyphen “-” to Show the Reciprocity Between All Key Players**

The standard definition of service-learning is “a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. The focus is therefore placed on both service and learning” (NSLC, 2010). All 11 SLDs agree to this definition and the use of the hyphen “-” between service and learning. As discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2), the need to use the hyphen is of dire importance and as Sigmon (1994) noted, SERVICE-LEARNING indicates that the service and learning
goals are of equal weight, each enhancing the other for all participants. Below are some SLD service-learning definitions and perspectives:

SLD2 voiced:

When I stand of classes…I often say service-learning is a no brainer term because it is what it says it is and [Institution Name] uses the hyphen. It is service that connects learning and learning that connects to service. So it is intentional involvement with community that is mutually beneficial and reciprocal, which students are able to take what they’re learning on campus and apply it to community, but then also learn from the community in the process and bring it, and it’s done...

In a similar manner, SLD8 noted:

I am a school where I think the hyphen is really important, you know as Robert Sigmon said. We always try to emphasize that to people because our communications off. They tend to leave the hyphen out and we’re always scolding them because I think it’s so important to make the distinction between work that is for service and work that is for learning.

SLD11 expressed:

Service-learning is pedagogy and if people don’t see it that way, then I don’t understand people. So often people misunderstand service-learning as community service and it is to me one of the most effects ways to teach. It’s obviously not the only way to teach. It can be an immensely impractical way to teach because we’re not trained to teach that way and it can be more expensive. It’s obviously more
time consuming but it is experiential learning in a way. I think it adds much to anyone’s academic career…I’ve worked here for 20 years at [Institution Name] College. I never once had anyone comeback, who graduated [here], and tell me about the fabulous lecture that somebody delivered in a classroom that they remembered the rest of their life, but what they do remember are things they did outside the classroom…those things people never forget.

SLD6’s expressed that there is ambiguity surrounding the term service-learning. She chooses to explain service-learning to each key player differently, making it relate to them, without losing its true definition:

If a faculty member was saying, “What’s service-learning?” I would say, “Well one of the things you’re doing is…having service or work within the community meet course or curriculum outcomes. That this is a way in which you can meet your course outcome, through engagement through service work, community practice.” I want to broaden service a little bit…within a community. There are a lot of issues around that like is this about student learning? Is it about community development and community benefit? So if I am talking to a faculty member, that’s how I would explain it. If it was a community member, I would say it’s an opportunity to have students learn about you and from you, and that they’d be able to provide something you might need and at the same time simultaneously meet an outcome within a course or something curriculum based…I really work with our faculty here to really broaden it to curriculum as well.
**Subtheme 5.1: All of the SLDs felt serving-learning should be meaningful; meaningfulness is based off of community merit.** All 11 SLDs expressed that service-learning needs to be meaningful and beneficial to all key players. Below are a few examples to support this theme:

SLD1, 3 and 8 expressed that service-learning should provide personal growth development for students. This growth should be in terms of how to make proper career and life choices and influence how students will be involved in the community during post-graduation. Overall, it should aid in the development of one’s life choices, which involve career path and future community involvement. SLD1 related personally with this stating,

I also personally have seen students make poor decisions; including my own two children [who] have not necessarily made the best decision about career choices. And I have often felt my own children and lots of other students, and teenagers do not get career support and adequate counseling at schools about what careers to go into. They don’t really understand that. My passion is also helping students find their way in their lives.

In discussing his values and beliefs, regarding discussing community merit, SLD3 used this word to describe the importance of it:

I’m trying to find the right word….I would say like the sense of *ethics*…like reciprocity, that you know…minimizing any kind of stakeholder or constituency taking advantage. So what might be all parties, the student, the faculty, and the community, have to have equal risk and equal reward. We don’t want to shape or
provide a service experience that is awesome for the student’s learning, but it’s not great for the community partners’ need, and vice versa.

SLD2 and 8 desire to make students aware of community differences (e.g., urban vs. suburban), and their own privilege; thus helping students properly acknowledge both (compared to their familial background/campus climate vs. community climate) and embrace them before and during service participation. Much like the major theme of this section, SLD2 states that when she uses the terms “reciprocal and mutually beneficial,” as stated in her definition of service-learning, “it’s not rhetoric. It has to be as worthwhile for the community partner reciprocity.” She also went on to say, in regards to meaningfulness and diversity:

I think that is my having come out of community, it’s a balance…if student’s don’t understand issues as to why [Local School District Name] utilizes 2,057 [Institution Name] students in a year and suburban district maybe takes 10…it could be size of district, it could be the district. But you and I both know it’s because there are issues in the urban that we don’t have in the suburban. So students need to be apprised and aware of those as well first of all to be able to interact in a way that is affective, but also to learn and grown in the process…We are all equal, so we need to provide playing fields that really do make us equal.

In conjunction sentiments in major Theme (5.0), SLD8 expressed:

…one of our big challenges in this work is to be constantly reminding everyone that, ‘Yes, we have power and privilege because we’re at this place and because of our own personal histories. But that doesn’t give us more expertise and doesn’t
give us more knowledge. It gives us different knowledge and what does our responsibility, given that we have it as a privilege, to use it for the common good. And who gets to decide the common good?’

For service-learning to be meaningful for the community, all SLDs believe the service experience and/or need should be determined by the community partner, not the institution. This determining is called community merit, meaning the community being able to determine what their need is and also decide whether or not the activity/service has value in the community and the community’s need is met. This is not to negate the fact the students should be learning as well, but it is not the institution’s “place” to tell the community what their need is nor come in and tell them what they are going to do. SLD5 believes the participation of the community should include them “being served as having a role as teachers and participants in selection whether or not the activity has merit in the community and the community has need in the community.”

SLD9 had a great, yet disheartening, example of this when she first stepped into her role while seeking community feedback and connections:

‘Oh yeah, [Institution Name] come to us all the time because we have such bad statistics. They come to us and say they’re going to get this grant they are going to do something to help…the grants never help us.’ It’s because the grants were always research grants and they didn’t help the community. I promised them when I wrote that first grant, ‘This is going to be different. This is going to be something were you all get the most benefit. We will work with you to do it. I promise you this is going to benefit the community.’
Subtheme (5.2): Not all SLDS are practicing reflection/reflective practitioners. Reflection is crucial and is an expectation of all courses and projects, as it should, but most SLDs are not participating in the act, as all participants should (Jacoby & Mustacio, 2010). There are only six SLDs who do practice reflection on a consistent basis and they do so in various forms, such as journaling, peer/assistant director conversation—being open to constructive criticism, and also active, intentional dialogue with community partners. For example, SLD1 does a lot of reflection, especially in the form of writing. She does a great job of utilizing every aspect of service-learning, such as grant writing and personal progress reports to do so, stating:

I do a lot of writing. I’ve done a lot of journaling, but also I have to write a lot of progress reports, mainly for my own benefit because we don’t do a lot of official reporting. We survey [key players]…because we want to learn from everybody…make sure it was what people wanted to do because it would be pointless if it wasn’t meeting their needs.

SLD3 believes that reflection is a unique part of his personality, so it comes naturally, and most often occurs through active communication with key players/stakeholders, which is where a lot of the quality and ethics, discussed in Subtheme (5.2), takes place. SLD5 has a very unique and grounded perspective of reflection:

Well it should play a role because it is part of the equation. It’s how learning is cemented; it is how learning is known. It fosters learning and it does come into practice in a variety of ways. My style of leadership with students is very interactive and flat… I’m reflective in my actual conversations with my student
leaders and with my staff. Dialogue is part of my process and so I think reflection, well dialogue requires a reflective personality. Beyond that, in my own kind of time alone in my office, I have a daily effort, a daily practice of writing reflectively. So for me, writing is a way of understanding the world, understanding my own brain, is to put it out in writing. So that’s another… I would say also reflective activities like prayer, meditation and reading sacred texts, those are both shoulds and dos. I do them, but I should do them more productively and more regularly than I do…So I’d say reflection plays you know an important role—big picture kind of spiritually, but also on a daily basis, in terms of actual conversation and dialogue in decision making.

SLD6 had this to say:

Reflection, well I talk a lot to myself…I mean I am in the arts, so it praxis. It’s an act of praxis so it is always—reflection is within the experience itself. Certainly I post it because of in the work I do, it’s about reflecting with in. So as something is happening, there is then this philosophy that truth lives in interruptions and so I think that reflection is a powerful interruption within an act of anything. So I practice it within the actual experience itself.

SLD11 is a practicing reflective practitioner, but hopes that more SLDs could collectively reflect, stating:

I personally think it would be helpful for service-learning directors collectively to be able to reflect with one another. There’s a little bit of that that happens in [State Name], through [State Campus Compact]. But the reality of it is, the few
times we get together, we are in very structured environments where we are dealing with things like grant writing and other kinds of things that are certainly things that are necessary. But I really think it would be helpful for us to have an opportunity to come together and do that. But the one thing I have advantage in is the Provost at [Institution Name] and I have team taught a number of service-learning classes together…She’s very, very committed to it. So we have an opportunity to reflect together and then I’m also blessed that I have two ordained congregational ministers that are right here. There is a church across the street. The pastor there is very mission oriented. We have something called [Institution’s Leadership Center Name] which is in the top floor of the library across the street. So I also have an opportunity to reflect with those colleagues as well. So and I do take some advantage there.

The reasons that five SLDs did little to no reflection, which is common among most people in general, is that we do not do the very thing that we know will take care of us and/or is crucial to the work we do. SLDs should serve and feed themselves first, as realized by SLD9 who is currently stepping out of her role as SLD to attend to health issues. She now can attribute to job stress and lack of self-care in taking the time to reflect about the “now,” sharing:

That’s a good question. I, up until recently, when I’ve been sick, to be honest, I was working so many hours and just working so hard, trying to get everything done, I didn’t make the time and top and reflect nearly as often as I should have. Now of course, I had to do that as I was working with faculty because I think it’s
so important to model that when working with faculty. But I guess I didn’t do that, the way it really should be done because I was just pushing too hard to get it all done and didn’t often stop and look back and say ok, let me think about this. Let me see how this feels…what have I learned from what I just learned? How can I do this going forward?

**Theme (6.0): Values and Beliefs, and Goals and Motivations Vary Among the SLDs, However they do Centralize Around the theme of Holistic Student Growth**

Overall, all of the SLDs have a strong sense of responsibility and consider it an honor to foster student growth, and for the effects to be for a life time. SLD5 had great insight, in regards to the role and importance of having students at such crucial points in life, and its connection to their faith as well:

…we’re not just developing their minds, we’re developing their souls and spirits and characters and bodies in terms of health practices…. part of what’s unique about [Institution’s name] is that it has a clear sense of its theological heritage and a clear commitment to continuing that theological heritage. So our theological heritage that sounds so weighty…our Christian tradition is one that fully participates in the world because the world is something that was made good. It’s become less good or fully broken but there is a role for us to play in its rebuilding…the term we use is eschatology… all that means is for us, engaging with culture and engaging with society, those things matter….because they don’t end. So then service-learning plays a role in this process in a variety of ways. We help deepen the learning because that’s what happens when you’re engaged experientially in your learning. We help expose our students to things that are
both wrong and right in the world... the realities of the world in a way that you couldn’t be through a text book... But, it isn’t just the brokenness that you’re face with. It’s the beauty, this [any type of service-learning project] teaches you things about joy or about learning or about perseverance you just... you can’t help but be amazed at it, you know, and a better person as a result of being around...

