

*February, 2003*

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

### **Statement of Purpose:**

The purpose of the Campus Directions Committee task force on Community Partnerships is to examine ways that Indiana University South Bend can develop and expand partnerships with the community. That includes strengthening existing partnerships as well as creating new partnerships with schools, business and labor, government agencies, and other external groups. The task force began its work by auditing current partnerships, and is continuing by recommending future ones.

The task force created three categories of partnerships: institutional, programmatic, and individual. University-sponsored programs such as the Office of Community Links, UCET, and Alumni Affairs are examples of institutional programs that support partnerships but are unconnected to specific academic units. The programmatic category includes academic schools, colleges, and divisions, which sponsor numerous internship programs and service-learning activities related to a field of study. Individual activities include applied faculty research as well as service on community boards and committees. Additionally, partnership issues include the use of campus facilities and other resources by community organizations, and support of and attendance at important community events. An audit (the "Phase 1" report of this task force) shows that IU South Bend engages in an extraordinary variety of community partnerships at all levels.

However, major challenges include time and pressures on faculty teaching loads and a lack of common understanding across the campus of the concepts and models of service-learning. If community partnerships are to be a priority for IU South Bend, policies will need to

be developed to reward faculty, particularly those related to faculty tenure based on service in addition to research. It must be determined how such institutional programs as the Office of Community Links and UCET can educate the campus and promote service-learning, and how programs such as enrollment management, Dining Services, Events Management, and the Schurz Library can best coordinate policies. It will be necessary to continue to examine each programmatic area on an on-going basis, to evaluate partnerships and share information campus-wide. This must begin with the leadership and solid support of our chancellor. The institution will also need to continue to track and encourage individual involvement to maximize those connections. Further, the institution will need to determine how service-learning and volunteer community service can be better incorporated into student learning and student life. It will be beneficial to develop ways to better publicize partnerships in order to encourage such activities and improve the position and image of IU South Bend as a community leader in this aspect.

The purpose of the Phase I report was to track and evaluate partnerships and community needs. The purpose of this “Phase II” report is to recommend institutional and programmatic partnerships—both existing and new—and identify priorities.

### **General Recommendations**

To facilitate community partnerships, it is recommended that the Office of Community Links and UCET work together to sponsor discussions and workshops on the topic of service-learning, as they have to some extent in the past. It is recommended these offices facilitate grants, provide materials, and encourage a greater number of faculty to attend service-learning conferences off-campus. It is recommended that these offices provide a library of examples of

service-learning courses, such as those listed in an appendix to this report, along with other relevant materials.

As presidential (chancellor-level) support for service-learning is a key indicator of the institutionalism of service on campuses, it is recommended that the IU South Bend chancellor take actions to clearly support service-learning. These could include providing monetary rewards and recognition such as publicity and service awards, speaking publicly about service, and demonstrating service and community involvement herself at the local, state, and national levels.

To encourage student participation, it is recommended that service-learning be incorporated into core curricula, optional credit added for a service component, and/or a graduation requirement be implemented. Service-learning and volunteerism could be tracked as is course completion, with a transcript provided; scholarships could also reward community service, as some already do; and a student organization based on service could be supported, which has been done in the past. Opportunities for community work-study, which help to increase service, could be better promoted by both financial aid advisors and the Office of Community Links. These offices should continue to facilitate and increase the number of community work-study placements.

A community focus group (see Appendix C) recommended that Community Links serve as a clearinghouse for all partnering opportunities. Bringle (2002) supports the importance of a campus clearinghouse and the careful selection of key agencies on which to focus partnership efforts. Further, that focus group recommended the creation of a program similar to Advocates for Community Engagement (ACEs) on the Bloomington campus. That program involves placing students (paid) in selected community agencies, where the students become familiar with the agency and work with the faculty to facilitate university involvement and recruitment of

additional students to serve. This core of agencies is selected so that most students have an opportunity to be introduced to identified key issues such as homelessness and child mentoring. It is recommended that IU South Bend implement a similar program, utilizing Community Service scholarships.

Ultimately, the measure of success for IU South Bend partnerships is how well the overall goal—to “strengthen existing partnerships and create new partnerships with schools, business and labor, government agencies, and other external groups”—is achieved. Qualitative and quantitative baseline surveys, followed by regular surveys, should measure progress. The research should measure community satisfaction as well as faculty, administrative, and student “buy-in.” In addition, data regarding specific outcomes for the community and campus should be collected and analyzed. Other overall indicators should include quantitative data regarding policy changes, participation, administrative and faculty structure, curricula, and budget commitments.

What follows are recommendations of community partnership activities related to the various institution-wide and programmatic areas at IU South Bend.

### **Community Partnership Recommendations for the IU South Bend Schurz Library:**

With the limited funding and staffing, it is difficult for the Library to expand its efforts on developing further community partnerships. It is recommended that there be continued effort to publicize the fact that anyone in the broader community can use the Library and Learning Resource Center. The Library’s Speaker Series has been successful and should continue. If possible, funding from outside sources should be found. It is also recommended that the Library continue to seek opportunities to provide relevant continuing education for various segments of our community (e.g., teachers, social workers, etc.).

There is interest in developing a formal partnership with the IVY Tech Library which would introduce IVY Tech students to the resources at the IUSB Schurz Library. Limited staffing at both institutions has not yet made this possible.

### **Community Partnership Recommendations for the School of Business and Economics:**

1. Initiate Program of Faculty Internships to serve local businesses. During initial year, establish steering committee of Business School administrators, business faculty, and community business leaders to provide program direction, and secure funding to support three interns.

Measures of success: presence of steering committee, and degree of funding secured.

2. Continue program of *Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA)*, with special emphasis on the elderly and low income participants

Measures of success: numbers of clients served; level of funding from the United States Treasury; number of Business school faculty and student volunteers.

3. Expand School's participation in State-wide *HelpNet Program*.

Measures of success: Increase number of faculty participants and number of clients by one each.

4. Strengthen and expand the *Small Business Practicum* and interaction with the Small Business Development Center and the Chamber of Commerce of St. Joseph County.

Measures of success: Attract greater numbers of students attracted; upgrade the entrepreneurship area of the Management curriculum, which includes the practicum course (W408), to a full-scale 'concentration' or major.

5. Continue participation in *Collegiate Business Assistance Program* with increased emphasized on student projects with non-profit organizations, start-ups companies, and very small business organizations.

Measures of success: number of participants.

6. Continue to administer the *Entrepreneurial Growth Development and Education Roundtable* (EDGE program) to provide forum for chief executives of area mid-size organizations to share information on enhancing their organization's presence in the local community.

Measures of success: Identify and attract sufficient number of participants to keep the program viable; assign principal faculty responsibility to the project; develop partnership with appropriate community organization to administer and grow the forum; make the program completely self-supporting.

7. Continue activities of *Center of Economic Education*, serving larger numbers of area high school teachers of economics, and increase emphasis on research projects that address economic issues relevant in the local community.

Measures of success: numbers of projects and numbers of participants.

8. Redirect the *Entrepreneurship Symposium Series* to include more students and more presenters.

Measures of success: attract significant financial support for business community to underwrite multi-event program; combine events with specific course expectations (graduate and undergraduate).

9. Attract students to the *Students In Free Enterprise organization (SIFE)*, a global organization in which students design educational outreach projects for community groups.

Measures of success: making SIFE a part of regular curriculum; numbers of students participating in SIFE

10. Establish a Corporate Financial Executives Roundtable for publicly-held and large private companies as a forum for discussing pertinent issues.

Measures of success: attract 12 to 15 members; deliver first program in May 2003.