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The field and movement of community engagement in higher education is one way for institutions of higher education to fulfill the public good mission. Community engagement practices have shifted to valuing democratically engaged partnerships between the community and campus (Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009). However, the research on community engagement reveals a lack of understanding of community voice and perspective on if and how community-campus partnerships make a difference for community-based organizations partnered with institutions of higher education. This embedded case study begins to fill these gaps in the literature by examining the voice and perspective of community-based organizations partnered with a university in the Mountain West region of the United States. The conceptual framework borrows from theories of Dewey (1916) and Freire (1970, 1985), and democratic engagement (Saltmarsh et al., 2009), and practices of asset-based community development (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Green & Haines, 2012) and consensus organization (Eichler, 2007). Findings provide important insights on the barriers and support systems that community-based organizations experience when partnering with institutions of higher education. The centrality of relationships is a salient finding from this study. These findings begin to shed light on community-university partnerships can be measured. Findings hold important implications for current practices in institutions of higher education, for the field of community engagement, and the theories that guide these practices.

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Exploring the Community Impact of Community-University Partnerships

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Morgridge College of Education

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Stacey D. Muse

March 2018

Advisor: Dr. Judy Kiyama

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The field and movement of community engagement in higher education is one way for institutions of higher education to fulfill the public good mission. Community engagement practices have shifted to valuing democratically engaged partnerships between the community and campus (Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009). However, the research on community engagement reveals a lack of understanding of community voice and perspective on if and how community-campus partnerships make a difference for community-based organizations partnered with institutions of higher education. This embedded case study begins to fill these gaps in the literature by examining the voice and perspective of community-based organizations partnered with a university in the Mountain West region of the United States. The conceptual framework borrows from theories of Dewey (1916) and Freire (1970, 1985), and democratic engagement (Saltmarsh et al., 2009), and practices of asset-based community development (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Green & Haines, 2012) and consensus organization (Eichler, 2007). Findings provide important insights on the barriers and support systems that community-based organizations experience when partnering with institutions of higher education. The centrality of relationships is a salient finding from this study. These findings begin to shed light on community-university partnerships can be measured. Findings hold important implications for current practices in institutions of higher education, for the field of community engagement, and the theories that guide these practices.

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Chapter One: Rationale for Study

American higher education holds a long history of seeking to serve the public good, but what constitutes as public good? Tracing the history of American higher education illustrates the various shifts in understanding what service and public good mean, and the ways it is enacted. One specific field that has emerged from these shifts is community engagement. Also considered a movement, community engagement explores the ways in which higher education partners with the greater community, ideally with a focus on “the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity” (Swearer Center, 2017, paragraph 5).

Higher education community engagement is rooted in the philosophy that education should contribute to the creation and sustainability of a democratic society and stems from a re-emerging focus on the public good as a primary mission of institutions of higher education (Morphew & Hartley, 2006; Scott, 2006). The movement of community engagement follows this shift with an emerging focus and intention on creating democratically engaged partnerships between community-based organizations and institutions of higher education that are defined by being inclusive, reciprocal, and co-created (Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009). However, an exploration of the

emergence of and research on community engagement in American higher education reveals a general lack of understanding of community voice and perspective on if and how the partnership makes a difference for the community partner (Muse, 2016). Rather, research tends to focus on the internal outcomes or benefits for the Academy (i.e., student outcomes). This begs the question: How can community-university partnerships be truly democratically engaged (inclusive, reciprocal, and co-created) if the voices of community partners are not included in research that shapes how we understand the outcomes of such partnerships? As such, this study elevates the community perspective by exploring how community partners identify, understand, and advocate for the outputs and outcomes of their partnership(s) with a university.

Community engagement and civic engagement tend to be umbrella terms for applying expertise in or with a given community, and democratic engagement specifically seeks to embody equality, inclusiveness, reciprocity, and deliberative democracy (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). Thus, the term community engagement will be used as an umbrella term for parallel concepts and key words such as civic engagement and civic education. As such, the following chapter delineates a clear rationale for the study by framing the issue within the historical context of community engagement as a means of fulfilling the public good mission of American higher education. I follow with a statement of the problem, the purpose of the research, and the research questions. The chapter closes with a brief overview of the study and definitions of key concepts and terms.

Overview of American Higher Education History

The creation and expansion of American higher education included a public services aspect through federal acts and inter-university movements, which set a precedent toward serving the public good (Chambers, 2005; Scott, 2006; Thelin, 2004). These movements set the stage for the emergence of a third mission of American higher education, which focused on public good. This section traces the historical context of the public good mission from early colonial colleges to present day.

Early establishment of public good. Early colonial colleges were founded to provide training and education to men in order to support the new colonies (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997; Chambers, 2005; Geiger, 2005; Hartley, 2011; Thelin, 2004). This practical foundation was expanded through the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which stated “religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools, and the means of education shall forever be encouraged” (Chambers, 2005, p. 13). The practical application of public good was further reinforced through the passing and implementation of the Morrill Land Grant Acts of 1862 and 1890, which provided funding for the creation of colleges and universities that would meet the public sector needs of agriculture and mechanical arts (Bloom, Hartley, & Rosovsky, 2007; Chambers, 2005; Scott, 2006; Thelin, 2004). Research done at Land Grant universities and colleges were some of the first of its kind to partner academia with community to help “improve the productivity and efficiency of farming and domestic practices, while training engineers, draftsmen, and other professionals to design and build the developing nation” (Chambers, 2005, p. 14). Further, Land Grant universities and

colleges sought to solve practical problems while educating students for civic leadership (Hartley, 2009).

During this time, the rhetoric around education and democracy increased. Veysey (1965) delineates six ways in which democracy in higher education was defined and evolved. The movement of how democracy was understood started internally through the belief that there was equality amongst all fields of study and moved to the equal treatment of students (Veysey, 1965). The understanding of democracy in higher education continued to shift outwards with equal access to admission and the idea that higher education was a means of achieving success and preventing struggle through training and skill development. Higher education institutions were then seen as the central source of knowledge creation and dissemination, and finally shifted to a belief that higher education should focus on the needs and demands of the public (Veysey, 1965). These government actions demonstrated the support and movement towards universities and colleges working to benefit the greater good in theoretical and practical ways. This trend continued and was strengthened by the settlement houses in Chicago and the “Wisconsin Idea,” which brought university staff and faculty into local communities to provide expertise and resources towards community development (Chambers, 2005; Scott, 2006).

The Wisconsin Idea originated from the University of Wisconsin, when then President Charles Van Hiise developed a statewide extension service to support local communities by applying faculty expertise to help train locals from various public and private spheres (homemakers, farmers, and businessmen) (Chambers, 2005; McCarthy,

1921; Thelin, 2004). In the same vein of university employees serving the local community, the Hull House sought to improve the lives of immigrant settlement workers in a low-income Chicago neighborhood (Benson, Harkavy, & Puckett, 2007). Settlement houses, such as Jane Addams' Hull House in Chicago, led the way in providing community-based resources through collaboration with local universities (Benson et al., 2007; Fisher, Fabricant, & Simmons, 2004). The Chicago Hull House collaborated with the University of Chicago's sociology department and School of Social Administration to address the needs of the immigrant settlement workers (Fisher et al., 2004). This community-based model also served as the inspiration for Dewey's work in experiential learning (Benson et al., 2007), which will be discussed in the next chapter.

After World War II President Truman established the President's Commission on Higher Education to address the needs of American higher education (National Taskforce on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012; Thelin, 2004). The Commission published *Higher Education for American Democracy*, which made a number of recommendations towards increasing access to higher education and called for institutions of higher education to be "the carrier of democratic values, ideals, and processes" (President's Commission on Higher Education, 1947a, p. 102). The Civil Rights Movement and activism of the 1960s increased student engagement and more diverse populations. These changes impacted the landscape of higher education, as a more diverse and empowered student body pushed for more relevant curriculum and program offerings that spoke to their interests and needs (Chambers, 2005; Fisher et al., 2004; Scott, 2006; Thelin, 2004).

Models and movements in support of public good. In the 1970s, there was a strong push for accountability and student learning outcomes (Chambers, 2005). Various political scandals, controversial issues, such as the Vietnam War, and a cultural shift away from the me-centered generation gave rise to a great focus on issues of social welfare and community development and engagement (Chambers, 2005; Roper & Hirth, 2005). The federal government continued to pass community-based initiatives that focused on students and faculty (Fisher et al., 2004). The Higher Education Act of 1965 was the first of its kind to provide federal funds towards addressing community issues (e.g., housing, poverty, and public health) through research efforts, continuing education, and university extension programs (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). In addition, programs like the Peace Corps encouraged students to volunteer to work in impoverished communities around the world (Fisher et al., 2004).

