

# SUCCESSFUL SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAMS

*New Models of Excellence  
in Higher Education*

Augsburg College  
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Minneapolis, MN 55454

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## On the Shoulders of Giants: Building on a Tradition of Experiential Education at Augsburg College

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### INTRODUCTION

Augsburg College's original mission was that of a *Presteskole*, a ministerial training school for one of the Norwegian branches of the Lutheran church. It was founded in a small, rural setting in Marshall, Wisconsin, and relocated to Minneapolis when its founding president was evicted from a recycled school house, with 10 to 12 of the 20 students lodging in the president's home and all college activities conducted in an attic measuring ten by eighteen. This austere lifestyle continued when Augsburg relocated to Minneapolis, and the promised contributions of prominent civic leaders failed to materialize. The foundation of the first building was laid only after a young servant girl, Karen Danielson, loaned the school officials \$60, which served as a catalyst for the delinquent pledges that eventually enabled the college to open its doors in its new, urban location in 1872. The founding fathers seemed to

reflect the 19th century religious awakening in Norway which also emphasized the civic responsibilities of committed Christians and which called for full involvement in community life. For example, one of the earliest faculty members was elected to the Minneapolis Board of Education even before his final citizenship papers were received!

## VISION AND MISSION

With these humble origins and a focus on training preachers and teachers, Augsburg adopted a motto of "Education for Service" early in the 20th century. The president who allegedly coined that motto, Bernhard Christensen, attended Augsburg as a student and reinforced the Scandinavian traditions and social ethic of community involvement in a profound manner when he began teaching at Augsburg in 1930. Deeply influenced by these traditions and the example of Kagawa, a Japanese Christian who chose to live among the poorest in his society, Bernhard Christensen also chose to live in a deteriorating neighborhood in Minneapolis, turning his home into a hostel for people in need of a place to stay.

President Christensen was named by Mayor Hubert Humphrey to chair the first Human Relations Commission in Minneapolis, and Christensen actively supported students who initiated a controversial coffeehouse, a venue where Bob Dylan frequently played early in his career, as an alternative to the drug culture in a nearby neighborhood. It seems clear that Christensen's brand of nonsectarian Christianity continues to be reflected in the current mission statement of the college: "to develop future leaders of service to the world by providing high quality educational opportunities which are based in the liberal arts and shaped by the faith and values of the Christian church, by the context of a vital metropolitan setting, and by the intentionally diverse campus community."

Thus, the mission and vision of the service-learning program is built upon the scaffolding created by generations of those who embraced the community and saw Minneapolis as a place of opportunity and service.<sup>1</sup> Many of Augsburg's former students returned to serve on the faculty. They continued this rich tradition of "education for service," which was enhanced by their sophistication in their disciplines and involvement in the community, often including residency in adjacent neighborhoods.

## ORIGINS AND FOUNDATION: A LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE IN THE MODERN METROPOLIS

In the 1940s the "education for service" theme forked in several directions. Joel Torstenson, an alumnus, became the visionary architect of

many new academic ways to manifest the motto. Upon being named to chair the sociology department, he added courses in Intercultural Relations and Minority Problems, as well as Introduction to Social Work and Public Welfare. The department soon became the largest in the college, embracing the praxis between analysis and practice. In 1957, the department began to require field experience in a social agency as an integral part of the classroom course(s) in social work. While Torstenson continued to actively support the growth and eventually the independence of the social work program,<sup>2</sup> he emphasized that the primary objective of the sociology program was "to help students attain a better understanding of society . . . and [the] forces of social change, in the hope that departmental alumni would become effective agents of change" (Chrislock, 1969, p. 210).

Furthermore, Torstenson argued effectively that such an objective was consistent with the mission of a Christian liberal arts college. During the 1950s and 1960s, Torstenson and his colleagues expanded this educational philosophy to include a Social Science Research Center which engaged students and faculty in participatory action research; e.g., community studies for neighborhood groups, planning districts, and the emerging South Minneapolis Model Cities Program of the War on Poverty.

In addition to attracting new colleagues who shared his vision, Torstenson convinced the college to give him a year's sabbatical leave in 1965-66 in order to study what other urban colleges and universities were doing in the arena of urban and experiential education. He traveled widely, studying closely the ways in which urban colleges and universities were engaging themselves in their communities and milieu. The result was the formative document, "The Liberal Arts College in the Modern Metropolis," a paper presented to the Augsburg faculty on January 12, 1967, and adopted in principle as the faculty and administration increasingly began to refer to Augsburg as a college of the city. Torstenson argued that the college's location "at the heart of one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the United States gives it a strategic setting for deliberately developing an educational program responsive to the opportunities and challenges of such a community . . . [giving] careful attention to the forces at work in the modern metropolis . . ." (Torstenson, 1967).

## Early Service-Learning Rationale and Programs

As a prophet ahead of his time, Torstenson (1967) identified a number of motifs of academic response to the metropolis. First, he posited the metropolis as a learning laboratory for liberal learning, including in his examples Johns Hopkins YMCA's extensive tutoring programs, where students became participant observers through volunteer or paid placements. Secondly, he saw the metropolis as a laboratory for research,

including participatory action research. Thirdly, he identified the metropolis as an opportunity for community service for both students and faculty as members of communities "which not only need their help but also have some legitimate claim upon them." The fourth motif advanced by Torstenson and embraced by the faculty was the metropolis as an occasion for corporate academic responsibility. Here, in the best tradition of the liberal arts, he questioned individualistic perspectives and ethics that are inadequate for dealing with the question of what it means for colleges and universities, as well as businesses and corporations, to be colleagues and partners with their surrounding communities and the larger metropolitan area.

Torstenson emphasized the critical importance of "the interactive relationships between community and college/university as dynamic and adaptive social institutions responding to each other and the social forces within and beyond the local community" (1967). But equally importantly, his position paper and leadership led to the subsequent development of an Urban Concerns graduation requirement, the college-wide internship program, the urban studies program, an autonomous social work department, active involvement in the establishment of the Urban Corps in Minneapolis and St. Paul (for off-campus public and community service work-study internships), and the Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs (HECUA).

