

Stay Informed

CSL Newsletter

VOLUME 4

ISSUE 4

From Our Executive Director: Students as Colleagues

Students are the powerhouse behind our campus commitment and excellence in community engagement. Yes, we each play our roles in this work, but I am increasingly convinced that it is through the spark and energy of IUPUI students that our commitment is now part of the fabric and culture of our campus. If we are to achieve our strategic goal to “Deepen our Commitment to Community Engagement”, we will do well to work within deeper and more creative ways with students as colleagues to expand the circle of leadership (Zlotkowski, Longo & Williams, 2006).

We should not be surprised...yet often we stand amazed...by the contributions IUPUI students make on campus and within the community. Evident in part by the recipients of the [2015 William M. Plater Medallion for Civic Engagement](#), students assume a variety of roles in community engagement. They serve as advocates, event planners, facilitators, mentors, researchers, site supervisors, social entrepreneurs, teaching assistants, and volunteer managers.

IUPUI students sustain campus traditions such as [MLK Day of Service](#), Spring House Calls, and the [America Reads Tutoring Program](#); but they also create new and innovative approaches to addressing social needs through initiatives such as Paws Pantry, the Student Outreach Clinic, and recent community organizing events. According to our data from 2013-14, IUPUI students contributed 376,602 service hours, representing more than an 11% increase from the prior year.

This level of participation is consistent with national data on student volunteer rates. Volunteer rates during the college years vary, based on reporting methods, but across all indicators there is an increase in student participation. The Higher Education Research Institute reports that 26% of current college students and 31% of college graduates volunteer their time in community organizations, a rate that is at a thirty-year high (Pryor et al., 2009). The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, using data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Institutional Characteristics, indicates that between 1996 and 2008, proportionately more college students participated in volunteer activities, with a reported increase from 39% to 47%, indicating that nearly half of all college students volunteer (Griffith, 2012).

Faculty, staff, and community partners play an essential role in energizing students and creating a “civic-minded campus” through both curricular and co-curricular programs (Sponsler & Hartley, 2012). As we learn to assume the role of a civic mentor in more explicit ways, we can deepen student learning and development as civic-minded graduates and professionals (see [Norris' article below](#)). And as we learn to trust, depend upon, and empower students as colleagues in this work, our civic engagement will deepen. I challenge all of us to identify new ways in the coming year to engage

students as colleagues, and may their spark and energy renew our motivations and commitments to this important work.

Citations:

Griffith, J. (2012). A decade of helping: Community service among recent high school graduates attending college. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 41(5) 786–801.

Pryor, J. H., Hurtado S., DeAngelo, L., Paluki-Blake, L., & Tran, S. (2009). *The American freshman: The national norms, fall 2009*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles.

Sponsler, L. E. & Hartley, M. (2013). NASPA research and policy institute issue brief: *Five things student affairs professional can do to institutionalize civic engagement*. Washington, DC: NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

Zlotkowski, E., Longo, N., & Williams, R. (2006). *Students as colleagues: Expanding the circle of service learning leadership*. Campus Compact: Brown University.

Slideshow: Sam H. Jones Service Scholars receive other awards



Sam H. Jones Scholars honored at IUPUI Top 100 Dinner.

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Many **Sam H. Jones Community Service Scholars** are recognized with IUPUI awards like the **Top 100**, **William M. Plater Civic Engagement Medallion**, and graduate with **IUPUI Honors College** distinction.

Conversations with our Community Partners

The Center for Service and Learning is very fortunate to have strong, long-term partnerships with community organizations and strives for continuous improvement of our programs. To this end, CSL conducted a series of interviews with ten of our community partners who have hosted our **Sam H. Jones Community Service Scholars** (CSS) to learn more about the benefits and challenges of student participation and the community partner's role in student's educational development . These partners included: the **Ronald McDonald House, AMPATH, George Washington Community High School, Volunteers of America of Indiana, Big Brothers Big Sisters, the United Way, Indy Urban Acres, Exodus Refugee Immigration, and Mary Rigg Neighborhood Center.**

The Community Service Scholar (CSS) program is a part of the Sam H. Jones Community Service Scholarship Program. The activities of CSS are intentionally designed to facilitate their understanding of social issues in Indianapolis and to contribute to the work of community agencies that are addressing those social issues. CSS are matched with a community agency and serve four hours each week where the scholar participates in programs and activities that further the mission of the agency.

During the interviews, our partners were asked questions regarding their satisfaction with the CSS program and the service provided by our scholars. Overwhelmingly, our community partners were satisfied with the CSS program but also provided key suggestions for logistical improvements. A theme that emerged throughout the interviews was the perception of our CSS as exemplars; many of those interviewed believed that CSS enter their service experience better prepared for complicated tasks and more invested in the organization than other student volunteers. The CSS are inquisitive, reliable, quite knowledgeable about social issues, and focused on civic engagement. A second theme that was reiterated in the interviews was the dedication of our community partners to their role as co-educators of our scholars. This is crucial to the success of the CSS program and reinforces the reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationships of our partnerships.