The 1980s brought an increased number of students pursuing higher education in the pursuit of higher paying jobs (Hartley, 2011). This, combined with the general political apathy of youth triggered a number of organizations to emerge towards addressing and increasing civic engagement (Hartley, 2011). This included the founding of student action organizations such as the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) and Campus Compact (Hartley, 2009; Roper & Hirth, 2005). Both organizations sought to enhance campus infrastructure and support students, faculty, and staff in community engagement projects (Chambers, 2005). COOL was founded by Harvard graduates Wayne Mesiel and Bobby Hackett in 1984, and sought to promote a lifelong commitment to public service and civically engaged leadership (Hartley, 2009). The

organization fulfilled this mission by supporting and developing student leaders from more than 450 higher education institutions (Hartley, 2009). Where COOL focused on developing and empowering student leaders, Campus Compact sought to support civic engagement efforts by working with campus presidents and administration (Hartley, 2009). Presidents from Stanford, Georgetown, and Brown were inspired by the work of Frank Newman, whose 1985 publication, *Higher Education and the American Resurgence*, called for civic education to be a cornerstone of modern higher education (Hartley, 2009; Hartley, 2011). Campus Compact initially focused on promoting volunteer work, but would evolve into leading the way on embedding service into the curriculum (e.g., service-learning) (Hartley, 2009; Hartley, 2011).

The 1990s brought increased federal support for community engagement projects and organizations (Hartley, 2009). These organizations, such as the Corporation for National and Community Service, AmeriCorps, and the Kellogg Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good (now known as The National Forum), created a strong system of support and advocacy for community engaged projects and civic education (Chambers, 2005; Hartley, 2009). The work of Ernest Boyer also increased the call for increased civic education in his 1990 publication *Scholarship Reconsidered*. Boyer (1990, 1996) called for the academy to become “a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems – and must reaffirm its historic commitment to [...] the scholarship of engagement” (p. 19). Boyer’s (1996) charge would be reaffirmed in the late 1990s as the members of the American Council on Education, the American Association of Colleges and Universities, and

Campus Compact came together to create the *Wingspread Declaration on Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University* (written by Harry Boyte and Elizabeth Hollander), which sought to discover how best to inspire students towards civic engagement (Hartley, 2009). While action intended by the publication did not materialize, this and subsequent publications kept the conversation around civic engagement and education going in American higher education institutions (Hartley, 2009).

The civic engagement conversation continues in the 2000s. In response to noted civic disengagement across the country, *A Crucible Moment* (2012) was published by the National Taskforce on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement. The publication pressed higher education to cultivate civic-mindedness through creating and measuring civic ethos of the campus, civic literacy of students, embedded civic inquiry across the disciplines, and promote lifelong commitments to civic action (National Taskforce of Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012). The movement and field continue to be strengthened by programs such as the American Democracy Project, an initiative of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities that addresses how higher education institutions are preparing their students to become civically engaged citizens through various initiatives and programs across the United states (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, n.d.; Hartley, 2009; Mehaffy, 2005). These initiatives, along with the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, demonstrate and bolster the growing popularity and commitment to community engagement (Driscoll, 2008; Weerts & Sandmann, 2010).

Mission shift: Towards an established public good mission. The aforementioned political and social changes greatly impacted the landscape of American higher education. As such, a review of mission statements and orientation of American institutions of higher education show a steady, significant shift. Whereas American universities initially focused on missions centered on teaching and research, a third mission of public good within the American higher education system emerged in tandem with the previously discussed political and social movements (Morphew & Hartley, 2006; Scott, 2006). The movement towards this third mission helped to create more definition around the term and idea of public good, and the emergent field of community engagement. Analyzing the mission shift of higher education institutions reveals the ways in which the public good mission has emerged and been enacted, as mission statements guide, inspire, and define the institutional values and actions (Morphew & Hartley, 2006). Scott (2006) went on to delineate six mission transformations within the university over time: Teaching Mission, Research Mission, Nationalization Mission, Democratization Mission, Public Service Mission, and Internationalization Mission. The common thread through each is service.

Pre-nation-state stage: Teaching and research mission. The teaching and research missions are coupled into what Scott (2006) calls the pre-nation-state stage as higher education institutions were developed during this time and focused on teaching and research (p.4). The teaching mission is seen first in the Middle Ages at the Universities of Bologna and Paris (Kerr, 1994; Scott, 2006). The teaching mission was necessary for preparing individuals to work in the public and private sectors (Brubacher

& Rudy, 1997; Roper & Hirth, 2005; Scott, 2006). The research mission strengthened with an increased focus on applied research, which arose in the preindustrial German states, prior to the states unifying nationally (Kerr, 1994; Scott, 2006). German universities combined teaching and research within the classroom, combining the two missions (Scott, 2006).

Nation-state stage: Nationalization, democratization, and public service

missions. The nationalization, democratization, and public service missions fall under the nation-state stage and evolved to serve the needs of the nation states (Scott, 2006, p. 4). The nationalization mission emerged in western European universities and focused on service to and promotion of the government and nation (Kerr, 1994; Scott, 2006). In his study, Scott (2006) noted the lingering impact, as many universities around the world sought to bolster their respective governments, while American colleges and universities never nationalized. The democratization mission is first seen in early American colleges and universities and focused on service to the individual (Roper & Hirth, 2005; Scott, 2006). The previously discussed Morrill Acts were the impetus for the public service mission.

Globalization stage: Internationalization mission. From the rapidly increasing interconnection and interdependency between countries and nations, we see the internationalization mission emerge (Scott, 2006). The internationalization mission is an extension of the public service mission, as it focuses on service to the “body of nation-states” (Scott, 2006, p. 5) and holds a particular focus on how students engage with the world as global citizens (e.g., understanding cultures around the world) (Kerr, 1994).

Analyzing the higher education mission transformation from the medieval to the postmodern era reveals a common, consistent thread of service (Kerr, 1994; Scott, 2006). Over time, the mission of higher education moves from serving a few to serving many (Kerr, 1994). Though many institutional missions articulate an emphasis on service, public service, civic engagement, and the like, the ways in which said service and/or engagement manifests can be vastly different (Morphew & Hartley, 2006).

Community Engagement as Fulfillment of the Public Good Mission. The social, political, and cultural shifts served as a catalyst for a more defined third mission of public service in institutions of higher education. This section delineates ways in which the public good is defined. Further, the emergence of community engagement as a mode of fulfilling the public good mission is discussed and defined.

Public good. In the discussion of mission types, Scott (2006) notes the interconnection between the teaching, research, and public good missions, with the latter seeking to “transmit higher knowledge to the public through external service activities [such as] applied research, off-campus courses, a wide array of consulting and analysis for rural and urban communities, and service learning” (p. 24). Bloom et al. (2007) delineate the various public benefits attained from higher education, which are outlined in Table 1.1 (p. 300). The various benefits are categorized by social and economic benefits, and broken down between the public and private sphere. According to Bloom et al. (2007) the public economically benefits from higher education through increased tax revenues and workforce flexibility, and a decreased reliance on government support. Citing their previous analysis from 2004, Bloom et al. (2007) note that workers

statistically make more money when located in areas with a larger number of higher education graduates. Higher education benefits the public in a non-economic way (that is to say, socially) by increasing charitable giving and civic involvement, improving technology, increased diversity and acceptance, and decreased crime rate (Bloom et al., 2007). Individuals who pursue a higher education degree receive private benefits, as well (Bloom et al., 2007). From an economic perspective, individuals with higher education enjoy employment opportunities and mobility, which tends to lead to increased salaries and higher savings (Bloom et al., 2007).

Table 1.1

The Array of Higher Education Benefits

	Public	Private
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tax revenues • Greater productivity • Increased workforce flexibility • Decreased reliance on government financial support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher salaries • Employment • Higher savings levels • Improved working conditions • Personal/professional mobility
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced crime rate • Increased charitable giving/community service • Increased quality of civic life • Social cohesion/diversity • Improved ability adapt to and use technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved health/life expectancy • Improved quality of life for offspring • Better consumer decision making • Increased personal status • More hobbies, leisure activities

Note. From Bloom, D., Hartley, M., & Rosovsky, H. (2007). Beyond private gain: The public benefits of higher education. In PG Altbach and J. Forres (eds) *International Handbook of Higher Education*, Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer, 293-308.

Table 1.1 demonstrates the vast reach and benefits of public good from institutions of higher education.

Community, civic, and democratic engagement. Because the field is relatively new, there are various definitions for community and civic engagement, and there are distinct differences between community, civic, and democratic engagement. Community engagement is a broad, umbrella term for a multitude of university-oriented activities. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching defines community engagement as “the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional, state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity” (Swearer Center, 2017, paragraph 5). Though is it not a comprehensive list, Bringle and Hatcher (2002) outline at least eight ways in which universities have become more involved with the community:

cooperative extension and continuing education programs, clinical and pre-professional programs, top-down administrative initiatives, centralized administrative-academic unites with outreach missions, faculty professional service, student volunteer initiatives, economic and political outreach, community access to facilities and cultural events, and service-learning classes (p. 503).

The table below, compiled in large part from the work of Giles (2008), provides an overview of the community engagement landscape (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2

Types of Community Engagement

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Education • Civic Engagement • Community Engagement • Community-based Learning • Community-based Research • Community Organizing • Dialogue and Deliberation • Engaged Scholarship • Experiential Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension • Political Organizing • Scholarship of Engagement • Scholarship on Engagement • Service Learning • Social Justice • Voluntary Service • Voting
--	--

Note. Compiled and expanded from Giles, D.E. (2008). Understanding an emerging field of scholarship: Toward a research agenda for engaged, public scholarship. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 12(2), 97-106.

According to Ehrlich (2000), *civic engagement* means

“working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and nonpolitical processes” (p. vi).