### **Programmatic Developments in the 1960s and 1970s: Building on the Foundations**

One response to Torstenson's position paper was the establishment of a task force on the college and metropolis. It initiated the development of an urban studies program and supportive courses, as well as the recruitment of faculty who were actively "interested in and concerned about the college's role in the modern city" (Torstenson, 1974). Of particular relevance to this chapter was the effort to "expand the field experience programs into areas beyond those developed for students enrolled in the courses in education and social work," as well as "an expanded student employment service . . . which takes more complete advantage of the urban setting . . . carefully consider[ing] the educative function of employment."<sup>3</sup>

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Augsburg initiated a wide range of academically grounded experiential education programs that grew from this long tradition and history, and especially from the conceptual and organizational leadership of Professor Torstenson.

*Expansion of the Social Science Research Center (1964 and following).* Robert Clyde was hired to work closely with community groups and the newly established Model Cities Program. Efforts focused upon what would now be called participatory action research (PAR), involving

the community residents, faculty, and students in data gathering and analysis that would be helpful in enabling the community to make decisions and press for changes and resources that would improve the quality of life of residents in the Model Cities neighborhoods. The center focused its participatory action research on the priorities and planning in urban neighborhoods, such as experimental schools, racism, and social cost accounting.

*Establishment of the Crisis Colony and the Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs (HECUA).* Torstenson's position paper was also grounded in the urban crises of the 1960s and the turbulence taking place in most U.S. cities. Following Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination, Ewald "Joe" Bash, an innovative pastor and educator, contacted Torstenson. Bash had already been developing immersion residency programs for high school students and seminarians on the north side of Minneapolis. Together they created and conducted a program in the summer of 1968. "It was an experiment with a 'live-in' learning program in which students . . . shared in the life and work of a ghetto community while studying the nature and dynamics of modern urban life for college credit" (Torstenson, 1974). Using a co-learning approach, "... ghetto 'street people,' indigenous leaders of local community organizations, and civil rights leaders were hired as 'adjunct professors' . . . [with] each student engaged in volunteer work in strategic agencies, organizations, or situations which would provide a sensitive 'participation-observer' situation" (Torstenson, 1974).

In addition to focusing on the societal crisis, Torstenson and Bash contended that there was an educational crisis that had been brewing all during the 1960s. Their work reflected the reemerging affirmation of the work of John Dewey and others who insisted upon a new epistemology and the relevance of experiential education. As Joe Bash put it, "... no longer was objectivity alone an adequate approach to learning. . . . Teaching and learning must happen in dynamics of experiential encounter" (Bash, 1969). Thus, at its core, the Crisis Colony was based upon an explicit experiential education epistemology. The powerful impact that it had on students and faculty alike led to its continuation the following year as a semester in the city program with students continuing to live in the community, engaging in community service internships and study that involved community-based instructors and college professors, as well as reading, critical analysis, and field study.

Other colleges and universities in Minnesota were impressed by what Bash and Torstenson had created. Hence, the Crisis Colony (renamed the Metropolitan Urban Studies Term) was opened to non-Augsburg students, and eventually evolved into a consortium of 18 colleges and universities in the upper Midwest. The Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs (HECUA) celebrated its 25th anniversary

in 1996, honoring Joel Torstenson, Bob Clyde, Oscar Anderson, Gordon Nelson, and colleagues from the other colleges who joined with Augsburg in creating the consortium. Another indicator of Augsburg and Torstenson's commitment to experiential education was the housing of the consortium at Augsburg in its formative years with Torstenson serving HECUA as president and volunteer CEO during its early years.<sup>4</sup>

**Metro-Urban Studies Internship Program (MUSIP) and Urban Corps/Work-Study.** In order to expand the opportunities for Augsburg students to engage in public and community service endeavors, a college-wide internship program was created in 1972. Since only a small percentage of students could participate in the full semester in the city programs, the faculty created internship options in every academic department, with the opportunity for students to take up to four of their 35 courses as internships. Most of those early internships focused upon connecting the students' major disciplines to the challenges facing the Twin Cities community, particularly in the central cities.

When Minneapolis and St. Paul established Urban Corps programs in the late 1960s, Augsburg allowed, even encouraged, students to use their work-study funding to engage in public and community service placements, with 10% of the work-study budget set aside for these off-campus opportunities. In addition, Herald Johnson, the financial aid director, sought out special federal and private funding for students to engage in extensive tutoring and literacy internships at the Curry Center, a settlement house in Augsburg's immediate neighborhood.

<sup>3</sup>President Oscar Anderson initiated a "Day in May" in 1968 in order for the whole college community to listen to the voices of desperation and revolt from the inner cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. "The impact of that dramatic experience of students and faculty learning directly from its surrounding community about some of the deeply felt feelings of frustration and anger of hurting people in our cities was intense" (Torstenson, 1974).

William Youngdahl, producer of the film "Time for Burning," spent two years on campus exploring the establishment of a Center of Urban Care which involved a number of students and faculty. He became an important link between the college, the Urban Coalition, the Human Relations Commission, and other initiatives in the community. In addition, Youngdahl worked with students and faculty to develop new college responses to the challenges of minority education (Torstenson, 1974).

One other experiential educational strategy for connecting Augsburg with the community embraced the co-learning model in other ways. In the fall of 1969, a course in Crime and Society was initiated at the Minnesota Maximum Security Prison in Stillwater, located approximately 25 miles from the campus. The class was made up of 17 Augsburg students, 11 prison inmates, and four correctional officers. The basic readings were complemented by role playing and role reversals, with all stu-

dents becoming the teachers as well as the learners. Professor Cal Appleby defined his role as that of an enabler. Subsequent co-learning courses were taught at Stillwater and expanded to the Women's Prison in Shakopee, the St. Cloud Reformatory, and Trevilla, a residence for physically and emotionally challenged adults.