SLD11 had the same sentiments as SLD3, in terms of higher education’s purpose and service-learning being the connection to creating not only awesome, future leaders in the workforce, but they know how and desire to be just as dynamic in the communities they’ll reside in. He expressed:

I think we do our students, in our country, in the US, we do our students a huge disservice if they go through and we call them educated; and they have not had an interaction with other cultures or with some of the social issues that are going on and they don’t know how the majority of the world live. I think service-learning provides opportunity to at least give them a glimpse to see how sometimes people from different cultures, that they might not have been a part of their experience growing up... to give the interaction and that’s rubbing shoulders with people from different places and with different systems in place or different issues and I think it really stretches people that way.

Subtheme 6.1: In general, what motivates all of the SLDs is to get every key player to have that “aha” moment. Within the “aha” moment lies unselfishness and new perspective on life/life role and purpose. SLD11 expressed:
In my situation it’s a personal calling but it’s also to see what happens with students in that environment. Now any instructor always helps with that aha moment and I think there are a lot more of those through any service-learning experience than you would have in a traditional classroom. And it’s an amazing thing. I really love what I do and I really enjoy doing it and it’s not always perfect. There are some students that are a challenge to deal with. But even the ones that are a challenge to deal with, have that aha moment and to being able to witness that as often as I do is always an amazing thing. This time a year you get students who are going to be graduating next week. A lot of those students just stop by in here and talk about what it’s been like for them and that kind of thing. It’s very rewarding.

SLD1’s passion is to help students find their own way in life. She has witnessed students, even her own children, make poor life and career choice decisions, due to a lack of knowing their opportunities and not being connection to their own communities to even understand that. When it comes to service-learning, she stated:

Ever since I decided doing this at this college, I’ve never been failed to be amazed about how it transforms students. It’s just incredible how it changes and influences them. You know you get kids who say they are going to do business, that they go into mentoring in a school. Then all of a sudden they are going to be teachers because they never experienced it; and then they do that and they find that. ‘Wow! This is my passion in life.’ A lot of kids haven’t found their passion and I really, obviously feel they don’t get support in that area…Education is often
very separate from real life and I don’t think it should be. Education is all about our real life experiences and that’s how it should be.

SLD2 stated:

What’s wonderful about this work is that you have your feet in the community and to see the benefit on both sides of doing that, you see what faculty and students gain from it. How they learn and grow, but then you also see the community’s benefits and again, it’s not that we’re there to give you a gift…the great benefactor…It’s the opportunity to really, really enhance learning through interaction through growth and community, there is nothing better than that.?

In illustrating how university’s wisdom and skill can be connected to the community, SLD3 shows the connection and how the “aha” moment occurs for all key players through service-learning:

So we have all this need in the community and we have all these skills at the college and we can find ways in which people utilize their skills and knowledge to meet the community need...The other thing too is living in a democracy, it’s our civic duty to improve our community but to participate in our community…But you have to know how to participate…that’s where higher ed comes in, is it helps you learn how to be a good participatory citizen. That you can gain the skills, you learn the logistics, and they know how, the communication, the critical thinking, and the value of why you would want to be a good participatory citizen.

As a whole, SLDs get excited seeing faculty grow, and go from being against service-learning to the biggest advocates. In regards to watching faculty take-off and
transform, especially through community partnership building, and become problem
solvers, SLD6 and 7 expressed mutual joy. SLD7 shared that

…it is exciting, innovative work, and I also think just from the faculty
development perspective, it’s really exciting to see how faculty change their
practice as teachers and as researchers through engagement in the community and
through getting their students engaged…so being involved in this is just really
great to see.

Theme (7.0) Many SLDs Felt Institutional Support (Upper Level) was needed, Not
Just in Terms to Say They Approve of Service-Learning, but for Them to be Active
Participants in Service-Learning

This theme only came from four out of the 11 SLDs, but I felt it was very
important to present as a theme. The four expressed that their administration is not
supportive of service-learning. Another reason I deemed it important to present as a
theme is because there was a 5th, SLD7, who has undergone a lot of leadership change
within the past few years, yet has a strong working relationship with the administration at
her institution. She also felt as if the two structures and/or heads she reports to could do a
better job of communicating with one another and others to come together and develop an
engagement plan for the university to really integrate and carry forth the institution’s
public service mission. Other SLDs desire support in terms of being active participants in
service-learning, whether it be being hands-on, encouraging and confidently mandating,
yet providing tenure opportunities and rewards for faculty, and building relationships
with the community.

SLD 1 expressed that she was:
Not getting a lot of institutional support in asking faculty to get involved…be left up to her to do it…”partly political because administrators don’t like to tell faculty. It’s sort of a big no-no in higher education. Because this has been grassroots and faculty driven, it’s been very successful and I think they are afraid that as soon as they say you have to do it, people won’t want to do it.

SLD9:

I think the campus has been supportive but I have to qualify that by saying too much of the time they see it as service-learning is what [she does]…if we want this done, we’ll get her to do it, rather than people taking ownership of this and believing it’s their job too….It’s been a huge challenge to work Deans and Department Heads who don’t support the service-learning faculty. There is no recognition in the tenure process. That’s been a huge problem.

SLD11 would like more support from the institution in terms of making SL a mandate, and putting money behind faculty to help in training and getting them on board (or recruitment) to do service-learning. He also stated that service-learning is supposedly part of tenure, but it is unclear.

Expressed as a personal goal, SLD6 expressed that she wants her university administration to make a charge and be active participants in service-learning, stating:

I want the university...to be really deliberate in its collaboration or communication with the community. So for example, if they...if the university would say we are really going to focus on them and economic development, well that’s going to be really helpful for our work here. So what we can do is really help faculty cultivate
service-learning experiences that focus on economic development within the
community. Or we can look and initiate grant kind of programming. So one of my
goals is to get the university to make it a charge...to really work with the
community and I mean that in the broadest sense...well, I mean be actual local,
physical external to the community to really work with them to create some sort
of kind of priorities so we can best collaborate and serve.

Subtheme 7.1: Most SLDs have autonomy, but while it is an amazing
experience to create and feel empowered through having so much trust, it can seem
lonely and provide a sense of feeling unsupported. All of the SLDs reported that the
have autonomy within the institution, many of which enjoy being trusted to make
decisions. For some, as seen in major theme of this section, it comes with challenges, but
nonetheless, they like being able to make decisions for the office and push them through.
You have some, like SLD11, who does not like to be micromanaged, but you have a
couple who want some feedback—shockingly, the minimum would suffice. Not that
these two want to be micromanaged, but they feel as though they are literally out on their
own with no accountability. They expressed thoughts of “false” trust and being used to
fulfill an “appeal” or goal on paper. The two SLDs who felt this way are SLDs 1 and 9,
with SLD6 sharing with SLD1 the lack of an overall strategic plan.

After explaining how SLD1’s position was created through her own grassroots
efforts and that she basically created a program with suggestions for administrators to
take the program even further after her retirement, she expressed that they are “too
overwhelmed by it,” going on to say:
They haven’t done anything with it. So they just let me go in any direction I was to go in basically. So I don’t have any direction and that is very bad I think. That is dispiriting when you feel like you don’t have any direction. I like to be autonomous and it’s fantastic to feel like they’ve given me permission to do what I like. But in terms of making this institutional and fitting within the whole college, you really need direction and you really need much more specific types of support. So that autonomy can suck. You know I mean it’s not necessarily beneficial sometimes if you’re out in a peripheral area not feeling like you know what the strategic plan is or know when they’re going to have a meeting about the academic cabinet and decide on certain things.

She went on to explain that she believes it is like this for not only herself, but many service-learning directors and managers because upper administration have no clear understanding of what service-learning is. Therefore, like her, there is no accountability, stating:

I have no accountability. I mean (laughs) the accountability has been are we or are we not successful? Are students complaining that they didn’t get the service-learning endorsements on their transcripts? Are any community partners complaining? I think it’s more to do with…just would it be a reaction to a problem that would be accountability rather than them being strategic as administrators about what do we want to happen here and how are we going to make it happen? What are the steps? What will [SLD1’s] role be?
SLD9, whose office was also created through grassroots efforts and is also retiring, expressed that her job became very stressful because it became her responding to needs that arose, due to lack of structure. She stated, “no one was telling me, ‘Here are the goals we want you to accomplish.’ They would say, ‘Send your goals you want to accomplish and align them with the overall university.’”

SLD1 and SLD6 also expressed how the lack of an overall strategic plan hinders their job and accountability. SLD1 stated:

I don’t have access to strategic planning meetings, which is something I feel is very very important because we don’t have strategic planning meetings at our college. We have a strategic plan and to be honest I don’t know what it is because I think our college is in the very early stages of being strategic about strategic planning. They have done a lot of planning fairly well, but it’s often been rather informal or it’s been around the structure of the college, like building planning. They have a building plan, but they don’t have a “strategic plan.” So, more like a business plan. They are pretty good at that side of things…In terms of being really thoughtful in their planning…for the college I think a lot of things have happened the way my initiative started, which is somebody is interested in something, they promote it…instead of being really strategic about the way they’re developing it…I do think strategic planning is very, very important and it’s lacking at our college.
Theme (8.0): Most SLDs Correlate their Job Responsibilities to Align with the Institutions’ Core Mission, But do Admit that There Are Some “Blurred Lines”

Seven of the 11 SLDs expressed that they align their duties to the core mission of the institution. Of the 11 service-learning programs, three were started through grassroots efforts, primarily by their own doing; and, thus, they created their own job roles and responsibilities. As discussed earlier, two of those, SLDs 1 and 9, have complete autonomy, but they would like structure and accountability from administration. Below are a few excerpts and descriptions of SLDs who felt certain about their role and direction, followed by those who do not, but fulfill what they believe ought to be happening. SLD7 feels strong connection to her institution and its purpose, stating:

I feel very strongly that you know we’re a really important part of the universities land grant mission, which we are a land grant institution of public service and working with constituents beyond the campus is fundamental to who we are and I think that you know service-learning was really the first time that we said we want to involve students in that land grant mission and get them out of the classroom and into the community. And I guess I feel that it’s my job to keep us focused on that mission and that these are important opportunities for students to develop not just those future leaders but also you know it’s important for their academic development to have these experiences… I talk a lot about kind of the importance of service-learning to fulfill that mission, that civic mission that the university has…

SLD5 expressed that, though it is unspoken, he sees himself and the office as the “aggressive gab fly,” free spirited and center of activity. He also views his program role
to represent the college and to “make sure that [institution name] is present in the local community, in a positive service-oriented sense.” SLD4 shared that she believes her purpose is to connect faculty to nonprofits and inform them about service-learning, providing a clear operationalized definition. She also was the only to explicitly state her job description:

The big role that I play here, as a service-learning director, is to connect faculty with the nonprofits. And then better educate them on what service-learning is because a lot of them are confused about meeting course objectives and then reflection…The three things that are in my job description are service-learning coordination, facility use, and student-faculty-staff volunteerism. Not only do organize it, I track it. We track service-learning…all the sections that are doing service-learning…

As stated earlier, SLD1 created her job and designed the entire program on her own. Through much autonomy, she has achieved all her goals and dreams, and before stepping down, she will see service-learning be in all departments. SLD6 expressed that her role was unclear but knows she must be sure to teach the faculty fellow seminar, develop grant programs and support faculty, and to be a voice in the community. Though not part of the job description, she does feel responsible for retention because the rate is so high at her institution. She desires to utilize her knowledge on service-learning, in the area of emersion and retention to create mini-courses, which is unique because her office is considered a support office, not course creation entity.
SLD11 expressed that he does not have a job description, but he is ok with it, stating:

You know interestingly enough, I don’t really have a job description that I’ve ever seen. I think it’s pretty well left up to me to do what I think needs to be done. As a faculty member, it’s very clear what my responsibilities are. In terms of service-learning, I’m given a lot of leeway, which I appreciate. But I don’t think I’ve ever had anyone coming to me saying, “You should be doing this, you should be doing that.” So it’s been pretty well up to me and my program to decide what that’s going to look like.