Where community engagement and civic engagement tend to be umbrella terms for applying expertise in or with a given community, democratic engagement specifically seeks to embody equality, inclusiveness, reciprocity, and deliberative democracy (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). The types of engagement sometimes vary in pedagogy and methodology, but all share common attributes such as supporting the broad goal of education of students and the community through activities and partnerships that enhance a given community. The following section provides a brief definition of each of the types of the community engagement.

Community-based learning and research, experiential learning. Community-based learning is a general term for learning done within the community (Mooney & Edwards, 2001). Community-based research is “a partnership of students, faculty, and community who collaboratively engage in research with the purpose of solving a pressing community problem of effecting social change” (Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, & Donohue, 2003, p. 3). Experiential learning is rooted in the philosophies of Dewey, as Dewey (1938) believed students learned best through applied experiences. Experiential learning activities can include service-learning, internships, and field experience (Furco, 1996).

Extension and outreach. The Morrill Land Grant Acts of 1862 and 1890 ushered in a wave of colleges and universities focused on meeting the needs of the public sector (Bloom, Hartley, & Rosovsky, 2007; Chambers, 2005; Scott, 2006; Thelin, 2004). Other Acts that followed (1887 Hatch Act and Smith-Level Act of 1914) created an extension system of formalized outreach in the realm of community needs such as agriculture and home economics (Fitzgerald, Bruns, Sonka, Furco, & Swanson, 2012; Stanton, 2007). Thus, extension and outreach refer to the community-based activities done by the Land-Grant universities.

Service-learning. A form of community-based, experiential learning, Bringle and Clayton (2012) define service-learning as

a course-based or competency-based, credit bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in mutually identified service activities that benefit the community, and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility (p. 105).

As the pedagogy has developed, there are nuanced ideas of what service-learning is and should be. Marullo and Edwards (2000) note the distinction between service-learning that focuses on adding to the social justice movement versus service learning that provides an immediate service (i.e., serving food in a homeless shelter or assisting with office tasks for a nonprofit). This idea is similar to Enos and Morton's (2003) typology that defines service-learning partnerships as either transactional (one-time, meeting immediate needs) or transformational (co-created knowledge and work for deeper change). Continuing in this trajectory towards a critical service-learning model, Mitchell (2008) poignantly notes the ways in which critical service-learning differs from the traditional service-learning model. Where traditional service-learning focuses on the

service activities and ignores systems of oppression and inequality, critical service-learning is centered on “deconstruct[ing] systems of power so the need for service and the inequalities that create and sustain them are dismantled” (p. 50).

Engaged scholarship, scholarship of engagement, scholarship on engagement, public scholarship. Using previously noted definitions of engagement (Adler & Goggin, 2005; Driscoll, 2008) and expanding on the terms using Stanton’s (2007) work, engagement can be defined as a partnership between an institution of higher education and an entity within the community in order to “enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching, and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good” (p. 6). Scholarship refers to the “teaching, discovery, integration, application, and engagement; with clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation, and reflective critique that is rigorous and peer-reviewed” (Stanton, 2007, p. 6). Engaged Scholarship is faculty work that applies the expertise and work of the faculty to public issues with the intent of contributing to the good of the institution and the community (Fitzgerald et al., 2012). Janke and Colbeck (2008) discuss public scholarship as a general term that includes “service-learning, community-based research, and undergraduate research on public problems” (p. 31). Scholarship of engagement is also an umbrella term that pulls from other socially minded, collaborative fields such as service-learning, and is thought of as the foundation of community engagement (Boyer, 1996; Sandmann, 2006; 2008). Rooted in Boyer’s (1996) call for higher education to tend to society’s most pressing needs, the

scholarship of engagement is now typically defined by “mutually beneficial, reciprocal partnerships and integration of teaching, research, and service” (Sandmann, 2008, p. 96).

Voluntary service. Volunteer work is typically work that is not traditionally compensated (Gazley, Littlepage, & Bennett, 2012). Volunteer service is considered community-based and experiential learning when required by a course or part of an educational experience (Mooney & Edwards, 2001).

Statement of the Problem

Curricular and co-curricular partnerships between the campus and the community are one way to embody the public good mission of the academy. Having evolved over the years, the public good mission of higher education is becoming more prominent with the creation of the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, which is centered on reciprocal, mutually beneficial partnership between the campus and the greater community. Along with these shifts, there is a desire to understand what difference or “impact” community-university partnerships are making in the community. How do we know community engagement efforts are fulfilling the public good mission of colleges and universities? With the exception of a few scholarly pieces, the voice of community partners and understanding of community impact is largely missing from the literature. A review of the literature echoes the lack of exploration of community voice and impact of community-university partnerships. Driscoll (2014) conducted an analysis of higher education institutions that applied for the 2006 and 2008 Carnegie Classification of Community Engagement, and found the majority of applicants did not comprehensively assess community perceptions and impact of community partnerships. Much of the data

reported on community impact was anecdotal and focused on a specific group or partnership (Driscoll, 2014). Similar findings are noted in other studies as well (Christensen et al., 2013; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Curwood et al., 2011; King et al., 2010; Salant & Laumatia, 2011; Scull & Cuthill, 2010). Cruz and Giles (2000) have noted challenges in understanding community impact (e.g., defining community, accounting for variables related to impact), but only a few studies have focused understanding impact through the voice and perspective of the community (Bushouse, 2005; Ferrari & Worrall, 2000).

Purpose of the Research

Thus, the purpose of this research is two-fold: 1) elevate and focus on the voice of community partners in order to 2) explore of how community partners understand and communicate desired outputs and outcomes of their partnerships with an institution of higher education. Poister, Aristigueta, and Hall (2014) differentiates between outputs and outcomes: “Outputs represent what a program actually does and what it produces directly; outcomes are the results it generates” (Poister et al., 2014, p. 57). Generally speaking, outputs represent the products or services that are a result of a program, they are an “amount of work performed or volume of activity completed” (Poister et al., 2014, p. 58). Outcomes, on the other hand, “are the substantive results generated by producing these outputs” (Poister et al., 2014, p. 58). For example, an output of community engagement may be the number of hours logged engaging with the community; an outcome would be a change in behavior or attitude because of the experience from the hours logged. Further, “[i]mpacts are the accumulated consequences of the outcomes”

(Stoecker & Beckman, 2009, p. 8). Indicators are ways to discern and measure any difference made by the partnership. In other words, what areas of change are important for the community partners and how can the partnership with the University help create that change? Figure 1.1 illustrates how outputs, outcomes, impact and impact indicators are connected

Figure 1.1

Example of Outputs, Outcomes, Impacts and Indicators

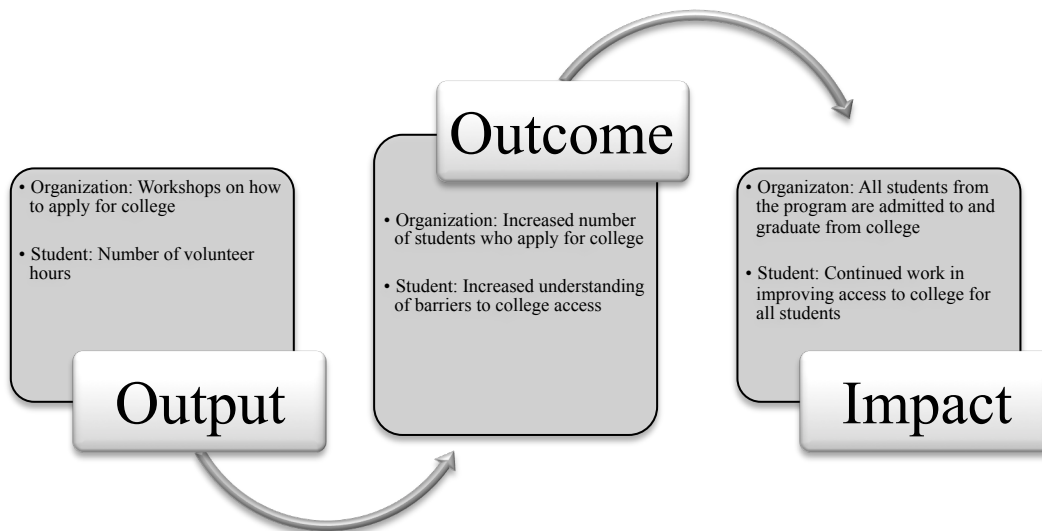


Figure 1.1 provides an example of a partnership between a nonprofit organization that focuses on supporting post-secondary enrollment of high school students. In this example, the organization is partnered with a service-learning course. The bulleted points represent the indicators of the outputs, outcomes, and impacts. The output for the organization is the number of workshops on how to apply for college, and the output for the student partnered with them is the number of hours volunteered. The outcome of this partnership is an increased number of students in the program who apply for college, and the student's increased understanding of college access. Ultimately for this program, the

impact is that all students from the program are admitted to and graduate from college. For the student involved, the impact is that this experience led them to continue working on improving access to higher education. This example illustrates how these concepts are connected and build off of each other.

Rooted in a philosophy of democratic engagement, the study utilizes the voice of current community partners to illustrate how community-based organizations identify, understand, and advocate for the outputs and outcomes that are important for their organization. Findings illuminate what the community partners see as important areas for change within their field, and ways the University can improve the ways in which they partner and assess community engagement efforts.