Another by-product of this innovative experiential co-learning ironically eliminated a role for Augsburg students; namely, the establishment of funding for higher education opportunities at the above correctional institutions. One of the original inmates subsequently came to Augsburg and established the Center for the Education of Nontraditional Students (CENTS), with a wide range of programs serving the disabled and hearing impaired. This further led to a thorough physical renovation which made Augsburg the most fully accessible campus in the state. Vern Bloom continued to expand CHR (Conserving Human Resources), with courses offered in mental hospitals and rehabilitation centers, with each endeavor involving Augsburg students and residents in courses such as Mental Health and the Social Order.

Hence, since its founding as a *Presteskole* in 1869, Augsburg has had a growing emphasis on experience-based education, an appreciation for praxis and experiential learning. Long before the research of Pat Cross, Bill McKeachie, Zelda Gamson, Alexander Astin, and others that led to the Wingspread "Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education," Augsburg faculty and students had found that experiential principles are sound and fundamental to a liberal arts education in a modern metropolis. Augsburg did not participate in the University Year of Action efforts and was not connected to the founding of the Society for Field Experience Education or the National Center for Public Service Internships in the early 1970s (forerunners of the National Society for Experiential Education). But Augsburg was actively involved in the founding of the Minnesota Association for Field Experience Learning (MAFEL) in 1971 and the Minnesota State Internship Program, both of which brought together faculty, public, and community agency staff for the purpose of creating public and community service internships for college and university students.

## CONTINUING THE TRADITION: INSTITUTIONALIZING EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION AND THE URBAN CONNECTION

### Handling the Succession

In 1977, a year before Joel Torstenson was to retire, he convinced the administration and his sociology colleagues that it was critical to find a successor who was committed to experiential, community-based educational programs and someone who had extensive experience in program

development and urban studies. As a result, the college brought me to campus to work with Joel for a year before his retirement. I had been working with Steve Brooks and the GLCA Philadelphia urban program and directing the College of Wooster's Urban Studies Program, which had urban centers in Portland, San Diego, Cleveland, Detroit, and Columbus. Prior to and during my graduate work at Notre Dame, I also worked with OEO programs in South Bend and before that as an intern in public housing and public education programs in New York City in the early 1960s.

I came to Augsburg with a deep respect for what had already been created and a charge to build upon that base. This involved working with colleagues to expand the opportunities for Augsburg students, encouraging them to become further involved in a praxis relationship with the city and the challenges associated with urbanization. With the MUSIP and HECUA programs firmly in place, a colleague and I were able to build upon the community research emphasis. Our research involved six Augsburg students as research colleagues, as we interviewed over 500 Minneapolis residents with a focus on central city residents' perceptions and behavior regarding their neighborhoods and housing.

Another innovation involved our continuing relationship with Joe Bash, the co-founder of the Crisis Colony. Joe had also founded a community radio station, KMOJ-FM, in the middle of the Sumner Olson Public Housing project. The station's antenna sat on top of a senior citizen's high-rise apartment complex which was struggling to remain viable for older residents. As Augsburg's representative on the KMOJ board of directors, I was able to work with Joe, the Minneapolis Housing Authority, and eight students to pioneer an intergenerational living arrangement in the same neighborhood where the Crisis Colony was born. The students served on the residents' council and planned and co-facilitated social and educational activities both inside the building and at the nearby community center. The quality of life for all, including the students, was significantly enhanced over the four years before the program was phased out.

### **External Funding in Difficult Times: Cooperative Education and Title VIII**

The early 1980s were tight financial times at Augsburg. The staffing for MUSIP had already been eliminated in the 1970s due to funding cuts. All internships were now decentralized to each department, with increasing focus on career development and less emphasis on public and community service. In addition, the course credit that many faculty once received for sponsoring and directing internships was eliminated in early budget cuts. But, as so often happens, new doors opened.

Thanks to an unexpected opportunity to serve as the Associate Academic Dean in 1980-81, I was given responsibility for assessing the

overall internship program and exploring what other colleges were doing. In the process, we discovered cooperative education and became acquainted with how other liberal arts colleges in Minnesota and elsewhere had used Title VIII funding to retool their internship programs and generate paid public and community service internships. We were able to use this funding to reestablish administrative and faculty support for experiential education. The timing was excellent, since even deeper cuts were made in the Augsburg budget during the 1982-83 academic year.

Hence, from 1984 through 1989, cooperative education funding provided administrative support that enabled me to devote all of my time, with the assistance of a staff, to experiential education. In addition, Title VIII funded faculty development in experiential education theory and practice and supported travel money to make possible Augsburg's full involvement in both the Cooperative Education Association (national, regional, and state) and the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education (NSIEE).

### **The Ad Hoc Community Service Task Force and Notre Dame's Center for Social Concern**

Of particular relevance to service-learning programming was our choice of consultants to help us in the first year of Title VIII funding. We were able to secure the services of Don McNeill, the Director of Notre Dame's Center for Social Concern (formerly the Center for Experiential Learning). More than 30 faculty attended his workshop on experiential education, which followed a morning convocation presentation concerning Notre Dame's newly renamed Center for Social Concern. Don showed an influential video which effectively portrayed community service in an experiential education context. In addition, he shared the podium with a recent Notre Dame alum who told of her life-changing experiences in their various urban-based community service-learning programs.

As we had hoped, faculty, staff, and students responded affirmatively to Don's workshop and his moving and articulate convocation connecting the liberal arts, Notre Dame's similar Christian mission and their version of education for service. The immediate result was the emergence of an ad hoc task force to explore programmatic alternatives and funding for the development of a community service program to be developed in conjunction with cooperative education and the existing internship programs. This group set about developing strategies to expand Augsburg's education for service.

### **National Society for Internships and Experiential Education (NSIEE)**

Cooperative education funding enabled me to attend the 1985 annual conference of the National Society for Internships and Experiential

Education (NSIEE) in Pittsburgh. There, I was greatly influenced by Cornell University's field study experiential workshop (led by Tim Stanton, Dwight Giles, et al.), the Service-Learning Special Interest Group, and Jane Kendall and her colleagues' FIPSE-funded Consultant Training program. Within the first two years of cooperative education funding, I found myself trained and active as a FIPSE-NSIEE consultant, as well as serving on the board of NSIEE and on the verge of becoming its president from 1987 to 1989 when NSIEE played a leading role in the reaffirmation of the value of combining service and learning.