Subtheme 8.1: All SLDs Rely on professional networks, peers, and follow high performing programs to learn from and set personal/office benchmarks.

Regardless of whether or not SLDs understood their roles, all 11 SLDs noted they do rely heavily on professional networks and peers, and follow highly recognized institutions of service-learning to model practices from and create personal/office benchmarks. Campus Compacts and regional consortiums were the most commonly used forms of professional networks. But for some nationally ranked programs, such as SLD2 and 5’s, it can be a challenge because they feel as if they have out grown resources, many of which are provided at regional and state conferences each year. SLD5 expressed:

Frankly, [State of Institution] is a leader’s state, but for places like [Institution Name], [State of Institution] can be a little bit tough because we are a leader in a leader state. So we can learn a lot from [Renowned Institution], but mostly everyone else is trying to learn from us, which is fine and it’s great and it’s fine to
participate. But we’ll go to the state institute or conference and it’s umm, you know, it’s good but it’s just not that helpful. But we’re always faced with the question of do we go because it’s a responsibility, a duty, and to share; or is that, does that make us arrogant…

To assure this does not happen, SLDs are sure to find other institutions, literature, and networks to be a part of to assure their growth. SLD2 is a part of many networks, two of which she is the director of, and she also expressed that her office has some theoretical basis, which she uses to guide the work that she does:

So Brofenbrenner …writes a lot about systems. We operate in a system and so it’s a lot of the interconnecting and intertwining circles a lot of the times. And it’s also like the principals of Physics. Each action has an equal and opposite reaction. So nothing we do is in a vacuum. So if you always keep that in mind that no matter, you know what the touch point is or what the action is, it ripples out elsewhere. As long as you keep that in mind and see how abusing the system can harm it, in terms of you know environmental ecology, but also just in terms of family and all those kinds of things…and looking at students and faculty as in that context…negative action can harm everything but positive action can benefit. And so that’s why there is you know, there is so much hands on and grassroots in what we do and so there is theoretical underpinnings.

**Chapter V Narrative Theme Summary**

This chapter covered the eight themes as extracted from the 11 SLDs interviewed for this research. Overall, SLDs come from various helping profession backgrounds. In
general, they have different challenges, but their overall goal is the wellbeing and holistic growth of students. They also desire that all key players have a change in their perspective of learning, and have a will to connect with the community surrounding their institution. For some, these are paradigm shifts that, along with community connection, lead to a better world because these changes are lifelong. Though some SLDs do not have full institutional support, they utilize theoretical frameworks, networks, colleagues, and professional networks to guide the work that they do. Let us now turn to the final chapter, which will discuss findings of this study concerning the voices of higher education service-learning directors, and present future research recommendations and also implications for higher education institutions.
CHAPTER VI
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Beyond the pages of the text book and preparing students for future careers in their respective disciplines, higher education has a moral purpose to instill in their pupils fortitude, wisdom beyond measure, and a burning desire to serve the community around them, no matter where their trail blazes in the future (Koehane, 2006). To fulfill this purpose, in 1969, educators and community minded people, alike, gathered to discuss how civic duties and community awareness could be interlaced with higher education. From this gathering, the foundation, on which service-learning within higher education stands, was cemented with the following tenants: student community service should be exhorted through the incorporation of academic learning and academic recognition should be given for the learning; funds should be made available by higher education institutions, private organizations, and government for students desiring to participate in service-learning; and students, community, agencies, and higher education institutions should all play a part in the planning and implementation process of service-learning (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2008).

In the years that followed, there followed a plethora of research and studies about service-learning’s impact and outcomes on its key players: students, faculty and staff, institution, and community partners (Astin & Astin, 2006; Astin et al., 2005; Campus Compact, 1998; Clark, 2008; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996; Gelmon, Holland, & Shinnammon, 1998; Ward, 2000). To date, there is little to no research on the key player who makes this phenomenon happen, the higher education service-learning
director. I, as the researcher, set out to look at the essence of who these individuals are, their roles and responsibilities, values and beliefs, and challenges and opportunities.

In this chapter, I summarize my analysis of data from interviews with 11 service-learning directors, by discussing how the major themes and other data outside these themes address my research questions. I then discuss connections to other researchers, future recommendations and my reflections.

**Analysis of Research Questions**

**Research Question 1**

My first research question focused on examining who service-learning directors are at universities, including their values and beliefs regarding service-learning, and what career path led them to this position (e.g., education, prior experience). Confirming what little prior research did suggest (Jacoby & Mustacio, 2003), there is no overall clear path or process to becoming a SLD; however all of the SLDs engaged with this study come from helping professions and studies (Theme 1.0). Some may view help/helping as a “bad” term to use when discussing service-learning, but for the sake of defining and aiding in the understanding of their service careers and human services-type degree programs, I use the definition of “helping profession(s)” and studies. This definition also helps to illustrate the SLD Education and Career Path (See Figure 4, Chapter V), which shows the various backgrounds, in regards to education and careers experienced by study participants, leading up to this point.

Helping profession(s) can be defined as “a profession that nurtures the growth of or addresses the problems of a person's physical, psychological, intellectual, emotional or
spiritual well-being, including medicine, nursing, psychotherapy, psychological counseling, social work, education, life coaching and ministry” (Wiktionary, 2012). In regards to the context in which one learns about how to do and/or participate in these forms of service, it is through one’s course of study, with pedagogies varying amongst particular core subject areas or curriculums, such as sociology, social work, human services, urban planning, and theology just to name a few.

In conjunction with these SLDs coming from interesting backgrounds and helping professions and degrees, there is something to be said to the fact that SLDs had someone, be it an instructor, mentor, and in some cases, the previous service-learning director, encouraging them to head toward this path in service-learning (Subtheme 1.1). Data revealed that seven of these SLDs were serving at their alma mater, which speaks to the strength of their relationships with strong connections to their respective institutions, especially among SLDs from faith-based institutions (Theme 2, Subtheme 2.1).

Also some SLDs, during their undergraduate and graduate studies, desired a transformational experience and/or craved deeper experience beyond the pages of the textbook (Theme 2.0). Many SLDs become involved in community efforts on their own during their tenure. Blazing her own trail, SLD8 even dropped out of school to do some experiential learning of her own because she was eager to engross herself in her field of interest, Public Health, she shared that:

My undergrad I took some time off because it was the 70s and things were in an uproar and I just kind of dropped out of school for a while, but I went back. Back then experiential learning was always a big part of what I did… I was really
interested in diffusion of innovation basically. How do people learn about new things and apply them. The way I learned about that was in a journalism class that studied sort of communications, and in particular in public health. And that was when my interest of Public Health sparked…I was a feminist because cared about reproductive health…[it] is one of those fields that’s disciplinary and community based by nature and so [I] did a lot of community based work…I think that’s what lead me in the direction of service-learning.

Much like SLD8, SLD3 had a personal initiative to be active in his learning, stating,

So, I had a lot of courses in psychology and sociology. You talk about substance abuse, many social problems, and homelessness and all this stuff…But I’m not one to necessarily believe everything that someone tells me, or what I read, or what other people tell me. I’m much more experience, in the sense of I’d rather not see a picture reflect the Eifel Tower and have people tell me what Paris is like. Let me go to Paris and experience for myself. Then I get my own perception and then we can have a conversation. Because what you’ve experienced and what you’re saying and how you’re applying and perceiving, you’re kind of voicing that, so to speak, into shaping my understanding and learning of what that is, making it completely different that if I were to experience it.

Earlier I mentioned help/helping being a “bad” or limiting term because, as expressed at the beginning of this study, people in “helping” professions and, by extension, in service-learning are not going out volunteering or aiding to solely meet a need; the purpose and process of service-learning is one of reciprocity. Service-learning
is beneficial and reciprocal in that service and learning goals are of equal weight (Theme 5.0), each enhancing the other for all participants (Sigmon, 1994). All key players within service-learning are benefiting in multiple aspect. Providing service and/or fulfilling a need meets the psychological well-being of both, therefore reciprocating, and/or having a ripple effect on the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual well-being of all, which builds an amazing community and beneficial, working partnership. Overall, all of the SLDs within this study intentionally serve to assist in the fulfillment of serving the surrounding community and fostering student awareness.

As discussed in the research participant profiles, values and beliefs of service-learning directors varied. Theme 6 speaks to this fact, finding that the one thing all these SLDs have in common and value is holistic student growth and wanting all key players to have an “aha” moment (Subtheme 6.1). These SLDs have a deep passion for students coming into their own and caring about the community around them, no matter where they go. They consider it a privilege and honor to serve. They take great pride in being part of students’ journeys of discovery in finding their moral compasses, solidifying major and career goals that are truly their passion, and also developing a desire to want to be involved in the service-learning process. This means they are often advocating for the office and aiding other students along their journeys as well. For example SLD1 expressed:

The value of service-learning is related to personal growth, and it is a really important aspect for me, in terms of how I see students developing and
growing...helping them get careers...make career choices, make choices about their own lives, and make choices about how they are involved in the community.

SLD5 shared that he wanted to find the meaning of life, which just so happens to be helping his students do the same, stating:

Holy smokes, obviously my personal goals include finding meaning in life and for me meaning in life has a lot to do with helping students find their meaning in life...walk along side students in their developing identity years in help to find meaning and purpose.

