Community Asset Mapping: A Critical Strategy for Service Part 3/3

The Bonner Community Engagement Curriculum

BWBRS Description: *Bonner Curriculum workshop teaches participants how to view a community from its assets, not deficits. Students learn how to find assets within their partner communities and incorporate them into service work.*

Overview: Community asset mapping— the process of intentionally identifying the human, material, financial, entrepreneurial and other resources in a community—is an important process for community projects of all kinds. Whether you are tutoring a child in a neighborhood school, starting your own new initiative, or mobilizing a campaign for a policy change, knowing and using the many assets within a community (including those of the university or college) provide a foundation for effectiveness. This intensive training, designed over a series of activities most suitable for at least three days, provides guidance on how to uncover community assets and create a canvass or map of them. It relies on the framework of viewing a community from its assets, rather than deficits, in order to utilize and manifest existing resources of all kinds.

Category Community context and engagement; community asset mapping; impact; research

Level: Participants may be all levels; facilitator should be highly experienced

Recommended

Bonner Sequence: This three-session training is recommended for Bonner students during their first and second year in the program, perhaps broken into two or three parts. The concept of Asset Mapping (and the activities of day one of this guide) could be introduced during the first semester, perhaps beginning during Orientation. The activities of day two could be introduced a bit later (perhaps mid-way through the semester or mid-year). The activities of day three could follow right after that, or be introduced later, perhaps in preparation for sophomore year service.

*** There is an additional handout attached that focuses on asset mapping a campus. If mapping a campus would be useful for your program, include it where/when you feel most appropriate.

Learning Outcomes:

- Session Three activities focuses on getting participants to likewise map the assets of their campus and consider how these assets might best be deployed in service to community.

Materials

- Flip Charts
- Markers
- Copies of Handouts

How to Prepare:

Review the entire guide and the extensive handouts. Determine days for the series of activities. Collect materials. Prepare logistics related for community immersions (mapping, interviewing, etc.) Make flip charts.

Review the facilitation workshops to get a sense of tools and techniques to use. Prepare your own notes about facilitating discussions, debriefs, in-community activities, etc.

Brief Outline:

This is the third of a three part series. The structure of this training is intentionally loose to accommodate a wide range of reflection possibilities. The facilitator will need to

guide reflection in the way that seems best to them based on the flow and results of the previous two sessions. Focus this reflection on possible next steps.

Session Three (full day including immersion/profile activities)
   1) Reflection & Wrap Up   suggested time 60 minutes

Session Three

Part 1) Reflection & Wrap Up
Suggested time: 60 minutes

Convene the group again. Focus the group with a warm up or pair question.

Break the reflection into several parts:

1) Sharing (What?)
2) Discussing and Reflection (So what?)
3) Questions and Going Deeper (Now what?)

For example, for 1) What:
Have each small group or individual report on some of what they learned through the interaction with community residents. Have them note also how they experienced the exercise: was it hard, was it easy, was it fun and why, what emotions came up, etc.

Consult the Reflection workshop for additional ideas and tools.

For example, for 2) So what:
Engage the group in considering, "so what can we take from these experiences to enrich our asset map?" Add more details to the community asset map (from day 2) using post-its and markers. Help participants draw connections between the people and the project and the community.

For example, for 3) Now what:
Return to the IOU's framework presented on Day 1:
I-Identify
O-Organize

U-Utilize
S-Sustain

Engage the participants in a brainstorm and exploration of how they can approach their learning, information, and relationship building in terms of the framework IOU'S.

Summary Questions

1. What, if any, work currently is going on involving members of the campus community and the community. Consider the following:

☐ Student-led community service projects
☐ Institutionalized community service projects
☐ Broad civic engagement projects that involve large segments of the campus population
☐ Political engagement projects, such as get out the vote initiatives
☐ Career-related projects, such as those linking community entities with internships, jobs, and career opportunities
☐ Faculty research projects
☐ Academic department research projects
☐ Service learning courses (courses with placements in community agencies, internships, or other connections)
☐ Community based research projects (projects agenda determined by community)
☐ Informal partnerships between campus entities and community entities
☐ Formal partnerships between campus entities and community entities
☐ Economic development projects, such as construction or rehabilitation of housing
☐ Financial projects, such as creation of lending institutions or funds
☐ Accreditation projects, such as graduate programs with teaching placements in schools that are connected to graduation completion
Other:

2. What, if any, seem to be the major gaps or issues with existing relationships projects, or partnerships? Consider the following:

Process
☐ Lack of accountability to agencies/partners
☐ Turnover of students/staff
☐ Overall low participation/low levels of involvement
☐ Perceived low quality of involvement/work by students/campus

- ☐ Lack of community voice in decision-making, goals, or structure
- ☐ Economic divides between campus and community (town-gown; rich campus-poor community)
- ☐ Too many programs; not enough coordination
- ☐ Too many programs; "we're all leaders" syndrome; new programs every year
- ☐ Lack of sufficient resources
- ☐ Lack of leadership at all levels of campus

Program

- ☐ Student-led community service projects
- ☐ Institutionalized community service projects
- ☐ Broad civic engagement projects that involve large segments of the campus population
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Other:

3. **Considering all of this information, develop a few key guidelines or ideas to take forward into your own planning. For more guidance, now turn to the Utilizing Community Assets training.**

Campus Inventory

☐ **If you are from a campus, spend several hours (or even days) also mapping the campus — the college or university environment.**

The purpose for doing so is to get a more complete sense of the types of resources — student, intellectual, academic, and material — that could be leveraged toward the success of the project and benefit of the community.