As previously noted, it is ironic that all of this happened when the college was experiencing difficult financial times and cutbacks. However, cooperative education funding enabled me to travel and experience a full range of co-op education training, which included NSIEE. This, in turn, enabled me to become an active part of the initiatives and organizations that played a key role in the resurgence of interest in service-learning in the 1980s; i.e., the work of Jane Kendall, Bob Sigmon, Tim Stanton, Dwight Giles, John Duley, Sharon Rubin, Tom Little, Sally Migliore, and Dick Couto.

Needless to say, it was exciting and very rewarding to be able to serve as president of NSIEE (now NSEE) when its strategic planning directed and enabled the staff and membership to give highest priority to the theory and practice of service-learning. My work on the NSIEE board enabled me to be involved in the development of the ten Wingspread Principles of Combining Service and Learning and the Jane Kendall/NSIEE 2-volume "bible," *Combining Service and Learning*. As a result of our involvement in NSEE, Augsburg was able to stay informed and connected with those leaders and institutions that were on the cutting edge of the reemergence of service-learning in higher education.

For example, from the mid-1980s, when NSIEE's FIPSE consultants authored the much used *Strengthening Experiential Education Within Your Institution*, Augsburg has been aware of and closely following the philosophy and practice espoused in that work by grounding our efforts in the following:

- The values and mission of the college
- Involving faculty at every point
- Integrating experiential education into the curriculum
- Giving attention to quality and assessment
- Establishing administrative structures that support the goals of experiential education and are congruent with the institution
- Integrating experiential education into the budget and financial system of the college

Some specific examples illustrate further how the NSIEE connection was of benefit to Augsburg. When Augsburg, HECUA, and MAFEL co-hosted the 1988 NSIEE Conference in Minneapolis, we were able to secure the services of the chair of the service-learning SIG, Janet Luce of Stanford University. She came to our campus and spent an afternoon with Trygve Nystuen, the president of the student senate and other students interested in creating a community service commission as part of the student government and activities program. That same 1988 conference included an all-day preconference workshop on service-learning led by Jon Wagner of the University of California system. This provided another catalyst for our efforts. In addition, because of my NSIEE involvement, I was invited to become a reader for the FIPSE community service grants and began to visit various campuses as an NSIEE-FIPSE consultant, learning even more about emerging programs.

### Student Initiatives and External Funding for Service-Learning

Meanwhile, the Augsburg Community Service Task Force was actively supporting Trygve Nystuen and his successful efforts to establish a new community service commission in student government. In addition, major attention was focused on finding funding for a community service coordinator. Thanks to information gained through involvement in cooperative education and NSIEE, I became aware of the shift of supplemental work-study funding to an emphasis on community service. Since our Community Service Task Force had been authorized by the president and his staff to seek funding, we were able to obtain \$25,000 from the supplemental work-study money and use that grant to leverage another source of funding that had become available from the state of Minnesota in 1989. These were one-time grants of \$12,500 to hire staff for service-learning programs if the college provided a matching cash grant of \$12,500 or more. Had not the unexpected Federal Work-Study Supplemental grant been secured by Herald Johnson, there was little likelihood that any matching money would have been available.

In summary, it is critical to note that Augsburg's history and broadly based experiential education programs, in concert with the Cooperative Education Title VIII funding, made it possible for a faculty member to become actively engaged in the national dialogue on service-learning. This enabled Augsburg to take fuller advantage of new opportunities emerging in the field of service-learning. The college was already working actively with Mark Langseth and the staff of the National Youth Leadership Council to expand faculty involvement in service-learning.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the previous five years of groundwork by the task force all came to fruition in the form of the \$37,500 from these two sources to hire a staff and add a service-learning and tutoring emphasis to our experiential education programs.<sup>6</sup>

## A NEW PHASE OF SERVICE-LEARNING: UNDERWRITING NEW STAFF

### Staffing Service-Learning

With funds in hand, a search committee was named by the task force. It included the two student co-chairs of the newly created Student Senate Commission (now named the LINK). Laura Elhardt and Krisi Miller joined the new chair of the task force, Nancy Guibeault, and two faculty members as the search committee.

After an extensive search which included interviewing seven candidates, the committee unanimously agreed upon Mary Laurel True. Her credentials included an MSW in community organizing and previous experience in organizing and staffing a health-related service-learning program in Worcester, Massachusetts. Mary knew the college well since she had been a participant in Augsburg's first global semester program in Mexico when she had been a student at St. Catherine's in St. Paul and had lived with Augsburg students after she returned to the U.S. In addition, since Mary had a young child, she chose to work part-time, making it possible for us to hire another part-time staff person as coordinator of tutoring and mentoring.

Along with the job description developed by the director of experiential education, to whom Mary would report, the task force had agreed that Wingspread's "Ten Principles for Combining Service and Learning" and "Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education" should guide our efforts. These two documents, along with NSIEE's *Strengthening Experiential Education Within Your Institution* (1986) formed the framework and principles for the building and expansion of the service-learning program. In addition, we had the benefit of having a collection of syllabi from courses that had incorporated service into the course content. These had come from NSIEE, COOL, and Campus Compact sources and were used in the syllabi sampling workshops referred to previously. Two faculty members, one in psychology and one in sociology, worked with Mary to incorporate a 15 to 20 hour service component into their courses as a trial run during the semester following her coming aboard.

### FIPSE Funding

As was the case with cooperative education, funding needed to be secured in order for the college to phase the staffing into permanent, hard-money positions. Hence, in addition to program development and supervision of the tutoring coordinator, Mary began right away to develop a proposal for FIPSE, continuing the initial efforts of the task force. With assistance from Carol Forbes, the newly hired Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, and ideas from other FIPSE-funded programs,<sup>7</sup> Mary set to work, using feedback from the advisory commit-

tee and experiential education staff,<sup>8</sup> to meet the FIPSE deadline, framing the proposal in terms of experiential education and the college's specific context.