As shared in his profile, SLD5 also provided a story illustrating how students find value in service-learning and, in turn, advocate for the office with the aiming of helping other students find their purpose:

a couple of years ago, two students, seniors, majoring in International Development looking back on their time in International Development and realizing how much more rich it would have been if there had been service-learning. Now these happen to be two of my staff members, so they were well trained. And they, with the permission of the key faculty in that department, they developed a proposed set of service-learning possibilities for each of the major core courses in that major, ha! Ya know, which just warms your heart when you watch your students taking actually taking action to change curriculum. That was a good example and that’s unusually high level and stuff like that happens, not infrequently.
In the beginning of this chapter and as expressed in the introduction of this study, I discussed how service-learning is a type of pedagogy that could help higher education achieve its moral purpose of creating intentional, active civic leaders. I also spoke of transformational leadership being the form of leadership that would lead students and all key players into being such. As illustrated above, with SLD1 and SLD5, it can be concluded that the SLDs in my study are transformational leaders. Transformational leaders are leaders that can affectively guide the production of active citizens and leaders of tomorrow, through engaging all key players in a mutual process of accountability and raising one another to higher levels of morality and motivation (Burns, 1978).

In regard to the varying values and beliefs, and even motivations and goals for these SLDs, they ranged from personal to professional. On a personal and professional level, SLD3 valued efficiency and quality. He shared that his focus is on “creating a good definition of service-learning and providing the most proficient way for faculty and students to do service-learning at whatever scale…We want efficiency and we want quality.” He believed by having efficiency and quality as your rubric in everything you do, meaningful service-learning would occur for all key players, especially community partners (Theme 5.1). SLD2 expressed the same stating:

So to me the goal is to meet that institutional goal, [mandate that we will have the undergraduates involved in service-learning by the year 2012-2013], but to do it in the way that we don’t sacrifice quality for quantity…[discovering and implementing] how to utilize the assets we have in terms of students and faculty in a way that is meaningful…for them, but also meaningful and beneficial for
community in ways that [give them] a voice…So my goals are to meet the
university expectations, but to do it in a way that it’s beneficial for
community…we are all equal, so we need to provide playing fields that really, do
make us equal.

Again, both on a personal and professional level, these SLDs want to eliminate
indifference and feel that universities have the power to do so as well. SLD6 stated:
…indifference is much more harmful than love or hate…I think you can be
indifferent to the world in which we live within. This university situates itself,
within the community. I think it’s the responsibility of the university, a public
university. Even if state funds don’t call it a university…I think it’s the
university’s responsibility to provide resources, serve as a sounding board to
collaborate, and work within the community it situates itself. It shouldn’t separate
itself…it is community.

Other values and beliefs, and goals expressed were having 100% participating in
service-learning, service-learning endorsements on transcripts, community and faculty
service-learning training, faculty scholars, and a common campus wide understanding of
service-learning. From these values and beliefs, goals and motivations, I believe that
these SLDs are servant leaders who get things done. They set and obtain goals by any
means necessary; however, they do not comprise the core values of service-learning in
doing so. Overall, they desire efficiency and quality. SLDs are also super heroes in a
sense. Essentially, many want to save the world and make it a better place, as SLD5 said,
“…we have issues…all of these things are manifestations of a world that isn’t as it should
be. And we have healthy bodies and minds and times to do something about those things that are wrong in the world…”

Research Question 2

My second research question examines how well service-learning directors understand their role and expectations (theirs and the institutions) for their role. Data revealed that these SLDs understand their role to a certain degree, and that degree varies based on the institution and its mission. Some SLDs were not sure of their role and there was even one who had not even seen his job description, but that was something he was ok with, stating:

You know interestingly enough, I don’t really have a job description that I’ve ever seen. I think it’s pretty well left up to me to do what I think needs to be done. As a faculty member, it’s very clear what my responsibilities are. In terms of service-learning, I’m given a lot of leeway, which I appreciate. But I don’t think I’ve ever had anyone coming to me saying, “You should be doing this, you should be doing that.” So it’s been pretty well up to me and my program to decide what that’s going to look like.

Being that there is some uncertainty, these SLDs correlate their job responsibilities to align with the institution’s core mission, but do admit that there are “blurred lines” (Theme 8.0). Overall, these SLDs see their job responsibility and office as being university spokesperson(s), or even mascots in a sense. Those assured of their role, and even some who were not, stated that they are to be the voice for service-learning and a significant voice for the institution in the community and as SLD2 stated, “increase the
reputation of service-learning at [Institution name], both internally and externally.” SLD5 expressed that when it comes to the role he and his office is to play “it’s unspoken, it’s basically…one of our roles has been to be an “aggressive gab fly,” of activity; and to “make sure that [institution name] is present in the local community, in a positive service-oriented sense.” Other SLDs expressed that their job roles and responsibilities are to connect faculty to the community, more specifically non-profits and establish a campus culture that is not only aware of service-learning, but cultivates active participants. Within the context of campus awareness of service-learning, SLDs stressed the importance that service-learning courses meeting core objective(s) and fostering meaningful reflection. In essence, as SLD10 expressed, their jobs are really about pushing service-learning, not only the definition, but its purposes and benefits. SLD10 stated:

I think the challenge…is because I think service-learning, the heart of service-learning, is really deep; and there are service-learning programs on the surface but really service-learning at its heart really calls into question, what is education for? What is it all about and sometimes that’s a real challenge, in terms of different understandings of education or learning. What is learning? And I think service-learning really, really, really strongly advocates for praxis. And I love…there is a little quote that is, ‘Knowing and not doing, is not knowing.’ And I think service-learning tries to challenge that and If we really, you know if we are saying we know and we’ve learned that, then how does that translate. Then if it doesn’t
translate into a society where we have those principals or those values in action, then we’re not carrying it out, is it really, in my opinion, is it really learning?

In discussing their roles and throughout the study, issues with autonomy arose. As in the beginning of this section, there was one SLD who enjoyed his autonomy, but others expressed that it brought unwarranted feelings of loneliness. They expressed that while it is an amazing experience to create and feel empowered through having so much trust, it can seem lonely and provide a sense of feeling unsupported (Subtheme 7.1). SLD1 illustrated this by sharing:

…they just let me go in any direction I was to go in basically. So I don’t have any direction and that is very bad I think. That is dispiriting when you feel like you don’t have any direction. I like to be autonomous and it’s fantastic to feel like they’ve given me permission to do what I like. But in terms of making this institutional and fitting within the whole college, you really need direction and you really need much more specific types of support. So that autonomy can suck. You know I mean it’s not necessarily beneficial sometimes if you’re out in a peripheral area not feeling like you know what the strategic plan is or know when they’re going to have a meeting about the academic cabinet and decide on certain things.

Another finding, and confirmation of what little research is available about SLDs, is that the position of service-learning director is not professionalized. What is meant by being professionalized, or professionalization in this manner, is the process by which one becomes certified, whether it be through a certain educational curriculum or steps to
becoming “qualified” to work in a particular area or arena. Having a governing body or benchmarks and standards of practice is also a part of being professionalized. Absent the availability of any specific graduate degree or national standards, in order for SLDs to successfully complete the roles, they rely on professional networks and peers, and follow high performing programs to learn from and set personal/office benchmark (Theme 8.1). In the closing remarks of the data collection interview, I did have one SLD touch on SLDs and professionalization, and express some appreciation for there not being a clear, set path to the position. He stated:

I would say, thinking of your larger project, one nice thing about this particular professional position is it’s basically because it’s so new, it’s still…and this is where you’re taking but it’s basically unchartered. The way to this job is very, is still unclear. Now I know there is developing programs in…. Minnesota; has a really strong Campus Compact history. I think it’s valuable, that we as service-learning directors come from such a wide-variety of places. Eventually it’s going to have to narrow a little bit you know. I’d be disappointed if it doesn’t include a strong connection to student life preparation. I think that that’s a mistake if we go a direction of making it sort of an academically credential person, who doesn’t have a good sense of the whole house. You know, another angle… What kind of community development skills you have? Not just, but student community. But how do you…what do you know about working the nonprofit world because that’s another skill.
**Research Question 3**

My third research question examined how service-learning directors respond to challenges and opportunities, and conveyed some of their significant success stories. These SLDs face many challenges, including stresses from autonomy (Theme 7.1) and the lack of campus wide understanding and implementation of service-learning. Another expressed challenge, but also a goal of these SLDs, is to have active participation from administration (Theme 7.0). SLD6 expressed this stating:

I’d like the university to be really deliberate in its collaboration or communication with the community. So for example...if the university would say we are really going to focus on them and economic development, well that’s going to be really helpful for our work here. So what we can do is really help faculty cultivate service-learning experiences that focus on economic development within the community. Or we can look and initiate grant kind of programming. So one of my goals is to get the university to make it a charge...to really work with the community and I mean that in the broadest sense...well, I mean be actual local, physical external to the community to really work with them to create some sort of kind of priorities so we can best collaborate and serve.

Funding was an expressed challenge as well. Whether it be described as funding, fundraising, lack of resources, liability or time constraints with transportation, financial strain was expressed as a challenge. SLD6 shared:

...money and grants…that’s the stuff that keeps you awake at night, particularly when you have federal…there is not even federal funds to apply anymore. They
have cut things drastically…private funding are one chop wonders, so you can’t sustain from that.

She overcame this, however by:

How we learned, we downsized, reshaped, and reclassified. This is a union based school, so we reclassified as unclassified to keep. We created more networks. We focused on the networks that were generating actual revenue. So then it becomes, I think just have like with anything, you adapt to shape it so it can survive.

This challenge calls into play the disconnect between how institutions create and sustain the office and sustainability of that office and its programs. This runs counter to one of the founding tenants of service learning: funds should be made available by higher education institutions, private organizations, and government for students desiring to participate in service-learning.

SLD5 expressed the same sentiments to funding and grants when it came to a HUD grant he shared with a community partner. This sharing of funds proved to be difficult to keep, consequently turning into him losing the funding. However, he shared that he knows it is possible and has seen it evident in successful programs that have “actual sharing of money and decision making with community partners.” He knows that the solution call into play an earlier mentioned challenge, institutional participation and buy in, stating:

That would require so much institution buy in and so much time and patience, and I can’t say we’ve done it. We done really well, but we’ve never forged an actual institutional partnership, I don’t think. I mean, I’ve heard about it.
A personal challenge, which has an effect on how one affectively does their job, was the act of reflection and/or being a reflective practitioner (Subtheme 5.2). Reflection is important because it is the most crucial element of service-learning, which draws upon personal motivation and commitment, both of which are essential characteristics of transformation leaders (Burns, 1978). Chambers and The National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good (2002) define reflection as a process of seeking clarity about truth…truth in experience, thought, beliefs instincts, and relationships. Reflection can be accomplished independently or as a collective endeavor. Yet, however done, reflection demands consideration of one’s internal state (beliefs, feelings, assumptions) and external circumstances (actions, relationship, power dynamics, obstacles). Reflection also demands a self-honesty and humility that will hold its own against affront from any quarter. (inside cover).