Research Questions

To meet the purpose of the research, the proposed study explored the following questions:

1. How do community organizations define and determine outputs, outcomes, and impact indicators for community-university partnerships?
2. How does the community partner advocate or voice what outputs and outcomes are important for their organization when establishing and maintaining a partnership with the University?
3. How does a community partner determine whether or not a partnership is successful?

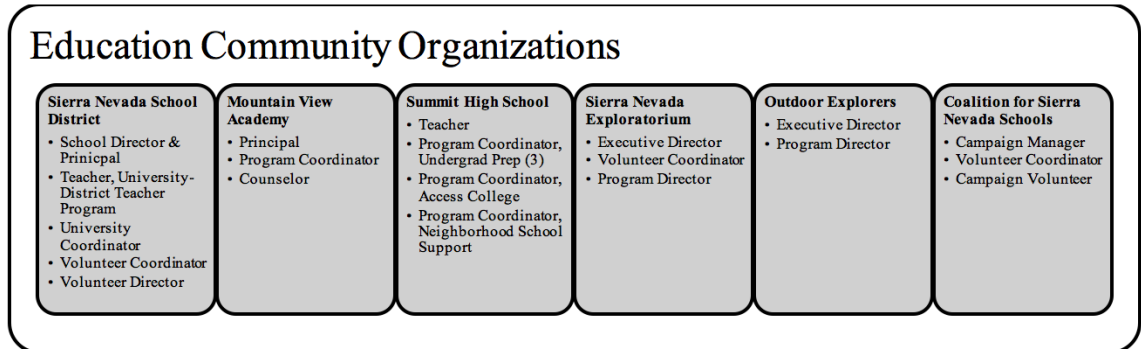
Study Overview

To guide the study and analyze the data, the study uses a conceptual framework that is grounded in the theoretical underpinnings of John Dewey (1903, 1916, 1938), Paulo Freire (1970, 1985, 1998), and democratic engagement (Saltmarsh et al., 2009), and built on the principles of asset-based community development and consensus organizing. Thus, the conceptual framework focuses on 1) being participatory and relationship-based, 2) honoring and understanding the resources and assets of stakeholders, 3) collaborating based on understanding the mutual self-interest of stakeholders, 4) addressing imbalance of power and shared voice, and 5) creating systemic change. The framework informed the research design and analysis.

To ensure the voice of community partners were central to this study, a qualitative design was used. This embedded single case study focused on community-based organizations that have an education-oriented mission. Thus, the single case is bound by the focus area of education (See Figure 1.2) There are six embedded cases within the single case and are as follows: a school district, an elementary school, a high school, two education-focused nonprofit organizations, and a political coalition that led a campaign for the passage of a funding measure schools in the area. Twenty-two people participated in this study, and hold varying positions within their respective organizations and connections to the partnership(s) with the University.

Figure 1.2

Single Case Embedded Case Study



Significance of the Study

The study is significant because it sought to remedy the misalignment of aspired versus realized values with regards to the public good mission and democratic purpose of higher education. Institutions of higher education promote a focus on public good and seek to prepare students to participate in a democratic society, but how can an institution fulfill this mission without including the community partner? How do we know higher education is serving the public good if we are not asking what is “good” to the public? Higher education cannot truly prepare students to participate in a democratic society if the institution is not modeling democratic engagement with the community. With the rise of community engagement initiatives (such as the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement), it is of the utmost importance to remedy this misalignment so that community-campus partnerships are democratically engaged. This study included the community partners in a democratic process towards better understanding and assessing community-campus partners.

Findings from this study reveal the importance of the quality of the partnership between the community-based organization and the university, as well as the barriers and support systems experienced by community-based organizations in accessing, navigating, forging, and maintaining a partnership with a university in the Mountain West region of the United States. This holds important implications for institutions of higher education moving forward, and as they seek to understand what difference is made by community-university partnerships. In short, the study points towards the University needing to develop a partner identity and focus on the quality of the relationships with community-based organizations before the outputs, outcomes, and impacts can be measured.

Overview of the Dissertation

The first chapter provided a rationale for the study by outlining the historical context of the evolution of the public good mission within higher education. This context allows for a deeper understanding modern definitions, challenges, and opportunities. The chapter closes with definition list of various terms that will be used throughout the dissertation.

Chapter two discusses literature review the current state of community engagement research as it relates to what difference community-university partnerships make for the community partner. A literature review of community engagement reveals the strengths of research thus far, as well as gaps in literature that need to be addressed. In addition, Chapter two provides conceptual framework of democracy and education, which establishes a foundation for understanding a function of community engagement. The conceptual framework provides a lens through which the research can be understood.

Chapter three outlines the research design and methods for the study. In this section, I provide the context for the study, which includes a review of my research paradigm, an overview of the location of the study, and research questions. The chapter closes with an in-depth look at research design and methods.

Chapter four illustrates the embedded cases that make up the single case. The case write-ups include information about the nature of the case, the historical background, physical setting, and information about the study participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Stake, 2008).

Chapter five discusses the salient findings of the within and between-case analysis. Findings are understood through the theoretical and conceptual framework, and illustrated through the use of direct participant quotes.

Chapter six provides an in-depth look at the implications of this study. Findings from the study have practical implications for the University, institutions of higher education, and community-based organizations. Theoretical implications are also considered.

Definition of Terms

This section provides basic definitions of the various concepts that support this topic. Key terms include democracy, democratic engagement, civic engagement, civic education, and community engagement. Though these definitions will be supported and expanded upon throughout the dissertation, this section seeks to create a common understanding of key terms to ground this exploration.

Democracy and democratic engagement. The concept of democracy and democratic engagement is a foundational piece to this study. At its core, democracy is based on the sovereignty and self-governance of an individual (de Tocqueville, 2003). A democratic society is one that disperses the power and authority amongst the people (Ketchum, 1992). The embodied standards of democratic society are “determined by the values of inclusiveness, participation, task sharing, lay participation, reciprocity in public problem solving, and an equality of respect of the knowledge and experience that everyone contributes to education and community building” (Saltmarsh et al., p. 6). Thus, community-university partnerships that are grounded in a democratic engagement framework position the university and community to seek solutions together, sharing equally in the engagement process (Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

Public good. Generally defined, public good refers to the “betterment of individuals and society” (Longanecker, 2005, p. 57). Traditionally, higher education has held the role of educating for personal and societal advancement (Longanecker, 2005). Economic development and stimulation is part of the public good definition, as higher education helps to develop individuals to participate in the work force (Longanecker, 2005). In the context of civic engagement, public can be defined as “a citizenry actively engaged in work that self-government requires” and good, in the context of a democratic society, “to be what citizens determine is most valuable in their common life” (Mathews, 2005, p. 73).

Civic engagement. There is a general lack of consensus regarding an exact definition for civic engagement (Adler & Goggin, 2005). In surveying the various

definitions of civic engagement, Adler and Goggin (2005) identify four nuanced areas of civic engagement: community service, collective action, political involvement, and social change. From this Adler and Goggin (2005) propose using David Crowley's definition, "Civic engagement describes how an active citizen participates in the life of a community in order to improve conditions for others or to help shape the community's future" (p. 241). Knapp, Fisher, and Levesque-Bristol (2010) define civic engagement as "political activities, neighborhood involvement, and membership in community organizations as well as individual volunteering" (p. 234). Ehrlich (2000) defines civic engagement as

working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and nonpolitical processes (p. vi).

Bringle, Hatcher, and Clayton (2006) note the distinction between civic engagement and other forms of community engagement in the context of higher education, as civic engagement "develops partnerships that possess integrity and that emphasize participatory, collaborative, and democratic processes," benefitting each constituent involved (p. 258). The main critique of civic engagement is that a more comprehensive, aligned approach is needed (Brinkardt, Holland, Percy, & Zimpher, 2004), as the current definitions are too wide to denote any real meaning beyond an activity that takes place within a community-like setting (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). Because the movement of civic engagement has waned over the years, democratic engagement is seen as an alternative to civic engagement (Dostilio, 2012; Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

Civic education. Dewey (1916) points back to the Germanic higher education roots of education as a form and function of preparing individuals to be civically involved

with a given community. A focus on civic education provides individuals with the theoretical and practical knowledge in order to become more civically engaged and responsible (Ketcham, 1992). Thornton and Jaeger (2008) define civic responsibility as

a) knowledge and support of democratic values, b) desire to act beneficially in community and for the community's members, c) use of knowledge and skills for societal benefit, d) appreciation for and interest in those unlike oneself, and e) personal accountability (p. 161).

Community engagement. Stanton (2008) defines community engagement as “the application of institutional resources to address and solve challenges facing community through collaboration with these communities” (p. 6). The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching expands this definition by including the assets of the community, stating the partnership should be a “mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources” and characterizes the partnership as reciprocal (Swearer Center, 2017, paragraph 5). Further, the Foundation states

the purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good (Driscoll, 2008, p. 39).