### Collaboration with the Faculty Development Program

The FIPSE proposal focused upon integrating service into specific courses with a faculty development focus to accomplish the long-term institutionalization of service-learning. This also led to the cultivation of new and continuing relationships with the community and community-based organizations. Immediately upon hearing that Augsburg would receive a two year FIPSE grant, Mary began to work with the director of faculty development to integrate all stipends and service-learning faculty development into the ongoing efforts and procedures of the faculty development program. The same proposal forms were used, and the FIPSE funds were channeled through faculty development and reviewed by their committee like any other request for funding to revise and/or develop a new course. It was decided that a stipend of \$500 was appropriate for the revision of an existing course and consistent with funding for the creation of a new course; i.e., \$1,500.

Mary and Lois Olson, the Coordinator of Internships and Cooperative Education, were invited by the director of faculty development to make a presentation at the summer faculty development workshop. The course revision stipends and Mary's availability to assist faculty in securing salient, quality placements for courses was announced and explained at that retreat. Faculty response was immediate and enthusiastic, with six faculty applying for grants during the fall term and an additional six the following term.

### PROGRAM STRUCTURE

In keeping with the long-standing tradition of having internships and cooperative education as a function of and a fundamental part of the academic program, the service-learning program is overseen by a faculty member who reports to the academic dean and vice president of academic affairs. In addition to being a part of the experiential education staff, the evolution of service-learning continued to have the benefit of a college-wide advisory committee which had evolved from the original task force. It consisted of the student LINK co-chairs, four faculty members, the assistant to the president for community affairs, and the chair from the student affairs division.

### Division of Labor and Reporting

While there is an integrated, collaborative relationship among all five members of the experiential education staff, there is also a clear division



of labor. Mary Laurel True, Associate Director of Experiential Education, coordinates and promotes all aspects of service-learning, including the direct supervision of the tutoring-literacy coordinator.<sup>9</sup> Lois Olson, Associate Director of Experiential Education, coordinates and promotes the internship and cooperative education programs, including the direct supervision of the Placement and Employer Relations Coordinator. The entire staff meets regularly for planning and coordination, led by a tenured professor, who divides his time equally between teaching and administration. Each office uses student work-study assistants to carry out many of the day-to-day functions of the programs.<sup>10</sup>

In all aspects of the experiential education program, there is a concentrated effort to create reciprocal relationships and mutual benefits among the three constituents we seek to serve: our students, the community, and the faculty and academic programs they represent. To that end, each of the associate directors is responsible for creating continual feedback from these three sectors as we seek to serve their needs and interests synergistically and simultaneously. The experiential education staff team-teach an interim service-learning internship course as well as a general education City Seminar for students engaged in internships and community service.

Finally, to emphasize a point made earlier, the current president and vice president for academic affairs have been strong supporters of the experiential education program throughout their respective tenures, as were their predecessors before them. Of particular note is that President Anderson has served as the chair of the Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service since its founding. The commission coordinates all state and federal funding. President Anderson also belongs to the National and State Campus Compacts. The previous academic vice president participated in the 1992 Campus Compact Summer Institute in Boulder, co-authoring the rationale and strategic plan for service-learning along with four faculty members who attended with him.

### Role of Students

Students had been actively engaged in initiating community service projects well before there was a staff for service-learning or internships; e.g., Urban Corps involvement in public and community service internships, active participation in the Metropolitan Urban Studies Term semester programs, participation in a Freire-oriented Latin American program of the college, staffing a homeless shelter as part of campus ministry, developing a cross-generational community among residents of a senior citizen public housing project, staffing ESL programs at a settlement house near the campus.

Thus, it was a natural progression, in 1988, for the student government to create a community service commission with a budget and

stipend for its chair(s). Beginning with the first two co-chairs, Laura Elhard and Krisi Miller, the commission chairs have worked collaboratively, yet autonomously, with the coordinator of service-learning to promote student involvement in community service. The coordinator of service-learning serves as the adviser to the LINK commissioner(s) as well.

Since its inception, LINK has planned and staffed annual Halloween and Christmas parties for neighborhood families in conjunction with the Marriott Food Service and the community service-learning staff. Every Wednesday evening, LINK provides mentors and volunteers as part of a program for children whose families attend a potluck dinner sponsored by Trinity Lutheran Congregation, the college, and Fairview Hospitals. The students plan and carry out an educational and recreational program for the children while the parents have time to talk and gain support from one another. This and other LINK programs are a collaboration with the Peace and Justice Commission of Campus Ministry.

Since 1988, LINK has recruited teams to participate in the Great American Clean-up every spring and, since 1995, LINK has planned and carried out spring break community service projects on the Mexican-U.S. border and in Appalachia working with Habitat for Humanity. Beginning in 1996, LINK and the service-learning staff have planned and carried out a multi-campus spring break program in the Twin Cities as well. In the summer of 1996, LINK, Campus Ministry, and the service-learning staff collaborated with Habitat and a nearby hospital to build a Habitat home in Augsburg's own neighborhood. In addition, Augsburg has had active chapters of MPIRG (Minnesota Public Interest Research Group), Amnesty International, and the Peace and Justice Commission in Campus Ministry.

### Sabo-Johnson-Torstenson Public and Community Service Scholars

Beginning in 1995, 12 students were awarded renewable \$2,000 scholarships based on past involvement in public and community service. Each scholar then becomes a part of a leadership team that works closely with the coordinator of community service-learning and the director of experiential education to promote service-learning. The scholars have periodic retreats and meet regularly, framing their work around the social change model of leadership development along with Greenleaf's servant-leadership model.

Each scholar serves as a liaison between the college and one of Augsburg's core sites/organizations, with the latter defined as a key placement location for course-embedded service-learning and/or internships and off-campus work-study placements. The scholars program endeavors to build student leadership which integrates LINK, MPIRG, and Campus Ministry, providing student leadership and collaboration in the ongoing effort to strengthen and expand public and community ser-



vice at Augsburg. In addition, the scholar team has been consistently and intentionally representative of the diversity on and off campus.