Not participating in reflection is a denial of the essence of the service-learning process. By not intentionally practicing reflection personally, these SLDs are saying, “Do as I say, not how I do (lead).” Reasons for neglecting reflective practice in SLD work vary from not having time or just not seeing the importance it plays in one’s own work. Jacoby and Mustacio (2010) warn that being a reflective service-learning director comes with challenges and that, although reflection is not stated as a required skill or capacity by the institution, integrating and engaging it in and SLDs already full job load will help ease the load, while at the same time, deepen the meaning of work for an SLD.
Reflection is a form of self-care, as well as self-discovery. SLD9 had a lot to say about reflection and the lack of practicing it. She now cherishes reflection, but not practicing while on the job did have devastating effects on her body, stating:

I do and did love it but I can also say it was super, super stressful because I would work so ever felt like I was getting it done. I could never catch up and get it done. So that’s one reason I got sick and having to ease out of it…I was working so many hours and just working so hard, trying to get everything done, I didn’t make the time and top and reflect nearly as often as I should have. Now of course, I had to do that as I was working with faculty because I think it’s so important to model that when working with faculty. But I guess I didn’t do that, the way it really should be done because I was just pushing too hard to get it all done and didn’t often stop and look back and say ok, let me think about this. Let me see how this feels, umm, what have I learned from what I just learned? How can I do this going forward?

Opportunities and success stories were warming to hear. The SLDs in this study beamed with excitement about the work they were doing, which makes it all worthwhile. As SLD11 stated, an SLD’s overall their goal is create “programs that work and become an integral part of the campus.” They get to make this goal happen while partaking in some of the best aspects of their job, many of which are once in a lifetime opportunities, such as traveling the world. Some of the places these SLDs have been to are Ireland, Dominican Republic, Antiqua, Guatemala, and Jamaica; and stateside, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Florida. Many of these travels took place during weekend trips
and alternative spring breaks. These experiences have awarded SLDs opportunities to
discover new cultures and provide students, many of which who have never left their
state of origin, that same opportunity. SLD10 shared how these experiences have lasting
effects on students, for instance, going to New Orleans during the aftermath of Hurricane
Katrina:

“I’ve worked here for 20 years at [Institution Name]. I never once had anyone
comeback, who was a graduate of [Institution Name], and tell me about the
fabulous lecture that somebody delivered in a classroom that they remembered the
rest of their life, but what they do remember are things they did outside of the
classroom. Those are things people never forget. So when you take a group of
students, many who’ve never been outside of the Midwest before to New Orleans,
and spend a week there, not only are they rebuilding Katrina Homes, but learning
about the culture of New Orleans and how unique that is within the United States,
and why it’s worth saving. Because a lot of people who live outside who live
outside of New Orleans sort of have an attitude of why should we be investing all
this money in this corrupt place that is different than the rest of the way we live
our lives. It’s a truly unique part of our culture and those are all things that you
learn.

While on these trips, SLDs and their institutions also ok opportunities to build
international partnerships as well. Travels and creating stable campus programs and long-
lasting service-learning courses allow for applying for awards such as, The President’s
Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll and Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, grants from Campus Compact; and AmeriCorps VISTA placements.

Outside of the traveling, these SLDs were just as excited that their offices are sustaining year after year, and that they are exploring ways to budget programs without damaging the integrity of the programs. As opportunities arise, best practices are developed and they are awarded opportunities such as hosting conferences, and being able to be a part of and head executive communities for networks their institutions are a part of. As SLD7 noted:

…I was on the executive committee for that for four years, and actually we hosted that conference in March of [Year] and so I was chair the committee that year. I’m also very involved. [Institution Name] is actually sponsoring an institution for the National Outreach Scholarship Conference and there are about… 15 to 20 institutions…That’s also a common networking group that meets occasionally, outside of the conference. I’m also part of a group called TRUCEN, which is The Research University Civic Engagement network and that’s a very small group because it’s for the very high research universities. It’s really about how research universities can support civic engagement and a part of their mission. Not only are we a land grant but we are also a research institution, so that informs a lot of what we do.

Overall, joy and contentment in just seeing service-learning grow, especially since their tenure started, was the consensus of all these SLDs. Seeing courses, and service-learning and volunteer hours increase brings great job satisfaction. SLD10 expressed:
Oh I love it!!! I love it...I really believe in what I do. It’s not a job and I think that sometimes there’s very difficult work that we do with challenging issues and facing resistance, and I think that really gives me the drive to go continue forward on it. I think it’s the sense of we’re engaging people for the common good and it benefits society as a whole. It certainly challenges me, in terms of my growth; it allows students new opportunities to learn; it allows us to build community and strengthen community; it allows us to learn more about community; and cross paths with some amazing community partners and people that are leaders and the everyday heroes that aren’t always—who’s story isn’t always told. They’re day in and day out, doing that quiet work behind the scenes. So those are some things that I love about it. It’s great to also work with students. I think they’re optimistic, they bring some good ideals and it’s great to see them come into a point where they might not know first what they want to be involved with. But to see them through that process, through a couple years, be involved in something and then find their passion, discover their passion and really say, ‘Hey this is what I want to do, I want to be involved in this.”

**Interpretation of Findings**

My aim in this section is to answer the question “What now?” where I go from specific themes detailed in my analysis chapter, Chapter V, to more general findings. Doing so can be conveyed in a number of ways, however, I am choosing to do so in the form of a theoretical framework and by “[relating] the schema of my findings to the
previous literature” (Foss & Waters, 2007, p. 226) provided in Chapter II, the literature review.

In Chapter V and my methodology section in Chapter III, I discussed the qualitative research analysis, a general inductive approach, used for this study. Expressed was one of its purposes, “to develop a model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes which are evident in the raw data” (Thomas, 2003, p. 2). Therefore, I have created a theoretical framework, Figure 5 below, “to transcend the specifics of the answer that is rooted in my findings…consisting of two elements---concepts and relationships among the concepts” (Foss & Waters, 2007, p. 226). This framework was also guided and inspired by a post interview conversation with SLD5 centered around the interconnectedness of God, purpose, life balance, and career decision(s).
Figure 5 is a theoretical framework illustrating core concepts and the relationships between them as extracted from my study of eleven higher education service-learning directors. The framework addresses the essence of who they are, what they do, and what they experience in the role. The backdrop of the framework is grey, representing the abyss, which is the world of service-learning for the director. An abyss is dark, void, and
cannot be measured. As revealed in the previous literature and in the analysis, this career path is not professionalized, so service-learning directors must rely on outside influences to help them bring clarity to their role and effectively carry out their job. Previous research has revealed that an essential behavior, practice, or discipline to navigate the abyss is reflection, which is and should be a constant act (Rogers, 2001; Schön, 1970, 1983). Reflection is a vital part of not only service-learning, but SLDs need to be reflective practitioners as well in order to achieve the transformational goals and aims of service-learning. In my study, SLDs either referenced God, fulfilling their lifelong purpose, being called to serve, or staying tuned to their moral compass or true north. These strategies serve as core guides to navigating through the challenges of the work. They also draw upon convictions, motivations and beliefs they tap into as they reflect upon the work that they do.

In the inner realm of the circular figure, surrounding the inner core, there is a yellow illumination representing what my data revealed about the SLDs life influences and impacts. This includes the influential people and/or encounters and mentors who have had an impact along the way and support and the base they derive from their various backgrounds (as represented by the blue ring). Again these various backgrounds entail education and career paths garnered in helping professions and degrees. Bounding the blue ring is another yellow light of illumination representing the organizations (such as their state Campus Compact, VISTAs, and networks) and peers of other service-learning directors with whom they work and gain insight from to create benchmarks and structure or replicate service-learning courses or programs, just to name a few.
The lower half of the theoretical framework illustrates (from the bottom up) the key players that my data revealed within service-learning, and their relationships with one another. The bottom of the graphic (Figure 5) illustrate you have students, community, and faculty. SLDs work hard to change the campus culture and have found it most effective to start with faculty, in terms of getting service-learning going and students involved. Once SLDs have created an operationalized definition of service-learning, articulated its scholarship and rigor, and can explain the benefits to both students and faculty, they are ready to go into the classrooms and present the service-learning course and guidelines to the students, as represented by the red two sided arrow. Through service-learning projects that have curricular connections, students and faculty are connected directly to the community. When this occurs, students are working directly with community. Additionally, faculty are learning how to affective community partnerships that contribute to student learning. The double-sided blue arrows represent the shared benefits and reciprocity among these relationships. Take note of the community having a different color than students and faculty. The yellow shading represents the meaningful service-learning, and it being based off of community merit.

Notice the blue arrows going up and resting on the institution, shaded in green. As a key player, my data reveals that the institution upholds service-learning (shown shaded in orange) in terms of funding, execution and institutionalization through strategic planning and reporting structure (housing in academic affairs), the support through accountability and effective communication with SLDs, and intentional, active participation. Leveled, with the institution being a little more prominent, are all the
arrows representing the key players, their relationships, and roles they serve in supporting and implementing service-learning.

In the middle of the framework, the white strips labeled as, values and beliefs, goals and motivations, and challenges and opportunities, all rest on service-learning, and tap into the backgrounds, motivations and influences on SLDs. If you notice, values and beliefs, and goals and motivations are coming down from the “personal” elements and background of the SLD. Recognize in the framework that these concepts also rest on service-learning, which through the experiences it cultivates, nurture and form the concepts as well. This is where my data reveals that these elements collide in the abyss. I would even stretch and say that is where the beautiful work and growth of all counterparts happen. Values, beliefs, goals, and motivations are all personal and professional for SLDs. SLDs carry forth the vision and mission of the institution in creating civic minded stakeholders and also serve as a face of the institution in the community. Values and beliefs have an effect on the goals and motivations set for the office of service-learning and its keys players.

In reference to the metaphor or colliding elements in an abyss and the creation of something beautiful, my data suggests that this is where challenges and opportunities arise. Through constant and consistent reflection, SLDs are able to overcome challenges, such as the cons of autonomy and low funding, and embrace opportunities, such as executing grant missions or partnering with community organizations in service-learning.
Connection to Previous Research

Now let us turn and examine how my findings and elements of this theoretical framework about SLDs connect with previous research. As a reminder, the purpose of my qualitative study was to describe and explore who service-learning directors are, how they became service-learning directors, and what they experience in the role. The findings and outcomes should not be generalized for all higher education service-learning directors; however, the goal is that the findings will add to the body of literature pertaining to service-learning, and create a knowledge base for service-learning directors. My findings can also provide information for institutions in how they can better support their service-learning directors by connecting to personal encounters illustrating the wants, needs, and concerns; their challenges and how the rise to the occasion to triumph over them; but most of all, their strengths and how they really are mission achievers, representing the institution to the surrounding community.