Over the years, American higher education has expanded to include the public good as a primary mission (Morphew & Hartley, 2006; Scott, 2006). While there are multiple ways in which public good can be conceptualized, this study focuses on exploring the difference made by partnerships between the campus and community-based organizations. Research on community engagement rarely includes the perspective of the community partner (Bushouse, 2005; Christensen et al., 2013; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Curwood et al., 2011; Ferrari & Worrall, 2000; King et al., 2010; Salant & Laumatia,

2011; Scull & Cuthill, 2010; Vernon & Ward, 1999). As such, this study focuses on the voice of community partners by asking community partners how they 1) define and determine impact indicators for their community-university partnership, 2) advocate or voice the impact indicators during the creation of community-university partnerships, and 3) determine whether or not a partnership is successful. To create common understanding, a review and definitions of key terms were provided. The next chapter reviews the literature with regards to the current state of community engagement and utilizes a conceptual framework of education as democratic engagement to support the understanding of community engagement in higher education.

Chapter Two: Current State of Community Engagement

In the following section I discuss the current research on community impact of community-university partnerships. Scholars have made strides in understanding the many facets of community engagement, yet, the research has its limits. This section offers an overview of the research done thus far with regards to community partner impact and voice.

Over the years, many aspects of community engagement have been explored, with the majority of the researching focusing on service-learning and its effects on students. Thus far, there are only a handful of studies that focus on the community partners' perspective (e.g., Stoecker & Tryon, 2009). In the literature that follows, I focus on elements that are contribute to understanding the external aspects of community engagement, thus exploring the community impact of community-campus partnerships. This includes a section focused specifically on the literature at the intersection of perspective and impact of partnerships between institutions of higher education and community organizations with an education focus. The literature on community impact focuses on the partnership as the unit of analysis to determine its effectiveness and general outcomes of community engagement. When narrowing the review of literature to

the community focus area of education, the general findings demonstrate that the majority of these partnerships are outreach rather than engagement-based, and while engaged programs show positive outcomes, they rarely include the community partner voice or perspective.

Partnership as the Unit of Analysis

Cruz and Giles (2000) encourage a focus on using the partnership between the community and campus as the unit of analysis as a means of sidestepping any issues of how ‘community’ is defined. The partnership between the community and campus serves as the “infrastructure that facilitates the service and learning and is both an intervening variable in studying certain learning and service impacts, as well as an outcome of ‘impact’ in itself” (Cruz & Giles, 2000, p. 31). That is to say, the partnership between a community organization and university is the space in which all stakeholders are engaged toward a common goal: serving and learning. To understand the impact on the partnership, Cruz and Giles (2000) suggest asking questions like “is the partnership better now with service-learning than it was before without service-learning?” and “are service and/or learning better because of the quality of the partnership?” (p. 31). Focusing on the partnership as the unit of analysis opened the doors to further exploration by scholars, adding to the understanding of the qualities of an effective partnership (Afshar, 2005; Clay et al., 2012; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Mendez & Lloyd, 2005; Sandy & Holland, 2006) and the incentives of participating in a community-campus partnership (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Worrall, 2007).

Stoecker and Tryon (2009) oversaw a large community-based research project in coordination with their students (approximately 14) and conducted interviews and focus groups with 67 staff from 64 organizations. What resulted was *The Unheard Voices*, a collection of findings that focused on the community partners' perspective and voice. The book focuses on seven themes: 1) Goals and motivations, 2) How organizations and students are matched, 3) Challenges of short-term service-learning, 4) Managing students and project; 5) Relationships with institutions of higher education, 6) Diversity, and 7) indicators of success. The findings from Stoecker and Tryon's study are noted in the corresponding sections.

Qualities of an effective partnership. The qualities of an effective partnership are centered on the relationship between the stakeholders (Afshar, 2005; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Leisey, Holton, & Davey, 2012; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Worrall, 2007). Having personal connections and trust between the higher education stakeholders (faculty, staff, students) is important in establishing an effective partnership (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Mendez & Lloyd, 2005; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Tryon, Hilgendorf, & Scott, 2009; Worrall, 2007). Demonstrating a commitment to finishing projects (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Leisey et al., 2012), including the community partner in the process of creating and managing the partnership (Afshar, 2005; Clay et al., 2012; Leiderman et al., 2002; Mendez & Lloyd, 2005; Sandy & Holland, 2006), and understanding the perspective and incentive of both partners can help to establish trust (Curwood, Munger, Mitchell, Mackeigan, & Farrar, 2011; Ferman & Hill, 2004). Viewing and treating the community partner as a co-creator in all elements is the

cornerstone of effective partnerships (Carney, Maltby, Mackin, & Maksym, 2011). Miron and Moely (2006) found a statistically significant positive correlation between the agency voice (the extent to which the agency co-created the partnership) and agency benefit. This includes helping to shape and define the philosophy, goals, vision, as well as serve as a co-educator throughout the partnership (Afshar, 2005; Clay et al., 2012; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Mendez & Lloyd, 2005; Sandy & Holland, 2006). A shared interest and passion for the issue being addressed (via community engagement work on the part of the higher education partner, via mission on the part of the community organization) is also needed for a sustainable, effective partnership (Carney et al., 2011; Clay et al., 2012; Leiderman et al., 2002; Tryon, Hilgendorg, & Scott, 2009). A partnership rooted in reciprocity and co-creation also creates the needed space for two-way learning, which community partners have cited as helping to break down the imbalance of power and privilege (Afshar, 2005; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Worrall, 2007).

The co-creative process feeds into creating a partnership that is mutually beneficial. Afshar (2005) notes the importance of the partner stakeholders to express their needs and desires for the partnership towards creating an agenda that works for both the community partner and the higher education institution. This openness and candor creates trust, which, as previously noted, is key in establishing an effective partnership (Afshar, 2005). Mendez and Lloyd (2005) echo these findings, as their work to promote wellness for Head Start participants benefitted from including the community on shaping the research agenda. Further, community partners have expressed the need for improvement on including community partners in the training, orientation, and planning process

(Sandy & Holland, 2006). As the partnership continues, the community partner and higher education partner should maintain shared control of the process, data, results, and resources (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Mendez & Lloyd, 2005).

Access to the data and results produced from the partnership are often useful for the community partner in increasing funding through grants, which increases the capacity of the organization (Bell & Carlson, 2009; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Mendez & Lloyd, 2005). In their study on understanding agenda conflict in community-campus partnerships, Ferman and Hill (2004) found that several of the community partners interviewed (17 leaders from 14 organizations) noted the benefits of co-creating grants that went entirely to the community organization. Community partners found this to be beneficial on a practical level (increased funding), and symbolic level (demonstrating respect for the organization) (Ferman & Hill, 2004).

A focus on increasing capacity building for the community partner is a major component that community partners desire and view as an incentive in participating in community-campus partnerships (Bell & Carlson, 2009; Afshar, 2005; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Worrall, 2007). In addition, partnerships focusing on the needs and strengths of the community and campus help to establish an effective partnership (Afshar, 2005; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Mendez & Lloyd, 2005; Sandy & Holland, 2006). Understanding the needs and strengths helps to assess the potential cost and risk for the community partner, as their resources tend to be more limited than their higher education partner (Afshar, 2005; Leiderman et al., 2002).

According to Afshar (2005), assessing the potential cost and risk is one of the most overlooked aspects of creating an effective community-campus relationship.

Beyond establishing a co-creative relationship that is mutually beneficial, there are some logistics that have proven to be key in effective community-campus partnerships. Gelmon et al. (1998) found that partnerships that had defined roles and responsibilities and regular evaluation were the strongest in community-campus partnerships. Further, constant clear communications, accountability structures, regular evaluation, and strong leaders are important in maintaining effective relationships (Afshar, 2005; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Leiderman et al., 2002; Mendez & Lloyd, 2005; Sandy & Holland, 2006). Sandy and Holland (2006) gathered data from 99 community partners across California who indicated a prioritization of partnerships characteristics. Participants noted that the highest valued characteristic is the relationship between institution and the community organization, followed by communication between partners, understanding the community organizations' perspective, individual connections between the institution and the community organization, treating the community partner as co-creator and co-leader of the partnership, and general follow through and leadership (Sandy & Holland, 2006).

Incentives and perspective of community partner. The incentives for community organizations to partner with higher education institutions vary from capacity-building opportunities to raising the visibility of the organization and/or cause (Bell & Carlson, 2009; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Worrall, 2007). Often community partners are drawn to the idea of having additional help on project-related resources such as

human capital, marketing, and fund development (Ferman & Hill, 2004). Additional resources, such as access to low-cost data collection and evaluation, training, and consistent volunteers, provided by the higher education partner are also a strong incentive for community organizations (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Worrall, 2007). Connected to both the desire to increase capacity and resources, is the opportunity for an expanded network (Ferman & Hill, 2004). This could mean connecting with organizations with similar missions and/or extending the community organization's reach deeper into the higher education institution by forging partnerships with other faculty, staff, and departments to garner more support (Ferman & Hill, 2004). Such an expanded network can help with increased collaboration and resources (Ferman & Hill, 2004). The association with a higher education institution is also an incentive in and of itself. Ferman and Hill (2004) found that some community partner organizations believed associating with a higher education institution increased their legitimacy and visibility, thus securing resource support from large corporations was more feasible because of the connection to the university.

As part of *The Unheard Voices* research project, Bell and Carlson (2009) focused on the motivations and goals of community-based organizations partnering through service-learning. Their findings uncover four salient themes in the goals and motivations for community organizations: educating the student(s) on the mission of the organization and issues faced, creating long-term solutions for sustainability, increasing organizational capacity, and building and/or strengthening the partnership with the university (Bell & Carlson, 2009). Despite challenges and set-backs that were noted by community partner

organizations, they ultimately saw their partnership with the university (through service-learning) as outweighing the costs because of the potential investment in building a longer-term support network either through the students themselves, or through a greater partnership with the university (Bell & Carlson, 2009).