The scholar program is funded by three endowment funds raised in honor of and by alumni of the college.<sup>11</sup> The largest endowment was raised in honor of alumnus Congressman Martin Sabo, who has served the public as a state legislator, Speaker of the Minnesota House of Representatives, and chair of the U.S. House Budget Committee. The other funding honors a 1931 graduate, Adeline Marie Rasmussen Johnson, and is provided by her family, who have been very involved in public and community service. The third endowment honors Joel and Fran Torstenson, whose example and leadership have been fundamental and foundational in the origins and educational philosophy of the service-learning program at Augsburg.

## STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE FACULTY INVOLVEMENT

As indicated in the preceding history, faculty have been the chief architects and supporters of experiential education, including service-learning, for at least three decades. This has firmly institutionalized experiential education throughout the curriculum through the college-wide internship, cooperative education, service-learning, and global education programs. With the advent of cooperative education funding, each academic department named a co-op education coordinator who was given a small annual stipend for participating in ongoing faculty development workshops and serving as a liaison for his/her respective department.

Similarly, and in conjunction with the faculty development program and outside funding, faculty have been provided with stipends to support their revision of courses to include a service-learning component. This has involved more than 25 faculty who now teach service-learning courses. A team of four faculty and the academic dean participated in the 1993 Campus Compact Summer Institute in Boulder. In addition, week-long service-learning summer institutes for faculty were held in 1994 and 1996 led by Augsburg faculty and the experiential education staff.

Indeed, the current director of faculty development, Victoria Littlefield, has played a key role in the expansion of service-learning. As a participant in the Campus Compact Summer Institute in 1993, she has been a co-planner with staff and has been instrumental in funding two Augsburg Summer Faculty Service-Learning Institutes (1994 and 1996). She serves on the Minnesota Campus Compact Advisory Council and has authored a faculty handbook for service-learning which focuses on incorporating community service into courses and has been widely circulated

among other colleges and universities. Two Augsburg faculty members, Joe Erickson and I, have served as editors in the American Association for Higher Education's (AAHE) monograph project, *Service-Learning and the Academic Disciplines*.

Since 1990, more than 30 different Augsburg courses have been designed or redesigned to include a service-learning component. Cass Dalglish has developed an innovative journalism course in which each student has a beat and identifies an issue to research and write about. The issues grow out of service involvement in a wide range of placements; e.g., homelessness, literacy, domestic abuse, poverty, crime. The Sociology Research Methods course engages students and instructor in action research for a nonprofit or community organization such as Habitat for Humanity or the Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

In a Biblical Studies course, students serve in the community to deepen their understanding of the biblical concept of works of mercy. The professor who teaches Environment and Behavior assigns his students in pairs to serve in a variety of environmentally related organizations in order to ground and apply the concepts of the course. In the History of Social Movements, students serve in a wide range of social movement organizations in order to more fully understand how current issues relate to past struggles and the difficulties and obstacles which a social movement faces. In a course required for education majors, Human Relations, students interact with diverse populations in order to grow in their understanding of and ability to interact with persons of other races and cultures. In the Urban Sociology course, the students and professor provide service, including action research, to neighborhood organizations near the college in order for students to do participant observation and have a point of departure and frame of reference for the course objectives of learning how to read a community and how to understand communities as social systems which are being impacted by a global market economy.

Currently, a mathematics professor has received a Campus Compact grant under the Science, Engineering, Architecture, Mathematics, and Computer Science Program (SEAMS). She has integrated a service-learning component into Math 247, Mathematical Modeling and Differential Equations. Another faculty member in the MIS and Business Administration department assigns teams of students to community-based organizations and nonprofits to design and create MIS programs in conjunction with her Project Management class. The supportive structures of service-learning summer institutes, faculty development stipends, and ongoing peer support and coaching undergird the growing involvement of faculty in service-learning and experiential education in general.

## OTHER COMPONENTS AND ASPECTS OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM

### First Year Experience (FYE) and Student Affairs

Every fall during new student orientation, each new student is assigned to a FYE group. All 300 first-year students participate. The faculty adviser and student orientation leader for each group work with Mary Laurel True and the service-learning staff to design a half-day service-learning experience in the community. Each year a quilt or collage is created, with each group contributing a square to the whole which is assembled and displayed at the opening convocation to mark and celebrate the centrality of service to the overall student experience at Augsburg. Convocation addresses always stress the education for service motto and the centrality of service to the academic program of the college.

In addition, the service-learning coordinator works with the residence hall coordinators and resident advisers (RA's) to create service-learning projects for each residence hall unit. All residence assistants arrange for at least one community service project for their floors each semester as part of their overall effort to enhance the quality of student life.

### Campus Ministry

As one of the early initiators of community service volunteer efforts, Campus Ministry continues to promote community and channel students into various service-learning endeavors. The service-learning staff and program works with the Peace and Justice Committee of Campus Ministry to jointly plan and promote community service projects.

Augsburg's Campus Minister, David Wold, has a long history of taking youth and adults to all parts of the world for service projects and increased global and cross-cultural understanding. His leadership and enthusiasm was instrumental in the creation of the initial Community Service-Learning Task Force in 1985 and the creation of a Peace and Justice Committee within Campus Ministry. Students, staff, and faculty active in community service are regularly invited to speak in chapel and promote the opportunities available in the wider community. Pastor Wold and a cadre of student volunteers have created a metropolitan-wide church basketball league which brings together thousands of boys and girls across race, class, and home neighborhood, making use of Augsburg's facilities to meet a community need.

### Community Participation and Key Community Partnerships

Augsburg's service-learning programs are built upon a long tradition of working with a wide range of community partners through a variety of

academic programs, including internships, cooperative education, social work and education practica, as well as student teaching. More specifically, the service-learning program has identified a set of 12 to 15 core sites determined by proximity to the campus, extent of need, and appropriateness of experiences for classes and student needs and interests. Most of these core sites have a Sabo-Johnson-Torstenson scholar who serves as a liaison between the organization/community and the college.