In Table 4, serving as another interpretation of my findings and the underlay to the concepts and relationships in Figure 5, are the 17 key findings that emerged from the data collected from these 11 SLDs. Some findings confirm previous research, and others are new findings which can be added to the current literature base of service-learning/service-learning directors in higher education.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Woodard (2013)</th>
<th>Previous Research</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) SLDs come from helping profession backgrounds</td>
<td>No previous research found on SLDs, thus Woodard (2013) is a new finding.</td>
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Table 4 – continued

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<tr>
<th>Woodard (2013)</th>
<th>Previous Research</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2) SLDs’ encounters with influential community minded individuals, such as an instructor or mentor, was of great influence</td>
<td>Confirms Jacoby and Mustacio (2010) conclusion that SLDs come from various backgrounds. No previous research found on the mentorship or influential impact on SLDs, thus Woodard (2013) is a new finding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) During matriculation of undergraduate and graduate studies, SLDs were eager to get their “hands dirty,” thereby becoming fearless trailblazers and active, intentional learners by setting out to discover and experience the depths of their areas of interest/study.</td>
<td>No previous research found on SLDs, thus Woodard (2013) is a new finding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Many SLDs’ undergraduate and/or graduate institutions had such a great impact on them, they continue to or have returned to serve at the institution.</td>
<td>No previous research found on SLDs, thus Woodard (2013) is a new finding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) SLDs from faith-based institutions connected strongly to their alma mater’s mission, which provided a lens to examine life and world issues, as well as create a mental model for service.</td>
<td>No previous research, thus Woodard (2013) is a new finding.</td>
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<td>6) Many SLDs agree that service-learning should be housed within Academic Affairs, while some SLDs may like to be housed in the wedge between both, Academic and Student Affairs.</td>
<td>Confirms findings from Ackerman et al. (2007), Bringle &amp; Hatcher (1996), and Holland (2007) research on service-learning institutionalization and housing/placement. No previous research found on SLDs, thus Woodard (2013) is a new finding, in regards to SLDs liking to be housed in the wedge between both Academic and Student Affairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) SLDs agree with Sigmon’s definition of service learning, and believe strongly in the use of the hyphen “-“ between service and</td>
<td>Confirms understanding, support, and utilization of Sigmon’s (1979) definition of service-learning (Sigmon, 2004; Rice,</td>
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<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>SLDs' Beliefs and Goals</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>SLDs believe that service-learning should be meaningful and the truth of it being meaningful should be based off community merit.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Although the discipline of reflection should be a part of one's daily routine, especially for a leader, not all SLDs operate as reflective practitioners.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>SLDs’ values and beliefs, and goals and motivations vary, but they collectively center on the holistic growth of students.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Other values and beliefs, and goals and motivations that drove SLDs are quality and efficient service-learning projects and courses; valuing and fostering strong institutional and community relationships; deep, meaningful service-learning; creating faculty service-learning scholars; and supporting faculty research interests and tenure qualifications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>SLDs feel life purpose is being fulfilled. They are motivated by all key players having their “aha” moments, such as becoming enthused about building connection; about learning, and discovering purpose. Other ahas include understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Table 4 – continued</td>
<td>Woodard (2013)</td>
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<td>society and privilege, finding passion and making and developing career goals.</td>
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</table>
13) Institutional support through the active, intentional involvement of administrator is of great need and importance to SLDs | Confirm findings from Bringle and Hatcher (1997), Holland (2007), Vogel and Seifer (2011), and Ackerman et al. (2007). These studies illustrated how service-learning should be institutionalized at an institution, and implications on how it/the office should be supported |
| 14) SLDs believe that having autonomy and knowing you can be trusted provides empowerment and fosters an environment where you are free to create. However, autonomy without accountability from leadership or a strategic plan to follow can cause SLDs to feel isolated and feel unsupported. | No previous research found on SLDs, thus Woodard (2013) is a new finding. |
| 15) SLDs are also made to feel as if service-learning is “something those guys over there do,” therefore there is not full institutional ownership. | No previous research found on SLDs, thus Woodard (2013) is a new finding. |
| 16) SLDs formulate job responsibilities and benchmarks based on the institution’s core mission, but admit to there being “blurred lines” when it comes to their true role and purpose. | Confirms findings from Jacoby (2003) concerning lack of understanding in regards to what their respective institutions expect. |
| 17) SLDs also obtain guidance and skill from colleagues and networks they are a part of. | Confirms findings from Jacoby and Mustacio (2003, 2010) concerning no defined roles and the position not being professionalized. |
As you can see from the Table 4, what emerged from my study are both new findings and others that confirm some of the established research on higher education service-learning directors, and therefore service-learning. New findings from the study confirm findings that SLDs come from various backgrounds, confirming Jacoby and Mustacio (2010), but more specifically from helping backgrounds. New findings also revealed that, before embarking on their paths of being a service-learning director, many blazed their own trail by exploring deeper their passions and getting their “hands dirty” while becoming involved in the community and taking opportunities to serve and study abroad. Also, encounters with mentors and people of influence along the way played a vital role in how the SLDs in this study came to be service-learning directors. Another new finding is that SLD’s undergraduate and/or graduate institutions had such a great impact on them, that they continue to or have returned to serve at the institution.

Let us turn to my findings that confirm aspects of previous research, as well as offer some new findings. In terms of how SLDs lead and carryout service-learning, overall these SLDs agree with Sigmon’s definition of service learning, and believe strongly in the use of the hyphen “-” between service and learning because it shows the reciprocity between all key players. This confirms understanding, support, and utilization of Sigmon’s (1979) definition of service-learning (Rice, 2010; Sigmon, 2004). SLDs nurturing and encouraging this reciprocity creates meaningful service-learning, and the truth of it being meaningful should be based off community merit. No previous research found, thus Woodard (2013) is a new finding, in regards to meaningfulness of service-learning being based off community merit. This finding confirms countless research on
service-learning being meaningful, but in particular Jones and Palmerton (2010) and Saltmarsh (1998).

Another element, the most vital within service-learning’s definition, is reflection, which should be done by all key players, including SLDs (Jacoby & Mustacio, 2010). The discipline of reflection should be a part of one’s daily routine, especially for a leader. For a leader, reflection should be an intentional act of self-care. In the context of service-learning, reflection is the most vital part for all key players. Therefore, research on the practice of reflection and/or being a reflective practitioner would be beneficial. Through acts of reflection, SLDs could use reflection as an assessment tool for the office of service-learning’s course/project and relationship with key players. This finding as well supports prior research of Ash and Clayton (2004), Eyler, Giles, and Schmeide (1996), and Eyler and Giles (1999). These studies discuss the importance of reflection within service-learning.

In regards to the core of SLDs’ values and beliefs, and goals and motivations, they vary but they collectively center on the holistic growth of students, confirming research similar to motivations of community service-learning professionals supported by Jacoby and Mustacio (2010). Other values and beliefs, and goals and motivations found in my study are quality and efficient service-learning projects and courses; valuing and fostering strong institutional and community relationships; deep, meaningful service-learning; creating faculty service-learning scholars; and supporting faculty research interests and tenure qualifications. This finding and its revelations confirms research of
Astin and Sax (1998), Astin et al. (2005), and Eyler and Giles (1999), which revealed service-learning’s impact on students, faculty, community, and the institution.

Through service-learning, SLDs’ life purpose is being fulfilled; and are motivated by all key players having their “aha” moments, such as becoming enthused about building connection and learning, discovering their purpose, understanding society and their privilege, finding their passion and making developing career goals, realizing that “Life isn’t about me,” making a lifelong vow to be active in community, seeing themselves (community) as facilitators in service-learning, and overall, realizing the vitality of service-learning. This a new finding in regards to SLDs believing their life purpose is being fulfilled through the journeys of key players, particularly students.

Institutionally, SLDs agree that the office of service-learning and reporting structure should be housed within Academic Affairs, thereby reporting to the Academic Dean and/or Provost. This revelation confirms prior research done by Ackerman et al. (2007), Bringle and Hatcher (1996), and Holland (2007), all of which discussed way in which service-learning could be institutionalized and carried, as well as how service-learning offices could best be support. However, a new finding, by one outlier, details there are benefits to being housed in wedge between both, Academic and Student Affairs. A new finding revealed that within this research reported housing and reporting structure, SLDs have autonomy and knowing they can be trusted provides empowerment, and fosters an environment where you are free to create. However, autonomy without accountability from leadership or strategic plan to follow can cause SLDs to feel isolated and feel unsupported. So SLDs are also made to feel as if service-learning is “something
those guys over there do,” therefore there is not full institutional ownership. To solve these issues of autonomy, SLDs expressed the need for institutional support through the active, intentional involvement. This finding confirms research of Bringle and Hatcher (1997), Holland (2007), Vogel and Seifer (2011); and Ackerman, et al. (2007). These studies illustrated how service-learning should be institutionalized at an institution, and implications on how it/the office should be supported.

SLDs formulate job responsibilities and benchmarks based on the institution’s core mission, Most SLDs correlate their job responsibilities to align with the institution’s core mission, but admit to there being “blurred lines” when it comes to their true role and purpose. SLDs also obtain guidance and skill from colleagues and networks they are a part of. These findings confirm Confirms Jacoby and Mustacio (2003, 2010) concerning no defined roles and the position not being professionalized.

In summary, findings confirmed some of the established research on service-learning in regards to its impact on students, faculty, and the community. Also confirmed are research and suggestions of implication as to how service-learning can and should be institutionalized, and in what ways administrators can be intentionally involved. The first being having a strategic plan that supports and carries out the institutions mission with service-learning built in.

New findings from the study confirm findings that SLDs come from various backgrounds, but more specifically from helping backgrounds. Before embarking on their paths of being a service-learning director, many blazed their own trail by exploring deeper their passions by becoming involved in the community and taking opportunities to
serve and study abroad. Encounters with mentors and people of influence along the way played a vital role in how they came to be service-learning directors as well. As with any career field, one grows and has challenges on the way. However for these SLDs, they are in the position of being in a career field that has much autonomy and levels of trust by the institution. The downfall for some with this is that it seems false and are left to feel as if they are doing it alone because there is no accountability or active support from the institution. Adding to this frustration is the fact that the position is not professionalized and SLDs are left to rely on networks and other offices of service-learning to develop benchmarks of their own and model after.

**Future Research Recommendations**

The findings from this study provide research recommendations for future researchers, higher education institutions, the study and discipline of leadership in higher education, and higher education service-learning directors.

**Recommendations for Future Researchers**

If this study were to be replicated, I would recommend the use of technology to help collect the data. Technologies such as Skype or Video Conferencing, along with the use of blackboard, or an online module/portal where SLDs could interact with one another and even go through some of the activities presented in Jacoby and Mustacio’s (2010) toolkit, *Looking in Reaching Out: A Reflective Guide for Community Service-Learning Professionals*. In particular from that toolkit, use the *Reflective Exercise: Motivations for Promoting Community Service-Learning*, to see how many matched and what others were discovered. Also within in the online modules there could be weekly
reflections over different topics, where SLDs could provide feedback for one another,
discuss possible cross-curricular service-learning, and even share current or past projects.
Providing ways for SLDs to connect during the study speaks to a concern raised by
SLD11. He expressed that though conferences and Campus Compact(s) is great, there is
little time provided for SLDs to workshop or simply get to know one another. More
directly, additional research that could come from implementing technology in this
format could aid in the understanding of how higher education leaders, not just SLDs,
network, discover, partner, and even encourage one another.