Outcomes of Community Engagement

Research on the community impact or outcomes on/for the community span topics and modes. Studies focus on outputs and outcomes within the fields of education, health, community and economic development, and public safety and the justice system. While others focus on the various modes of engagement, such as community-based participatory research, action research, service-learning, and volunteering. Salient findings from these studies demonstrate an increase in capacity (Bushouse, 2005; Carney et al., 2011; Chaskin et al., 2006; Gelmon et al., 1998; Jorge, 2003; King et al., 2010; Leisey et al., 2012; Salant & Laumatia, 2011; Worrall, 2007), individual benefits such as self-esteem and physical activity (Jorge, 2003; Officer et al., 2013; Rye et al., 2008; Schmidt & Robby, 2002), and voice and agency (Jorge, 2003; Miron & Moely, 2006; Salant & Laumatia, 2011). In his book, *Beyond the Campus*, David Maurrasse (2001) looks at the various community partnerships with several institutions of higher education (University of Pennsylvania, San Francisco State University, Xavier University, and Hostos Community College). Maurrasse's case studies provide illustrations of how partnerships between the campuses and communities are improving the larger community (Maurrasse, 2001). However, the institutions of higher education remain central in the deception of community-university partnerships (Maurrasse, 2001).

Capacity building for community organizations. Community-university partnerships can benefit the community partner by expanding the organization's general capacity, such as organizational infrastructure development. For example, Bushouse (2005) conducted a study exploring transactional versus transformational community-university partnerships. Transactional partnerships tend to be exchange-based, whereas transformational partnerships aim for long-term change for both the community and the university participants (Bushouse, 2005; Enos & Morton, 2003). Bushouse (2005) analyzed responses from nonprofit organizations that utilized course-based work from students enrolled in a nonprofit management course. The results demonstrate that the majority of the projects were useful in increasing organizational capacity (e.g., the project focused on mission development, program expansion, board governance, and employee recognition), and that the nonprofit partners preferred a transactional relationship as it was a lower economic risk (Bushouse, 2005).

Research on community-campus partnerships shows that community partner capacity can be impacted by increasing various forms of capital (Gelmon et al., 1998; Salant & Laumatia, 2011). Generally speaking, capital is typically defined as “wealth that is used to create more wealth” (Green & Haines, 2012, p. 12). The concept of capital is often broken down into other types of capital, such as social, human, financial, environmental, political, cultural and physical capital (Green & Haines, 2012). Theories of capital are expansive. Based on the survey of literature on the ways in which community-university partnerships impact the community partner's capital, the following section focuses on human capital.

Human capital refers to education, skills, and training of individuals (Emery, Fey, & Flora, 2006; Green & Haines, 2012). Thus, increasing the organization's capacity in term of human capital would include an increase in educated, trained staff, and growth in education, development of skills, and further training for current staff (Emery et al., 2006; Green & Haines, 2012). The ability to access resources outside of a given network to increase the wealth, understanding, and knowledge of the organization is also an element of human capital (Emery et al., 2006). The addition and development of human capital is a common benefit of community-university partnerships (King et al., 2010; Worrall, 2007). For example, in a study on multi-disciplinary community-university research partnerships, researchers found that community partner organizations reported moderate impacts on developing personal knowledge and research skills (King et al., 2010). In another study, a community partner with the Steans Center for Community-Based Service-Learning at DePaul University noted the benefit they receive from the labor of volunteers, and the process of learning that happens in working with the volunteers (Worrall, 2007). A study on the impact of student volunteers in community organizations revealed that the work of the students was valuable and important to the organization's daily operations (Edwards et al., 2001). A key finding in a study on the impacts of a service-learning course that paired Spanish language students with native Spanish speakers was the knowledge exchange that occurred between student and community member, with a strong impact on the community member (Jorge, 2003). From this experience, community members learned about how to get a driver's license,

information on how to buy a computer, and understanding elements of mainstream society (Jorge, 2003).

The connections made between community and university can also create a supportive network for the community organizations and members. Community partners from the Steans Center at DePaul University noted the benefit of having access to role models for their community clients (Worrall, 2007). Partnerships between community organizations and universities often lead to an increased network, which created a network of support for the community organizations (Gelmon et al., 1998). These networks can bolster work towards a common cause, collaboration, and understanding of how to access resources outside of the previously established network (Gelmon et al., 1998; Jorge, 2003; King et al., 2011).

Access to research conducted in a community-university partnership can expand the organization's resources and knowledge base, which supports the organization's ability to fulfill their mission (King et al., 2011; Worrall, 2007). For example, a partnership between a nonprofit organization and Virginia Commonwealth University resulted in unexpected, but useful data on the community the nonprofit organization sought to serve (Leisey et al., 2012). Further, community-university partnerships can increase a community organization's ability and ease to serve their clients (Leisey et al., 2012). Similarly, the University of Vermont's College of Medicine partners with the community and community agencies to address public health issues (Carney et al., 2011). While some of the projects emerged from the partnerships are beginning steps towards impact (e.g., projects that identify community needs and make recommendations for

interventions), many of the projects noted helped to improve the public health of the community (Carney et al., 2011). For example, the data from one research project illuminated the need for support and raising awareness for patient healthcare eligibility. The organization used the data to advocate for and hire a Patient Assistance Specialist who helps clients understand and access services (Carney et al., 2011). It should be noted that such an impact could fall into multiple types of capital building, as it creates funding, increases jobs, and seeks to better the overall health of the community by providing education.

Community and individual benefits. Community engagement efforts also have a noted impact on individuals served in engagement efforts, which increase the capacity of individuals, and, thus, communities. Partnerships between schools (K-12) and higher education institutions often result in increased student performance, which benefits the school as well as the students (Officer et al., 2013; Schmidt & Robby, 2002). Schmidt and Robby (2002) studied a service-learning partnership between four public schools in Southern California and a nearby higher education institution. Researchers compared the test results (Stanford Achievement Test, also referred to as the SAT/9) of students who received tutoring by service-learning participants and students that did not. Both groups of students made progress in comparison to national scores, but the students who received tutoring had higher scores than those without the service-learning tutoring intervention (Schmidt & Robby, 2002).

The multi-faceted partnership between Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) and the nearby George Washington Community High School

(GWCHS) has expanded resources and collaborative networks for the school and students, helped to increase the graduation rate, as well as the postsecondary acceptance rate (Officer et al. 2013). The interwoven, layered activities between IUPUI and GWCHS have increased the capacity of the community, school, as well as the high school students (Officer et al., 2013).

Individual benefits of community-university partnerships can expand beyond test scores and into social and emotional benefits. For example, many of the community member participants (in the previously noted Spanish language service-learning course) felt the experience improved their self-esteem, as they felt their presence in the partnership was meaningful and helpful for the student participants (Jorge, 2003). The interactions between the community member participants and students also had a positive effect on the children of the community member participants. The experience allowed their children to share an experience with someone from a different culture and to be in a position of teaching someone about their own culture (Jorge, 2003). In addition, the children, who previously did not think about going to college, all expressed a desire to attend college, which they attributed to their experience with the college students from the service-learning course (Jorge, 2003).

Another example of the ways in which community-university partnerships have benefitted individuals is through partnership in a community with a high obesity rate that sought to increase physical activity (Rye et al., 2008). University researchers partnered with teachers and high school students to develop and implement interventions to improve the physical wellness of the community. Through this process, community

members became more educated about physical health and increased their physical activity (Rye et al., 2008).

Voice and agency. As previously noted, the more voice the community partner has in co-creating the community-university partnership, the more benefit the community partner will reap, thus increasing the organizational capacity (Miron & Moely, 2006). The process of partnering can result in deeper understanding of the needs of the community and, ideally, creates the space to voice and act on those needs (Salant & Laumatia, 2011). In Jorge's (2003) study on a Spanish language service-learning course, community member participants were included on the curriculum development. This experience created a strengthened sense of voice and agency amongst the community member participants, as they saw themselves as experts and possessing knowledge that can be shared with the service-learning students (Jorge, 2003). Some community member participants sought out more opportunities to learn (e.g., learn English, pursue further education) and take on other leadership opportunities (e.g., presenting with a faculty member, serving as a community leader) (Jorge, 2003).

Studies that focus on the community partner perspective provide insight on how community-university partnerships can be improved (Gelmon, et al., 1998; Vernon & Ward, 1999). Vernon and Ward (1999) centered their study on the community perception of students and faculty in service-learning partnerships and other university outreach projects. Researchers surveyed 65 directors of community-based organizations and conducted interviews with 30 individuals at the community partner personnel level (Vernon & Ward, 1999). Community-based organizations were affiliated with at least

one of four colleges or universities in the area (Vernon & Ward, 1999). Findings from the study revealed three major themes: 1) communities have positive perceptions of their respective campus partner, 2) highlighted benefits and challenges of working with students, and 3) community partners desire more communication and coordination with campus partners (Vernon & Ward, 1999). From these findings Vernon and Ward (1999) present ways the campus can address the issues that emerged from the study. Similar findings were present in Stoecker and Tryon's (2009) study, with community partners noting the challenges in partnering through service-learning (short-term projects, academic calendar, and diversity). The findings from the study inform a set of community standards for service-learning developed by Stoecker and Tryon (2009), which are geared towards addressing the challenges and improving partnerships.