In recent years, the coordinator of service-learning has convened community leaders and agency staff to systematically identify community priorities and challenges with which the college and our experiential education programs can assist. All proposal and program development is done with the objective of achieving "reciprocity, collaboration and diversity" (Mintz & Hesser, 1996).

Beginning in 1994, community leaders and agency staff have been brought together to help in the identification of community assets and opportunities as part of an effort to write joint proposals for state funding of a tutoring and family support program for recent immigrant families who live in a community adjacent to the college. In addition, staff from the core sites are regularly consulted and convened to assist in the design and evaluation of the scholars program and the overall effectiveness of the service-learning program.

**Cedar Riverside Community School.** A very strong partnership has developed with a K-12 public charter school located in the most diverse and densely populated neighborhood in Minneapolis about four blocks from campus. In any given semester, there will be 40 to 60 Augsburg students serving in the classrooms, tutoring and assisting teachers and administrators in a variety of ways. A public and community service scholar works actively with the staff to coordinate and track student participation.

Several long-term collaborations have also developed. Augsburg's music department is assisting in the development of a music curriculum for the school. For example, piano pedagogy students teach charter school children piano, and music education majors teach percussion and are assisting in an effort to create and sustain a band program in a school which has no budget or resources for such a program. Studio arts majors offer computer design assistance for the school newspaper, and other art majors have developed a magazine project to enhance the writing and project development skills of students.

Students from an MIS project management class have assisted the administrative staff in the creation of programs to facilitate the writing of required reports and overall management of their record keeping. During the 1994-95 academic year, a comprehensive project involved a history class doing oral histories of seniors in the neighborhood high-rises, linking their stories with the children in the charter school who worked with

an art class to create paintings and drawings depicting the seniors' stories. All of these were integrated into an art exhibit which was displayed at Augsburg and a local bank. The entire project culminated in a campus celebration involving the seniors, the K-12 students, college students, and faculty in conjunction with the opening of the art exhibit and intergenerational conversations among all the participants. Following that successful year-long collaboration, a "Kids Come to Campus Day" event was inaugurated in April of 1996. The day included a parade led by Heart of the Beast larger-than-life puppets from a local theater.

**Franklin Learning Center.** As an arm of the Minneapolis Public Library, the center provides free, flexible, self-paced instruction to adults who read, write, and compute at or below the 12th grade level. The special focus is upon those who do not have a high school diploma and the increasingly large numbers of community residents whose first language is not English. In any given semester, 30 to 50 Augsburg students complement the AmeriCorps volunteers and single staff member to provide ESL and GED instruction and tutoring to the approximately 400 learners from over 40 different countries. The center is located in the neighborhood adjacent to Augsburg, approximately ten blocks from campus in a historic Carnegie Library adjacent to the American Indian Center.

**Coyle Center.** This historic settlement house offers a full range of educational, social, and recreational activities in a newly constructed facility, located six blocks from campus in the highest density and most diverse neighborhood in the city. Augsburg's service-learning collaboration with Coyle extends back nearly 25 years, including extensive ESL and literacy tutoring on a large scale thanks to a targeted literacy work-study grant from the federal government. Augsburg has collaborated with the staff in the food shelves, job bank, ESL and tutoring projects, and in after-school sports programs. The collaborative and reciprocal nature of the relationship is illustrated by an ongoing project to develop a multi-ethnic cookbook in which a social work community organization class interviews residents and brings them on as the central players in the project. Then, a journalism class follows up to work with the community residents to write and help design the cookbook. All of this culminates in a community celebration of the over 40 national and ethnic groups served by the community. This is a joint project of the Coyle Center, the Franklin Learning Center, Augsburg, and community residents.<sup>12</sup>

## Evaluation

Each student who participates in a service-learning course completes an evaluation at the end of the semester with the results used to improve and promote the service-learning program. As Director of Experiential Education, and someone who has also taught courses in Program

Evaluation, I have undertaken formative evaluations on two different occasions, once in conjunction with a sabbatical leave. The results have been presented at NSEE, AAHE, CIC, and Campus Compact national meetings. They were published in the *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* (1995). Faculty and community feedback are sought on a regular basis, but primarily in a qualitative and case study approach which aids in the ongoing formative evaluation of our service-learning objectives.

## CONCLUSION

Based upon a history and motto of education for service, Augsburg College has built its service-learning program into and upon its nearly 30-year effort to fully institutionalize experiential education throughout the curriculum. The current vision statement and mission of the college emphasize the importance of experience in the development of future leaders of service to the world. The emergence of a clear educational rationale, developed by Joel Torstenson and the faculty in the 1960s became the base for expanding community connectedness as a liberal arts college in the modern metropolis. All the presidents since the 1930s have actively supported community partnerships and service. And the subsequent efforts by the academic dean, the faculty, and staff to clearly connect that rationale to service-learning have firmly established service-learning within the academic curriculum and as an essential part of the experiential education program. Our efforts have been continually enhanced by active involvement in national and regional experiential education and service-learning organizations like NSEE and Campus Compact, as well as the National Youth Leadership Council which is based in the Twin Cities.

In retrospect, one can see there has been a synergy operating at Augsburg in which the institutional culture has incubated and welcomed, indeed sought out, persons who would expand and deepen the college's commitment to education for service. Over the years, one could say that the motto has been enlarged to education through service, as well. In an earlier essay (1989), "Experiential Education as a Liberating Art," I concluded by suggesting that education was at its best when at least three entities were engaged in a collaborative "crucible of learning." When a student, a faculty member, and a community person are simultaneously engaged in mutually overlapping experiential learning cycles, there is the highest potential for learning that I can imagine. Augsburg's service-learning program has always endeavored to function in that way, as a partnership in which students, faculty, and community members seek to serve and learn, aided by the experiential education staff in this learning and serving enterprise.