Information gleaned from these community partner interviews will be used for program improvement and additional research to understand how students can develop into civic-minded leaders through intentionally designed community experiences.

Sam H. Jones Legacy Lives on through Scholars

In 2003, after his passing, the **Sam H. Jones (SHJ) Community Service Scholarships Program** was aptly named after one of Indianapolis's most dedicated and compassionate public servants. Sam H. Jones was a prominent member of the Indianapolis community, breaking barriers between races and advocating for equality throughout his 36 years as President of the **Indianapolis Urban League**. Diahann Hollowell (Dee), a current supervisor of a scholar and personal friend of the late Sam Jones was asked to reflect on his legacy and the scholarship program. Our Sam H. Jones Scholars, Dee says "are perfectly named because of their devotion to community and their example of leadership. Sam would be very proud."

Mr. Jones worked tirelessly for social and economic equality; targeting justice, education, housing, employment, and youth issues throughout the community.

By accepting the role as a SHJ scholar, students associate themselves with the unselfish

service, leadership, and commitment that Sam Jones embodied. For a man whose life work was about breaking barriers and building bridges, the work of the SHJ scholars strengthens those ties by developing themselves as social advocates and improving the community. Their work is a tribute to his legacy and his idea of a better Indianapolis.

As Dee Hollowell states, "Sam worked diligently to build a bridge with all members of the community, especially students. It was my honor and privilege to learn about volunteering and commitment over the years exemplified by his leadership throughout our city."

Are You a Civic Mentor?

By Kristin Norris, Director of Assessment, CSL

Consider the various ways, purposes, and subsequent dialogue you have with students. Would you consider yourself to be a *civic* mentor? The concept of being a civic mentor stems from 'functional' mentoring (Thorndyke, Gusic, & Milner, 2008) whereby a mentee is paired with a mentor who has specific expertise. Historically, mentoring relationships have focused on the growth and accomplishment of an individual and may include several forms of assistance (e.g., access to social networks, providing opportunities to display talents and skills, counseling, serving as a reference). In addition, mentoring relationships may include broad forms of support including role modeling and psychological support. But what if students had a civic mentor? What would that look like and would having a civic mentor increase the likelihood of developing civic-minded graduates?

In a recent study, I explored this very concept. A civic-mentoring relationship is defined as a developmental partnership through which one person shares knowledge, skills, information and perspectives to foster the civic-minded growth of another (adapted from Norris & Miller, 2012). Civic mentoring is powerful because it holds great potential for creating opportunities for collaboration, dialogue, and problem-solving in complex community settings. Students participating in a service-based scholarship program and who indicate they have a civic mentor are more civic-minded at the end of the program, compared to those who do not have a civic mentor. Subsequent examination of the attributes of the civic-mentoring relationship (i.e., closeness of relationship, content, context of interactions, and students' perception of their mentors' civic-mindedness) revealed that the topics discussed during their interactions and the extent to which the students perceived their mentor to be civic-minded influence students' development of civic-mindedness.

These findings call into question the role of civic mentors in higher education and one's capacity to serve as a civic mentor. They also illuminate the challenges associated with having difficult conversations with students in an educational context and the inherent tension that may exist between a mentor's personal convictions and their role on campus. The results of this study confirm that more often than not, conversations around issues of power, privilege, politics, and democratic principles and processes are not happening. But more importantly, the results also suggest that civic mentoring holds great potential for developing the next generation of informed and engaged participants in society. So, are you a civic mentor? And how might you reconsider your role as a civic mentor and subsequently, the ways in which you create opportunities for meaningful

dialogue with students?

Citations:

Norris, K. E. (forthcoming). *Civic-Mentoring Relationships: Implications for Student Development of Civic-Mindedness* (Doctoral dissertation).

Norris, K. E., & Miller, B. (2012). Developing civic-minded graduates: The importance of civic mentoring. Indianapolis, IN: Assessment Institute.

Thorndyke, L. E., Gusic, M. E., & Milner, R. J. (2008). Functional mentoring: A practical approach with multilevel outcomes. *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*, 28(3), 157-164.

Events and Information

- Connect with [CSL](#) on Social Media
- [Preparing Your Faculty to Participate in the IUPUI Community-Based Learning Inventory – May 7, 2015](#)
- [Connecting Campuses with Communities – May 11-15, 2015](#)
- [Westside Windshield Tour – May 14, 2015](#)
- [Sam H. Jones Scholar, Leah Van Antwerp, discusses her path towards an increased awareness of global connectedness](#)
- [Congratulations to IUPUI Chancellor's Awardees for Excellence in Civic Engagement: Dr. David Craig \(Faculty\) and Mary Rigg Neighborhood Center \(Community Partner\)](#)
- [CSL honors Robert G. Bringle at the IUPUI Spirit of Philanthropy](#)
-  [2015 William M. Plater Civic Engagement Medallion Recipients Announced](#)
- [Read an Alternative Break Trip Advisor's account of her experiences in August, GA](#)