Similarly, Gelmon et al. (1998) conducted focus groups and interviews to gain an understanding of community partner perspectives. Findings note the benefits and challenges faced in a partnership between the campus and community, and demonstrated the importance of creating reciprocal, mutually beneficial partnerships (Gelmon et al., 1998). Seeking the community partner perspective highlighted the need for individuals with the higher education institution to invest a considerable amount of time in order to develop successful partnerships with the community organization, and indicated opportunities to improve the evaluations of partnerships (Gelmon et al., 1998).

Srinivas, Meenan, Drogin, and DePrince (2015) created the Community Impact Scale (CIS) to measure the perceptions of community partners with regards to the costs and benefits of partnering with a university. Srinivas et al. (2015) used a community-

driven model to create the CIS by interviewing community partners to generate possible items for the Scale. Next, researchers analyzed the responses to develop a 46-item instrument to measure the community partners' perception of the impact made by a partnership with the university (Srinivas, 2015). The CIS measures eight domains, which are as follows: Overall satisfaction with the partnership, social capital, skills and competencies, motivations and commitments, personal growth and self-concept, knowledge, organizational operations, organization resources (Srinivas et al., 2015). While the CIS is still relatively new, some of the identified domains (satisfaction, social capital, motivations and commitments, organization operation and resources) are consistent with the findings across this literature review.

Challenges

While community engagement works towards benefitting society, it is not without challenges. Research reveals issues that arise within the ways in which community engagement is studied, as well as challenges with the partnerships (Cruz & Giles, 2000; Gelmon et al., 1998). A key challenge in understanding the significance of community-university partnerships is the difficulty in defining community, as the term community can refer to a geographic location or common interest/need (Cruz & Giles, 2000). Further, there are many variables at play within any given community, thus measuring outcomes, impact, or significance of a community-university partnership becomes a challenge in determining the difference made by the partnership itself (Cruz & Giles, 2000). Often the community partner need is far greater than what the university partner can offer (Gelmon et al., 1998). Even when the university partner could help increase

capacity with the nonprofit organization, there was not necessarily a long-term commitment from the university partner to sustain the increased capacity (Gelmon et al., 1998).

While many studies report benefitting the community by increasing various forms of capital, or aiding in overall community development, the descriptions are often anecdotal and focus on outputs rather than outcomes, impact, or significance (Christensen et al., 2013; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Curwood et al., 2011; King et al., 2010; Salant & Laumatia, 2011; Scull & Cuthill, 2010). In other cases, the partnership between the community and university is described at length along with goals, lessons learned, and sometimes promising outcomes, but do not provide data on the actual outcomes or include the community voice (Afshar, 2005; Chupp & Joseph, 2010; Dulmus & Cristalli, 2011). Ferrari and Worrall (2000) center their study on the voice of the community partner participants by seeking community partner evaluations on the service-learning students, as students were found to be “helpful, sensitive, friendly, compassionate, and acting appropriately” (p. 38). Results point to overall satisfaction with students’ service (work relationship, respect, site sensitivity, appearance, attitude) and work skills (attendance, punctuality, dependable, work quality), but data on the significance and/or difference made for the organization or larger body of individuals is missing (Ferrari & Worrall, 2000). Despite the insight these scholarly pieces provide, they leave a gap in the literature on the significance and difference made by the partnership, and community partner perspective on what should be measured.

Challenges within the partnership. With a strong basis for understanding what qualities are found in effective partnerships, studies have also provided evidence for some of the challenges in establishing an effective partnership. A salient and common issue that occurs is the time constraints due to the academic calendar, as most higher education institutions operate in semesters or quarters, which does not always match up with the agreed upon community partner project (Martin, SeBlonka, & Tryon, 2009; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Worrall, 2007). Other challenges that arise are due to issues such as mismatched interest amongst stakeholders (e.g., faculty interest versus student participant interest) (Leisey et al., 2012; Worrall, 2007), varied understanding of the project or community needs and strengths, as well as mismatched understanding of partner capacity (Ferman & Hill, 2004). Community organizations across studies discuss the challenge of resource allocation, especially as it pertains to partnering with a higher education institution (Bushouse, 2005; Ferman & Hill, 2004). Leiderman et al. (2005) point to the challenge of communicating their capacity to their higher education partners and many community partners desired to speak openly about the possible risks to their organization and daily work as a result of partnering. However, many organizations feel the potential benefits outweigh the risks of partnering with a higher education institution (Worrall, 2007).

In line with the issue of misunderstanding partner capacity, the community partner often feels their knowledge and expertise is not recognized or valued in the community engagement partnership (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998). Overlooking the community partner as a source of expertise is often connected to the use

of the community as a laboratory of sorts, in which students come to learn (Ferman & Hill, 2004). This dynamic feeds into the imbalance of power and exclusion within community-university partnerships, which will be discussed in the following section.

Education-Focused Community Engagement Findings

A review of the literature that is focused on the intersection of community-engaged partnerships between an institution of higher education and education-based organizations demonstrates a general lack of community voice and perspective (Kirschenbaum & Reagan, 2001; Lima, 2004). While a number of studies report positive findings for community outcomes, they center on the university and focus on outreach programs rather than engagement (Barerra, 2015; Collins, 2011; Constan & Spicer, 2015; Moskal & Skokan, 2011). Studies that fall under the umbrella of community engagement report positive findings overall, but minimize the community partner voice and remain centered on the university (Kirschenbaum & Reagan, 2001; Lima, 2004; Moran, Cooper, Lopez, & Goza, 2009; Officer et al., 2013).

There are a number of studies on educational outreach programs that are centered at a college or university (Barerra, 2015; Collins, 2011; Constan & Spicer, 2015; Moskal & Skokan, 2011). These studies report positive findings with regards to meeting a need in the community; however, the university is still the central point of the study (Barrera, 2015; Moskal & Skokan, 2011). For example, Barrera (2015) focused on understanding community partner motivation to participate in a college preparation outreach program, and understand how their participation influences the community partners' views of the university's commitment to social responsibility and diversity. Counselors and teachers

from schools involved in the outreach programs were interviewed to understand their motivations for partnering with the University (Barrera, 2015). Findings show that primary motivations were linked to a need for resources, a shared responsibility for increasing educational access for underrepresented students, and an interest in increasing engagement (Barrera, 2015).

With regards to community engaged, education-focused partnerships, many studies remain centered on the University (Kirschenbaum & Reagan, 2001; Lima, 2004; Moran et al., 2009; Officer et al., 2013). Kirschenbaum and Reagan (2001) studied 57 programs that were collaborations between the University of Rochester and the Rochester City School District. Though they found that study participants reported being successful in meeting their partnership goals, and relatively high levels of collaboration, the study was centered on the university (Kirschenbaum & Reagan, 2001). A noted limitation, community partner perspectives were not part of the study and it is suggested that future research includes the community partners to better understand the collaborative efforts (Kirschenbaum & Reagan, 2001).

Similarly, Lima (2004) outlines reflections and lessons learned from five years working in service-learning partnerships between a university and K-12. A highlight from Lima's (2004) reflections is that the service should be based on the needs articulated by the partner schools, but the voice of the community partner is largely missing. In contrast, Moran and colleagues (2009) included the community partner in their study by conducting research, at least in part, with community members.

In a study on P-20 partnerships, the combined efforts of higher education institutions (community colleges and universities), K-12 schools, and families showed improvements for Latino student achievement (Moran et al., 2009). The work of Moran and colleagues (2009) demonstrates the benefit of educational partnerships in collaboration with the Latino community. Through an overview of three different studies that come out of the Educational Partnership Center (EPC) at the University of California, Santa Cruz, Moran and colleagues (2009) illustrate their work by highlighting three studies from the EPC: Family involvement, research involvement and student self-efficacy, and the resources that support students' math pathways to college. The example studies demonstrate ways in which the community is involved in various parts of the research process, and the overall benefits for students of the EPC. However, the focus on this article is to demonstrate the organizational structure that supports yielding such results (Moran et al., 2009).

The previously mentioned partnership between Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) and George Washington Community High School (GWCHS) notes positive outcomes for the community, but is centered on the university (Officer et al., 2013). In contrast, Hudson (2013) examined the ways in which institutions of higher education can serve as anchor institutions in their communities through partnerships with the Promise Neighborhood Initiative. The Promise Neighborhood Initiative focuses on improving communities through education (Hudson, 2013). Through an analysis of Promise Neighborhood awardee applications, Hudson (2013) discerns the ways in which higher education institutions are involved in these communities. While the

study focuses on the communities (as applications are typically generated from within the community, rather than a university), the main limitation of this study is that application descriptions do not equate to the lived experience (Hudson, 2013). The findings from this study demonstrate that institutions of higher education are predominately involved in improving education through capacity building, program and services, mission-related contributions, and partnership-maintaining contributions (Hudson, 2013).

