From Serving Individuals to Creating Community Engagement Programs
Working Toward Collective Impact
The Evolution of Collaborating for the Public Good

Cara Marie DiEnno
Associate Director, Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning
University of Denver

And Community-Engaged Student Fellows:

Sara Abdullah, MS Environmental Policy & Management Candidate
Michael Oyakojo, MA Economics Candidate
Dana Polley, MSW Candidate
Welcome - Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Workshop Learning Objectives
3. About DU & CCESL
4. History & Structure of the Community-Engaged Fellows
5. Lessons Learned: Pilots, Challenges, and Conclusions
6. Next Steps for AY 17-18
Learning Objectives
Learning Objectives

By the end of the workshop, attendees will:

● Have knowledge of the evolutionary process our institution took to arrive at the fellows program, to truly provide institution-wide collaboration for the public good on multiple issues of interest to the campus and community.

● Learn about one institution’s approach to developing leadership programs for students that support faculty community-engaged work and tackle community-identified issues.

● Have reflected on their own institution’s practices and begun to develop ideas about the next stage in their own evolutionary process to elevate commitment, action and impact of higher education and the public good.
About DU & CCESL
- Founded in 1864 - oldest private university in the rocky mountain region
- 5,758 Undergraduates || 6,039 Graduates
- Carnegie Research Classification - High Research Activity
In the past 20 YEARS, DU has invested more than $640 MILLION in facilities and infrastructure. 75% of all buildings on campus are either NEW OR RENOVATED.

The SECOND LARGEST private, nonretail employer in Denver.

70% of first-year undergraduates come from OUTSIDE OF COLORADO & 70% of undergraduates choose to LIVE IN COLORADO after graduation.

Each year DU allocates $350,000 to student research and creative work.

11 students per faculty member.

32,700 visitors = $8.5 MILLION
Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CCESL)
CCESL Mission

Mission: To educate, engage, and equip the campus community to accomplish tangible, public work that improves the lives of people in our communities.

– We value the public good, inclusive excellence, and, as part of higher education's civic mission, building community capacity and engagement
History & Structure
Community-Engaged Student Fellows Program
What is the Fellows Program?

- Interdisciplinary team of 9 fellows
- Assigned to interdisciplinary issue areas
- Advancing community-engaged work
Evolution to Fellows . . .

- Public Good Associates
- Scholar Shop
- DU IMPACT 2025
Conversation

- What program successes on your campus might be ready for their next evolution?
- What campus goals or initiatives might these programs connect to?
Current Structure - Hub & Spoke

Achieving Large-Scale Change through Collective Impact Involves 5 Key Conditions for Shared Success

- **Common Agenda**: All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.

- **Shared Measurement**: Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.

- **Mutually Reinforcing Activities**: Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.

- **Continuous Communication**: Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and appreciate common motivation.

- **Backbone Support**: Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization(s) with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies.

Source: Charting Change: Making Collective Impact Work, 2012; FSG Interviews
Current Structure - Issue Areas

- Social Entrepreneurship
- Health Equity
- Metropolitan Denver Nature Alliance
- Writing & The Public Good
- Criminal Justice
- Transportation
- Youth Voice
- Urban Renewal
- Education Access & Equity
Current Structure - Fellow Roles

1 - Issue-Area Specific.

- Information Gathering:
  - Identify faculty, staff, and courses working on subjects related to issue area and/or interested in collaborating with community partners.
  - Documenting work.

- Collaboration:
  - Faculty champion support.
  - Organize events and/or meetings between interested players.
  - Act as liaisons between community partner & DU community.

2 - Broader Community-Engagement Support.
Current Structure - CCESL’s Role

● Mentorship and guidance
● Financial support
● Staff meetings
● Community-engagement & service learning training (syllabus support, etc.)
Lessons Learned

Pilots, Challenges & Conclusions
Recruitment, Training & Compensation

● Recruitment
  ○ Wide open job description
  ○ Students who are the right fit

● Training
  ○ Various levels of community engagement knowledge
  ○ Responsive ‘in the moment’

● Compensation
  ○ Maintaining students for an academic year
Issue Specific Work

TRANSPORTATION:

- Provide supports to faculty with teaching and research in transportation-related issues
- On-going projects: DU Campus Master Plan (last done in 50 years), University of Denver light rail station remodelling
- Difficulty in defining issue area:
  - High-level political nature of transportation-related projects
  - Recent restructuring of campus transportation / parking offices
  - Difficulty in conveying faculty transportation cluster due to overlap with other fellows’ issue areas
Issue Specific Work

- Difficulty defining the issue
- Overlap between social entrepreneurship and community engagement
- Lack of faculty champion
- Information gathering
  - Internal research
- Outreach
  - One-to-one interviews and focus groups
Issue Specific Work

- Est. 2015 as a community-based effort built on shared values & hopes for regional, collaborative, nature-based work.
- Proposed & approved as a “Pilot Project” for DU IMPACT 2025.
- CCESL & Fellow’s Roles:
  - Identify DU faculty, organize meetings/events.
  - Track DU collaborations, classes, research, etc.
Online Presence

Reflection & Collaboration: (Prev. ePortfolios), Yammer

Information & Engagement: Weebly, Twitter
Social Network Mapping

Kumu

- Data visualization platform
- Interactive relationship map
- Track and share information
Responsive “Think Tank”

EXAMPLE - CORPORATE RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS:

● Partnership between CCESL (through the network of CE Fellows) and the Office of Associate Provost for Research
● Move DU’s research community from being an “order-taker,” to a “Partnership Demand Generator” that is rooted in reciprocity
● Emphasize the co-production of knowledge in the context of reciprocal partnerships with local stakeholders
● Demonstrate strong collaboration with community partners in proposal and project development

IDEAS SHARING AMONG CE FELLOWS:

● Sharing out ideas across disciplinary or issue lines during staff meetings
Ambassadors of Community Engagement

- Simple presence across departments/units on campus
- Public Good Forums
- During campus and community events
Conversation

- What methods, techniques or structures might facilitate your goals for the next evolution of your programs?
Next Steps

For AY 2017-2018
Next Steps

- Faculty Champion
- Team-based Project Funds
- Relationship with Scholar Shop
- Professional development funds
- Continuing to support their ‘ambassador’ role
Thank you!
Questions, comments, etc.

Learn More:
● www.du.edu/ccesl
● http://cceslfellows.weebly.com
● Contact Cara: cara.dienno@du.edu