SLD11 also brought up another research idea during data collection. When his
wife heard about the study, she asked if I would be doing interviews of the families or
spouses of the SLDs. I believe that being an effective leaders, encompasses your whole
life and how you manage everything holistically. SLDs spend a lot of time away from
their families, especially during the planning stages of the year and during trips,
especially abroad, for long periods of time. Like majority of the SLDs, SLD11 is married
with children, one of which is autistic, which has its challenges. Researchers from
disciplines outside of higher education leadership, such as Family and Consumer
Sciences or Marriage Couple and Family Sciences would be perfect in researching an
area such as this.

In conjunction with leadership in higher education, researchers in Holistic Health
and Wellness could explore transformational and servant leadership amongst SLDs. Also
within this context, spiritual or self-care disciplines, in particular the practice of reflection
and/or being a reflective practitioner, could be studied. As shared about SLD9, her health
was gravely affected due to the challenges face within this work and also as she now realizes the lack of reflection as a leader. What is even more interesting about SLD9 is that her background is in Educational Psychology and Wellness and Stress Management. Studying practitioners from all disciplines in regards to self-care can be vital contribution to research in a vast number of areas. Also a quantitative study exploring stress levels of SLDs could be done as well.

Adding to the spiritual disciplines of leaders, my area of interest before this study was on the spiritual dimensions of transformational leaders in higher education leadership. I believe this could be studied amongst SLDs, but more specifically using the Soul of Educational Leadership Series, which consists of seven books from a vast number of top leaders and contributors in the field. In particular, Volume 3: *Spirituality in Educational Leadership* (2008). Within this text there is a series of eight principles: intention; attention; our unique gifts; gratitude; our unique life lessons; holistic perspective; openness, and trust, which could be used as a theoretical framework of the study.

Researching service-learning and service-learning directors by institution mission and/or type would be a recommendation as well. HBCUs, because of these institutional types being mostly land grants and the Greek culture, lead to a lot of service (volunteer and community) being done, but it can get lost amongst what the definition of true service-learning is. So studying HBCUs would be of great interest and importance. The language of SLDs from Faith-Based institutions was different in terms of how they responded to values and beliefs, motivations and goals, and best aspects of the job. They
really responded in terms of fulfilling what they are put on this earth to do. These SLDs also expressed how they are blessed to work and serve at an institution where it is centered on God, tenants of service, and being able to be a part of molding and creating students’ lives. SL10 expressed:

… The nice thing is that faith is a huge part of it and being able to opening up the possibility of talking about faith, and faith and truth and ethics and all those different things, all those different topics. Meaning, some of the things that we have is just universal human issues. I really feel fortunate to be in a place that we can do that and to talk about how God fits into the picture. And if someone has a really strong faith that they aspire to live out on a daily basis, or if people are in a place where they don’t or they’re questioning or wondering about or wrestling with it. You know, ‘I don’t know where God fits in or if I even believe in God.’ So it is important that students feel welcomed as a part of that process, but that we’re on this journey together. We are having a conversation and we walk together and work together as community and we learn from each other’s experience that way.

More research looking into service-learning being housed in both student and academic affairs should be done as well. There are a few studies on student and academic affairs collaborating through service-learning, but a study speaking to the perspectives and perceptions of SLDs could be looked into more. Though it was only two SLDs, both at faith-based institutions, housed in both student and academic affairs, one, SLD5, wanting to be in the crux of both, made valid points of there being a difference between
student focused service-learning and academic service-learning. Based on the design, there was still true service-learning going on, just not through a course. Also in addition, he is able to communicate within the reporting structure affectively and the structure meets his needs a professional as well. Again using the words of SLD5, more in-depth he expressed:

There are, there are pros and cons, absolutely. But I will say, if the opportunity presented itself tomorrow to move our shop to the Academic Division, I’m not sure I would take it. Because…it’s very complicated. I have colleagues who run similar centers in the academic division. So for example, our off campus programs department, really strong connections between off campus programs and service-learning. Well they happen to be [in] academic center and we are not, the only downside to us not. Really it’s just a technical difference because in the eyes of faculty colleagues and even alumni nobody would really know. They don’t think of us as not being academic, we are. And the reality is if you’re an academic center, you have far far less support on just a personal and professional level than we have in the student life division. However, you know you want to talk about it, what Student Life has done well is accountability, and support, and relationship and meaning. The academic, the legacy of academia is fragmentation and competition and isolation. And that’s just not healthy. That is not the legacy of student life. Student Life has a much more holistic understanding of what it means to be a professional. Again, it doesn’t mean it’s all gravy to be in Student Life. I’ll be honest like there are days were I feel undervalued because I’m in
Student Life. But I’m savvy enough to know that is a bit of just plain pride that I
don’t need to worry about because the fact is take a look at our budget, take a look
at my sabbatical and my teaching opportunities, and what students are saying
about our office, I don’t care where we are housed. We’re doing important work
and it is valued.

During data collection, I was invited back by two SLDs: SLD1 and 3. With
SLD1, I was awarded the opportunity to sit in on one of her service-learning
certifications, and with SLD2, I was able to sit in with Faculty Scholars working with
other faculty to train and show them how to implement service-learning into their course,
as well as how to give it a service-learning endorsement in Banner. SLD2 also allowed
me to sit in on a staff meeting, participate in a citywide service-learning project, as well
as have lunch with his VISTA and Experiential Learning Coordinator to discuss in more
detail their roles and journeys. Exploring and comparing/contrasting these processes
would be interesting to discover. I also think it would be great to have a study looking at
Offices of Service-Learning and seeing how it matches to Bringle and Hatcher’s (2007)

**Recommendations for Higher Education Institutions**

In the beginning of this chapter I discussed how in 1969, educators and
community leaders met to discuss how service and civic engagement could be integrated
within higher education instruction. Two duties and implications for institutions were:
funds should be made available by higher education institutions, private organizations,
and government for students desiring to participate in service-learning; and students,
community, agencies; and higher education institutions should all play a part in the planning and implementation process of service-learning (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2008). Again, my study cannot speak for all institutions or service-learning directors, but the findings do reveal that SLDs feel that institutions (upper level administrators) should play a bigger part in institutionalizing and being active, intentional participants themselves. Whether it be administrative heads meeting with SLDs to discuss what is happening cross-discipline or with community partnerships and how they can be a part of service-learning, something needs to be done. Also with the perspective offered by SLD5, though his career is not professionalized, he is in a unique situation where both of his professional needs are being met. Though research supports and recommends service-learning should be housed in Academic Affairs, institutions should look and see how working with both Academic Affairs and Students Affairs might not only be beneficial to the professional needs to SLDs, but also the funding needs as well as building stronger relationships within the institution and cross-discipline as well.

My study also has implications on how institutions and communities/2-year institutions could help achieve President Barack Obama’s goals set at the Summit on Community Colleges in 2011. The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) published an article on President Obama’s initiative of Putting Americans Back to Work. A part of his plan is centered on community colleges and I believe this would be a great opportunity for all key players to learn about service-learning in the context of meeting the needs of their own institutions. Often, more times than not, community colleges consist of the very same people institutions are trying to serving and partner with, the surrounding
community. A true display of reciprocity and the definition of service-learning can play out here. Within this article they note that an estimated deferred maintenance of campuses has reached $100 billion and community colleges are in desperate need of upgrades to ensure that facilities are equipped to meet 21st Century workforce demands (AFT, 2011). Institutions can work with their service-learning director and business and community partners in the community to use these funds, but also create service-learning projects to meet their own needs.

**Researcher’s Reflections**

Overall, I am excited to have completed this research study. I met some of the most amazing people. I learned so much and will implement these golden nuggets as I approach departure from Western Michigan University. More than anything, I learned the value of self-care, reflection, and networking amongst peers.

These SLDs are people I will never forget. Trailblazers, in their own right, and at such a young age, I believe their willingness to discover and step out on their own to explore during undergraduate and graduate studies plays a huge factor in who and where they are today. I really valued our on and off the record conversations at the end of the interviews. I was able to discover the realities of the work they do, or as many described as the dark, dirty parts, which they seemingly love. Their work hours are intense. For example, SLD2 puts in 60-80 hour weeks, especially during the planning and prepping stages for the new school year. She has had days where she put 100 miles on her car without even going out of the city. She added expressing:
You do that and that’s what makes it interest and what makes it meaningful…and again, everybody who works in the university has a vital role…and none of us do our job without each other…but there are some job that I sort of wonder about…but that’s me and there are people who look at what I do and think I am nuts. Like, ‘Why would you do that?’ Then you have people that come back to you and say, ‘What does that have to do with the university?’ Because they don’t see it…and we do define it as scholarship and that is key. It’s also a reason that faculty buy in and why we grow. It is engaged teaching and a form of scholarship here…but hey you’ll have people that are more traditional faculty that think this is not of rigor…it is if you do it right.

During this data collection process and throughout much of my doctorate studies, I went through a lot of uncertainty and doubt, which seemed to come out of nowhere. SLD5 helped me out greatly when we discussed life purpose and career decisions. I plan on following in these SLDs footsteps, most like starting in a faith-based or 2-year in service-learning and/or civic engagement. I also have a desire to see service-learning implemented in adult education programs.
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Appendix A

Participant Qualifying Letter
Dear «Prefix» «Last»,

Greetings! My name is Kelsey Woodard and I am a doctoral student at Western Michigan University writing to request your participation in my dissertation research -- a study examining the experiences of higher education service-learning directors.

The study would require approximately 60-minutes of your time in a face-to-face interview to take place in your office at a time of your convenience. The topic to be discussed is your experience as a service-learning director: who you are, what you do, and how you do it. The interview will be voice recorded (not visually recorded) and all information will be kept confidential. Following the interview, you will receive a copy of the transcript to review and make additional remarks. If necessary, I may need to make follow up phone calls for clarification.

I am recruiting participants who fit the criteria and who would be interested in participating in the study. The only key criterion for participation is that you have held the position of service-learning director for a minimum of one-year.

To my knowledge, this study is the first of its kind in higher education service-learning and I hope to publish the research results. Your participation would be greatly appreciated. If interested, please read and sign the attached consent form, and return it to me in the addressed stamped envelope provided, or scan and e-mail to me.

Should you have any questions concerning this study and your qualification to participate, or you believe you fit the profile criteria and would be interested in participating in this study, please send an email with your contact information to kelsey.m.woodard@wmich.edu. I will respond to you directly to discuss the study in more detail, including goals and objectives, participant qualification, and participation requirements. I will also be requesting a copy of your vitae to gain more knowledge about your career path and background.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to end your participation at anytime. There are no costs associated, just the interview time commitment provided above. There is no compensation for your time; however, by sharing your experiences, you will provide great insight about the essence of service-learning directors in higher education. Understanding your experience is expected to provide information that may be invaluable
to other higher education service-learning directors, as they may encounter some of the same experiences you have.

This study is being conducted with the approval of the Educational Leadership, Research, and Technology Department at Western Michigan University and in accordance with the University’s Human Subjects Institutional Review Board guidelines regarding research ethical conduct.

With sincere thanks in advance. I look forward to speaking with you.