From 1993-95, Augsburg played an active role in the Council of Independent Colleges initiatives to further the incorporation of service into the curriculum. Augsburg's efforts are captured in the "Serving to Learn . . . Learning to Serve" motif which CIC advanced. Our location, our tradition, and our commitment to growth and change continually challenge us to combine service and learning in ways that allow all of us learn from one another and serve one another as we serve to learn and learn to serve.

Are we there? Hardly. Have we learned from those giants, both within the Augsburg community and outside, upon whose shoulders we stand? Immensely. How will we know whether we are getting closer to the vision of our forefathers and foremothers and to the wisdom emerging from the field of service-learning and experiential education? Perhaps it will be when all of our work with students and the community takes the form of a partnership in which our practice mirrors collaboration, reciprocity, and diversity.

These meta-principles have driven our efforts over the years and continue to shape our service-learning journey. For these and countless other reasons, particularly the acknowledged, but often unheralded work of community partners, students, faculty, and administration colleagues who have paved and continue to pave the way with their passion and commitment, service-learning will continue to be deeply embedded in the mission, vision, and future of Augsburg College.

*For actual Augsburg College service-learning documents, see Appendix C:  
Timeline for Infusing Service-Learning into a Course*

## ENDNOTES

1. This positive assessment of the urban location has not always been unanimous. From the early part of the 20th century, organized efforts were made to move to the suburbs for "more room and fresh air . . . more desirable locations." Carl Chrislock's *From Fjord to Freeway*, a source for much of the pre-1970 detail of this chapter, traces this struggle with parochial and anti-urban tendencies, often among the faculty itself, noting that it was not until 1946 when a unanimous vote of the board of trustees (led by George Sverdrup Michaelsen, the grandson of one of the earliest presidents) committed the college to a long-range expansion within its historic inner city location (Chrislock 1969).
2. Currently, an accredited B.S.W. and M.S.W. programs are among the largest undergraduate and the largest graduate programs of the college. These all grew out of Torstenson's effort to bring a series of talented social work faculty members to Augsburg, including Harold

and Merrillyn Belgum, Vern Bloom, Paul Steen, and Edwina Hertzberg. Not only did Torstenson see service-learning as fully compatible with the academic program, he was instrumental in creating majors and academic programs for students who wished to combine public and community service in careers, as well as in their citizenship role.

3. Several outcomes seem related to Torstenson's position paper, including Augsburg's leadership role in establishing the town meetings of the Twin Cities in collaboration with KTCA-TV (public TV) and a wide range of schools, agencies, adult educational organizations, and churches. This made the college's emerging urban orientation visible to many new audiences in the city. Further, when the college celebrated its centennial in 1969, the organizing theme was "The Challenge of the City," underscored by President Oscar Anderson's public statements and writings about the "unlimited laboratory," affirming the educational uses of the city. During the turbulent 1960s, there was a continued support for community service and good human relations which left its mark on the college curriculum as well as the college's relationship with the city (Torstenson, 1974). Finally, the 1970 *Academic Blueprint for Augsburg College* approved by faculty and regents, stresses that "Augsburg College should develop the greatest educational benefit from its urban location and should contribute to the enrichment of the life of the city . . . [directing] some of its energies to the needs of the city."
4. In 1973, Joel and Fran Torstenson took a group of students to Oslo, Norway, to learn how Scandinavians approach urban and social planning in contrast to what the U.S. does or does not do. The Scandinavian Urban Studies Term program continues as a program of HECUA. Subsequently, a former Peace Corps volunteer and his wife, Chip and Rosa Peterson, established a South American Urban Semester program in 1976 to enable students to learn about development and poverty in the southern hemisphere.
5. In 1989, Augsburg hosted the first Minnesota Faculty Gathering to discuss opportunities and developments relating to service-learning within classes and the curriculum. John Wallace, chair of the Board of the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) and a professor at the University of Minnesota, where COOL and NYLC were housed, and I had begun to present conference workshops at NYLC, COOL, and Bush Faculty Development conferences on "syllabus sampling." We were the faculty convenors at this initial Minnesota faculty gathering and were able to share what we had learned from across the country as regards the re-emerging curricular interests in service-learning.

6. In 1989, following the phasing out of Title VIII funding, the Internship and Cooperative Education Programs were fully integrated, with two full-time staff, and I returned to teaching a 3/7 load, with 4/7 time serving as Director of Experiential Education.
7. As a reader of FIPSE proposals, and a consultant with over 25 colleges and universities, I was able to ensure that our FIPSE proposal reflected the "Ten Principles of Combining Service and Learning" and was grounded in what was taking place nationally in service-learning.
8. The Experiential Education staff, in 1990, consisted of a Director, a Coordinator of Internships and Cooperative Education, a Coordinator of Placements and Employers, the Coordinator of Service-Learning, and the Coordinator of Tutoring and Mentoring.
9. This position has been further integrated into the teacher education placement process whereby the current holder of this position also works part-time in the education department, coordinating and placing practicum students in Minneapolis and St. Paul schools.
10. All of the staff positions and program budgets began with "soft money" from federal and state grants. Augsburg made a commitment to phase in those positions with regular college budget lines as the outside funding diminished. In every case that has been done, with four of the five positions fully funded by the operating budget, and the tutoring-literacy position partially funded by the operating budget and partially on "soft money" as of 1996. The director divides his time equally between teaching and administration.
11. Alumnus John Evans played a key role in raising funds for the endowment. As students and alums, John and his wife, Joan Moline, have served the community throughout the years.
12. In December 1996, Augsburg College, in its continual search for ways to deepen its commitment to service-learning, announced it would award scholarships of \$5,000 a year to AmeriCorps volunteers who meet its entrance requirements. These awards—the first of their type in the nation—are renewable for four years, regardless of financial need. This unique expansion of service-learning grew out of Augsburg's long-standing collaboration with the Coyle Center and an idea proposed by Augsburg student Sheri Hixon. The idea was enthusiastically endorsed by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton's affirmation that Augsburg "sets an example for colleges and universities throughout the country and recognizes that national service is a vital investment in our future."

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## On the Shoulders of Giants

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