First, complete the Campus Profile on the next page. Then, consider the summary questions below at the end.

Campus Profile

**Institution
name**: _____

Total undergraduate student population:
__less than 3,000   __3,001-5000   _5,001-10,000   __10,001-15,000   __over 15,000

Type: __ Public   or   __ Private
             __ 2-year   or   __ 4-year

Campus Setting: ___ Urban   or   ___ Rural   or   ___ Suburban
                  ___ Residential   or   ___ Commuter

Student body: ___ Traditional age (18-21)   or   ___ Non-traditional (adult)

Check any that apply:
__Single sex (men or women)   __ Military affiliation __Other: _____
__ Technical school   __Historically Black College

Is a commitment to service mentioned in the official college mission statement?
___ yes   ___ no

Is there a mandatory community service requirement on campus for graduation?
___ yes   ___ no

Are classes with service-learning components available on your campus?
___ yes   ___ no

Percentage of faculty involved: ___ 0-10%   ___ 10-20%
                              ___ 20-30%   ___ over 30%

Is community-based research offered on your campus?
___ yes   ___ no

SERVICE OFFICE GENERAL INFORMATION:

Does a centralized student community service office exist on campus?
__ yes   ___ no

Name: _____

How long has the office been in existence: ___ 0-3 years   ___ 4-6 years
                                      ___ 7-10 years   ___ over 10 years

Where is the student community service office housed?
___ Student Activities/Campus Activities Office
___ Student Government
___ Dean of Students
___ Campus Ministry
___ Academic Affairs or Provost Office
___ Other: _____

Is there a dedicated physical space for the student community service office?
___ yes   ___ no

Is the office located in a convenient, easily accessible area for students?
___ yes   ___ no   where: _____

Check all that you can find in the student community service office:

___ Brochure describing your programs
___ Records on community agencies and volunteer projects available
___ Records on each student volunteer
___ Bulletin board displaying upcoming service events, volunteer activities, etc.
___ Information describing local community, it's needs and assets
___ Training materials for service projects
___ Newsletters, articles and/or materials from national organizations, i.e.:

    ___ Amnesty International
    ___ Americorps
    ___ Peacecorps
    ___ Best Buddies
    ___ Bonner Foundation
    ___ BreakAway: The ASB Connection
    ___ Habitat for Humanity
    ___ Jumpstart
    ___ National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness
    ___ Oxfam America
    ___ Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education
    ___ Others: _____

SERVICE OFFICE STAFFING INFORMATION:

Check all that apply:
___ Full time paid professional staff   How many: ____
___ Graduate student fellows or interns   How many: ____
___ Work study students   How many: ____
___ Americorps VISTA
___ Volunteer Student Project Leaders   How many: ____
___ Advisory Committee
    Members include: ___ Faculty   How many: ____
                  ___ Students   How many: ____
                  ___ Community Member How many: ____

To whom does the head staff person of the student community service group report?
___ College President
___ Vice President of Academic Affairs
___ Vice President of Student Affairs
___ Dean of Students
___ Director of Student Activities

___ Other: _____

Total annual budget: ___ less than $10,000 ___ $10,001-$20,000 ___ $20,001-$30,000 ___ $30,001- $40,000 ___ $40,001-50,000 ___ over $50,000

Sources of funding (and % of whole):

___ University Budget   % ____
___ Student Activities Fee   % ____
___ Student Government Funding   % ____
___ Fundraising   % ____
___ Foundation Support   % ____
___ Endowment Support   % ____
___ Community Support   % ____

SERVICE PROGRAMMING:

Check all groups that the student community service office works with:

___ Fraternities and sororities
___ Athletic teams
___ Honor societies
___ Religious groups
___ Residence Life
___ Minority student groups
___ Service Clubs (i.e. Key Club, APO)

Does the student community service office support, offer, or assist with:

___ Winter or Spring Alternative Break trips
___ Summer service internships or opportunities
___ International service projects
___ Community Service/Volunteer Fair/Open House
___ Awareness Weeks
___ Speakers and/or films on social issues
___ America Reads/America Counts
___ Service Award presentations
___ Resources on careers in public service

ACTIVISM, ADVOCACY, POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT:

Where do students and groups go for resources and support around activism and advocacy:
___ The community service office listed above
___ Supportive faculty members
___ Other students and student groups on campus
___ National organizations
___ Student Activities Office
___ Office, department, or organization specifically focused on this kind of work
       Please describe: _____
___ Other: _____

Does a centralized office or organization coordinate or support political groups and activities:
___ The community service office listed above
___ Student Activities Office
___ Student Government
___ Faculty Department _____
___ Office, department, or organization specifically focused on this kind of work
       Please describe: _____
___ Other _____

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE CAREERS:

Does your Career Services Office offer the following support for pursuing nonprofit work and socially responsible careers:
___ Nonprofit Career Fairs
___ Representatives of nonprofit organizations at other career fairs and events
___ A staff person who explicitly has nonprofits as one of the industries she covers
___ Panels, workshops, or other events that address this type of work or that bring to campus alumni or nonprofit professionals to talk about socially responsible careers
___ Formal internship program
___ Work study opportunities for nonprofits
___ Partnerships with Community Service office on events and resources
___ Other: _____

What percentage of graduating students enter each of the following sectors:

___ For profit
___ Government
___ Nonprofit