Kelsey Woodard
kelsey.m.woodard@wmich.edu
Appendix B

Participant Consent Form
Western Michigan University
Educational Leadership, Research & Technology

Principal Investigator: Dr. Louann Bierlein-Palmer
Student Investigator: Kelsey Woodard, MA
Title of Study: VOICES OF HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICE-LEARNING DIRECTORS

You have been invited to participate in a research project titled “Voices of Higher Education Service-Learning Directors.” This project will serve as Kelsey Woodard’s dissertation for the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). This consent document will explain the purpose of this research project and will go over all of the time commitments, the procedures used in the study, and the risks and benefits of participating in this research project. Please read this consent form carefully and completely and please ask any questions if you need more clarification.

What are we trying to find out in this study?

The purpose of this study is to examine actual, lived experience of higher education service-learning directors. This study will explore the stories of these individuals with the aim of discovering the essence of who these individuals are, what they do, and how they do it. This study will examine their career paths and from in-depth interviews, discover their roles and responsibilities, values and beliefs, and challenges and opportunities.

Who can participate in this study?
The primary qualification for participation is to have held the position of service-learning director for a minimum of one-year.

Where will this study take place?
In your office, or a comfortable environment of your choice.

What is the time commitment for participating in this study?
A one-time meeting of approximately 60 minutes. Following this meeting, you will be sent a copy of transcribed discussion to review and make additional comments. If necessary, there may be a follow-up phone call for clarification.

What will you be asked to do if you choose to participate in this study?
The format of the interview will be that of a conversation between yourself and the researcher, where questions will be used to guide the conversation vs. a formal question and answer format. Questions pertaining to your experiences as a higher education service-learning director and other life experiences you have had may also be inquired.
What are the risks of participating in this study and how will these risks be minimized?
The risks associated with this study are minimal. You have the right to decline any question or topic that would make you uncomfortable or cause emotional distress. The only potential discomfort may be in discussing barriers to your career. The only other risk of discomfort is if the study reaches full participation and the researcher needs to send you regrets due to over-capacity.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?
There is no compensation for your time; however, by sharing your experiences, you will provide great insight about the essence of service-learning directors in higher education. Understanding your experience is expected to provide information that may be invaluable to other higher education service-learning directors, as they may encounter some of the same experiences you have. You will also give service-learning directors a voice within the immense service-learning field.

Are there any costs associated with participating in this study?
None.

Is there any compensation for participating in this study?
None.

Who will have access to the information collected during this study?
Only Kelsey Woodard, the student researcher, and Dr. Louann Bierlein-Palmer, the dissertation committee chair.

What if you want to stop participating in this study?
No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time. You will not suffer any prejudice or penalty by your decision to stop your participation. Additionally, although rare and unlikely, the investigator can also decide to stop your participation in the study without your consent.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research study?
Kelsey Woodard
Western Michigan University
kelsey.m.woodard@wmich.edu
(404) 229-1628
or
Dr. Louann Bierlein-Palmer
Western Michigan University
l.bierleinpalmer@wmich.edu

This consent document has been approved for use for one year by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) as indicated by the stamped date and signature of the board chair in the upper right corner. Do not participate in this study if the stamped date is older than one year.

I have read this informed consent document. The risks and benefits have been explained to me. I agree to take part in this study.

Please Print Your Name

______________________________________________________  ____________________  
Participant’s signature  Date

Your e-mail address:_______________________________________________________
Appendix C

Interview Protocol
Interview Protocol for Higher Education Service-Learning Directors

Date: ____________________________________________

Time: ____________________________________________

Location: ____________________________________________

Participant ID #: ____________________________________________

Yrs. in Service-Learning Director Role: ____________________________

Script: following a general introduction, and once in the participant’s office or chosen meeting place. Thank you for taking the time to talk to me today. This interview will take about 60-60 minutes to complete. As I mentioned to you before, the purpose of this study is to explore your actual lived experience as a higher-education service-learning director. I really want to hear your story and will be asking questions regarding your lived experience, which will be recorded and transcribed by myself. Please be aware that I will not be able to make any personal comments or agreements, even though I may like to. The reason for this is to reduce my influence on your answers as much as possible. Please take your time and answer the questions as completely as possible. Please feel free to ask me to repeat the question, if needed. Please be mindful that I may ask you to provide more information about some topic as we proceed. Shall we begin?

Journey to Service-Learning

1. Although I’ve had a chance to review your vitae, I would like to start by asking you how you came to be the service-learning director at ________ University (or College)? (Depending on experience: I see that you were a service-learning director at ________, how did you come to be the service-learning director at ________ University. Tailor for final interview protocol send-out).

2. When you were thinking about going into service-learning, who or what do you believe influenced you to pursue this career path? Please tell me about this. (Probes: who were they? when did this happen? what did they say?) (Come straight here if people are mentioned in # 1: You mentioned ________, Probes 1 and 2)

3. Tell me about your educational background. What aspects of your previous degree programs were relevant to your current service-learning director role?
4. Next, I’d like to ask you about your previous career experiences before you became a higher education service-learning director. I’ve noticed that you previously did work in ____, ____, and _____. Were you considering service-learning at the time you were in these previous career paths? What made you look into service-learning? (Do not ask, if this is their first position, just ask the latter).

   Service-Learning Motivations and Values

5. Now, let us turn to some broader service-learning issues. If somebody were to ask you what the term service-learning meant, what would you tell them?

6. What personal goals do you want to accomplish as a Service-Learning Director? What values and beliefs aid in shaping and guiding your work? What role does “reflection” play within your work?

7. What motivates you most about this position?

   Key Players & Institutional Support

8. How would you describe the culture of your campus in reference to supporting service-learning?

9. What changes have you seen within your campus culture regarding service-learning since you have been there?

10. How do you recruit and promote faculty involvement within service-learning activities? What support does your institution offer you and your office to support these efforts?

11. How do you get students involved in the service-learning culture? What support does your institution offer you and your office to support these efforts?

12. Describe your relationship with the off campus-community? How do you develop those partnerships/relationships? What support does your institution offer you and your office to support these efforts?

13. Describe where you are located within the university reporting structure and overall how your work supports your institution’s mission and overall strategic plan.
Service-learning Work Activities

We’ve now talked broadly about various aspects of your position. Let us now focus on some specifics.

14. What does a typical work day, week, or month entail for you?
15. What is the typical process for developing service-learning program and/or courses?
16. How does your office make available samples of outstanding service-learning programs and/or courses? Can you share any written materials you might have?
17. Explain what you think are the best aspects of your job.

Professional Aspects of the Position

18. How clear do you feel your job responsibilities are as the service-learning director and the role you play at your institution?
19. In doing research I found that there no national standards and outcomes that guide the work of service-learning directors. What do you use to guide the work that you do? Can you talk about whether it would be helpful to have clearer professional standards in place for directors?
20. Outside of your university (or college), what type of professional serving learning networks are you a part of, and what types of support do such networks bring?

Success and Challenges

21. What are some successes you have experienced?
22. Describe any challenges you have faced in your current position and how you overcome these challenges?

Closing

23. Please share any other thoughts you have concerning what we have talked about today? Is there anything you would have liked to talk about that I have not covered today? If so, please share.

This concludes our interview. I want to extend a sincere thank you again for your time, patience, and cooperation. I will take the information gathered here, review and compile it along with several other interviews.

May I contact you if I have further questions or need any clarification? Excellent, thanks again and I hope you have a wonderful day.

Shut off digital recorder.
Appendix D

Research Question Codes
**Research Questions**

1. Who are service-learning directors at universities, including their values and beliefs regarding service-learning, and what career path led them to this position (e.g., education, prior experience)?

2. How do service-learning directors understand their role, and expectations (theirs and the institutions) for their role?

3. How do service-learning directors respond to challenges and opportunities, and what are some of their significant success stories?

**Research Question and Interview Protocol Coding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journey to Service-Learning</th>
<th>Research Question #</th>
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### Service-Learning Motivations and Values

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<td>7. What motivates you most about this position?</td>
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### Key Players & Institutional Support

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### Service-learning Work Activities

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<td>20. Outside of your university (or college), what type of professional serving learning networks are you a part of, and what types of support do such networks bring?</td>
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<th><strong>Closing</strong></th>
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<td>23. Please share any other thoughts you have concerning what we have talked about today? Is there anything you would have liked to talk about that I have not covered today? If so, please share.</td>
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Appendix E

Copyright Holder Correspondence – Inductive Analysis
Permission to use table

Kelsey Woodard <woodard.kelsey@gmail.com>  
To: "dr.thomas@auckland.ac.nz" <dr.thomas@auckland.ac.nz>  
Wed, Oct 16, 2013 at 3:18 PM

Hello Dr. Thomas,

My name is Kelsey Woodard, a doctoral candidate, in Educational Leadership, Research and Technology, at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, MI, USA.

I am emailing you to ask for permission to use, and of course cite, your tables:

- Comparative of Qualitative Analysis Approaches (2006)

My research is on Higher Education Service-Learning Directors, and I used a general inductive approach for my analysis.

Your work aided greatly in my understanding and again, wanted to ask permission to use in my dissertation (methodology) section.

Thanks for your time and I hope to hear from you soon!

Blessings!

Kelsey Woodard

David R. Thomas <dr.thomas@auckland.ac.nz>  
To: Kelsey Woodard <woodard.kelsey@gmail.com>  
Wed, Oct 16, 2013 at 5:51 PM

Hi Kelsey

Yes that’s fine to use the tables in your dissertation.

Good to hear the paper has been useful.

Regards

David Thomas

David R. Thomas  
Emeritus Professor  
Social and Community Health  
University of Auckland

email: dr.thomas@auckland.ac.nz  
Mobile 021-628-285  
Postal address: P.O. Box 65188  
Mairangi Bay, Auckland 0754

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=413e45de&view=pt&searchInfo=iddt=14113346306145
Kelsey Woodard <woodard.kelsey@gmail.com>
To: "David R. Thomas" <dr.thomas@auckland.ac.nz>

Thanks so much Dr. Thomas,

Kelsey Woodard

Wed, Oct 16, 2013 at 6:31 PM

Kelsey Woodard <woodard.kelsey@gmail.com>
To: Jennifer M Holm <jennifer.holm@wmich.edu>

Just thought I'd share :) 

Kelsey Woodard

Wed, Oct 16, 2013 at 6:32 PM

Begin forwarded message:

From: "David R. Thomas" <dr.thomas@auckland.ac.nz>
Date: October 16, 2013 at 5:51:00 PM EDT
To: Kelsey Woodard <woodard.kelsey@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: Permission to use table

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=fc1a8f3f4e&im=rc&sa=m&sfapi=1&ti=141c238c30e0a146
Appendix F

Approval Letter from the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board
Date: September 15, 2011

To: Louann Bierlein-Palmer, Principal Investigator
   Kelsey Woodard, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Victoria Janson, Interim Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 11-09-11

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project titled “Voices of Higher Education Service Learning Directory” has been approved under the expedited category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you may only conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition, if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: September 15, 2012