Imbalance of Power and Exclusion

Giles (2008) calls higher education community engagement efforts to include “practitioner voices as co-generators of knowledge” (p.104). As previously noted, the most effective partnerships include the community partner voice and perspective in all levels of the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the community-university partnership (Afshar, 2005; Carney et al., 2011; Clay et al., 2012; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Mendez & Lloyd, 2005; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Worrall, 2007). Yet, the expertise of the community partner is often overlooked (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2005). Through an evaluation of the Engaging Communities and Campus program, community partner leaders spoke to issues around privilege and oppression that are replicated and reinforced in community engagement efforts (Leiderman et al., 2005). It was noted that this dynamic has “undermined the ability of partners to engage with community residents and address root causes of community problems, and contributed to overlooking opportunities to build on leadership that already exists among community residents” (Leiderman et al., 2005, p. 13).

Often community engagement on a college campus is steeped in the idea that expertise exists in the university and it should be applied to the community in order to remedy issues (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). “Academic knowledge is valued more than community-based knowledge, and knowledge flows in one direction, from inside the boundaries of the university outward to its place of need and application in the community” (Saltmarsh et al., 2009, p. 8). Thus, students who engage in these activities learn to reinforce the unspoken issues around power. This concept harkens back to the theories of Dewey (1903, 1916, 1938) and Freire (1970, 1985, 1998), which will be explored in the conceptual framework section.

The emergent patterns from the literature are reflected in the activities of institutions that have received the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement. Findings from an analysis of campuses that applied for the 2008 designation echo the literature review above with categories of community impact including capacity building, increased or improved services, and improved relationship between the campus and the community (Driscoll, 2014). The majority of the institutions provided details on what activities were completed, rather than evidence of any kind of impact (Driscoll, 2014). While patterns point to some ideal characteristics of community-university partnerships, how these partnerships are grounded remains ambiguous. The following section provides a framework by which community-university partnerships can be understood and analyzed.

Building Blocks of Conceptual Framework: Theoretical and Practical

Underpinnings

The conceptual framework used to guide this study is built on the theoretical foundation of education as a way and means of democratic engagement, and the practice of asset-based community development and consensus organizing. The following section first describes the theoretical underpinnings rooted in the work of John Dewey and Paulo Freire, and Saltmarsh, Hartley, and Clayton's emergent work on democratic engagement. Next, the definitions, context, and practices of asset-based community development and consensus organizing are discussed. Finally, the chapter closes with the components of the conceptual framework, why and how the framework is used in this study, and a brief summary of the chapter.

Theoretical underpinnings: Education as democratic engagement. This exploration of community engagement in higher education is supported by the philosophy that education should play an active role in creating a democratic society (Dewey, 1903, 1916, 1938; Freire, 1970, 1985, 1998; Saltmarsh, et al., 2009). Using the lens of democratic engagement establishes a strong base by which the public good mission of higher education (via community engagement efforts) can be conceptualized and analyzed. The work and theories of John Dewey and Paulo Freire serve as the cornerstones of this exploration, as Dewey (1903, 1916, 1938) believed in education as a means of producing and modeling democracy and Freire (1970, 1985, 1998) believed in education as a means of liberation and transformation. The works of both scholars serve as a strong influence for present-day community-based experiential learning (Benson et

al., 2007) and build towards the concept of democratic engagement (Saltmarsh, et al., 2009). An analysis of Dewey (1903, 1916, 1938) and Freire's (1970, 1985, 1998) views on the definition and purpose of education, the role of student and teacher, active versus passive learning, and the role/view of the community creates a foundation of how the education system should prepare an individual to engage in a democratic society.

Saltmarsh, Hartley, and Clayton's (2009) concept of democratic engagement builds on these theories by considering the interaction and engagement with the greater public through community-university partnerships.

Definition and purpose. The foundation of democracy is based on the sovereignty and self-governance of an individual (de Tocqueville, 2003). That is to say, the individual has ultimate power over her life; she has the freedom to choose (de Tocqueville, 2003). Dewey (1916) expanded on this idea by stating, "[a] democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience" (p. 87). It is upon this foundation that Dewey and Freire focused their work, yet the scholars took divergent paths in the ways in which education supported the individual and society. Both scholars viewed the purpose of the education system as a means to prepare individuals to participate in a democratic society, but where Dewey (1916) saw the education system as a means of creating and maintaining social order, Freire (1970, 1985) viewed the education system as promoting and sustaining hegemonic views of society, thus oppressing those outside the norm.

Dewey (1916) believed that the education system held the capacity to teach and guide individuals towards acting within social norms, which kept a given society growing

and alive. Heavily influenced by Plato, Dewey held that an effective education system “develops and maintains social order” (Benson et al., 2007, p. 21). Education provided a social function to society by helping to direct and develop individuals while creating social norms (Dewey, 1916). Without the transmission of these social norms, the society would not renew or regenerate, thus it would die off (Dewey, 1916). Such renewal and regeneration was dependent on teaching and learning (Dewey, 1916). Further, the general function of education is direction, control, or guidance (Dewey, 1916, 1938). Similarly, Freire (1998) held the function of education in high esteem; however, he took a far more critical stance on the role of education and society, believing “[e]ducation never was, is not, and never can be neutral or indifferent in regard to the reproduction of the dominant ideology or the interrogation of it” (p. 91). While the education system holds the potential to prepare individuals to participate in a democratic society, the reality is that the education system, as it has and continues to operate, is flawed. For Freire (1970, 1998), education was a means of liberation and transformation and inclusion towards creating a democratically engaged society.

Role of the teacher and the student. When it came to the role of the teacher and student, Dewey and Freire took vastly different approaches, as Dewey (1916) prescribed to a more traditional view of teacher as authority, and Freire (1970) called for equality in the learning space. Dewey’s (1903, 1916, 1938) view of passing down knowledge in order to continue a democratic society, places the teacher in the role of authority while Freire (1970, 1985) warns that this type of education can also pass along dominant hegemony, thus silencing the non-normative voice.

Dewey (1938) held, “[t]he main purpose or objective is to prepare the young for future responsibilities and for success in life, by means of acquisition of the organized bodies of information and prepared forms of skill which comprehend the material of instruction” (p. 18). Implicit in Dewey’s stance is the identification of one who knows and one who must be taught. In his work *Education and Democracy*, Dewey (1916) frames this regeneration through the lens of the mature and immature, which positions the mature as the one with knowledge to transmit and the immature as one who must learn these ways of being. In his later writing, Dewey (1938) compares the teacher to a wise mother caring for an infant; she builds on her experiences and experiences of others to know when to feed, change, and the like. Likewise, she taps into this base of experience and knowledge to know how guide and restrict in order to protect and develop the baby (Dewey, 1938). Where the “[t]eachers are the agents through which knowledge and skills are communicated and rules of conduct enforced,” the “attitude of pupils must, upon the whole, be one of docility, receptivity, and obedience,” as “the subject-matter as well as standards of proper conduct are handed down from the past” (Dewey, 1938, p. 18).

Freire (1985) would constitute Dewey’s views as “education for domestication,” which is “an act of transferring ‘knowledge,’ whereas education for freedom is an act of knowledge and a process of transforming action that should be exercised on reality” (Freire, 1985, p. 102). Freire (1970) characterizes education as a system of power and privilege, in which the teacher is the dominant authority figure, and the student is a vessel to be filled with the knowledge of the teacher. Freire (1970, 1985, 1998) denounced what he called the banking model, in which teachers hold the authority of knowing and deposit

information into the student who becomes a receptacle, of sorts. This banking model places students in a passive mode of learning, thus stunting their possible growth (Freire, 1970), a point of agreement between Dewey and Freire.

Active versus passive learning. While Dewey saw education a way to maintain social order, he focused on the importance of having real-world experience and bolstering an individual's natural curiosity toward active learning (Benson et al., 2007). In a similar vein, Freire (1985) believed students should actively participate in co-creating knowledge, which naturally allowed them to tap into their experiences. Both Dewey (1916, 1938) and Freire (1985) felt strongly about the importance of reflection in the learning process, a modern cornerstone in many community engagement modalities.

From Dewey's (1916) perspective, education is a means by which individuals are developed and their potential realized, which could only be done through a democratic system. That is to say, via the education system, individuals learn social/cultural norms through the active participation within the community. Such civic-minded education helps society to grow and operate at its highest potential, while reflecting the individual's strengths of its community (Dewey, 1916). Though Dewey (1916) prescribed to traditional forms of education authority (e.g., the teacher as the mature guiding the immature students), he valued real-world experience over memorization, which would be categorized as passive learning (Dewey, 1938). Real-world experience provides an opportunity for students to actively learn by reflecting on what they had done, which allowed for the student to make meaning of the world around them:

As an individual passes from one situation to another, his world, his environment, expands or contracts ... A fully integrated personality, on the other had, exists

only when successive experiences are integrated with one another (Dewey, 1938, p 44).

Similarly, Freire (1985) held

[t]he reflectiveness and finality of men's relationships with the world would not be possible if these relationships did not occur in an historical as well as physical context. Without critical reflection there is no finality, nor does finality have meaning outside an uninterrupted temporal series of events (Freire, 1985, p. 70).

Rather than mimic and memorize, individuals should be encouraged to explore and build on their native ways of knowing as individuals and in community. This method of education is how knowledge and new ways of knowing are created (Freire, 1970; 1998).

Freire (1970) referred to this creation as liberation stating, “[L]iberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it” (p. 79).

Both Freire (1970, 1985) and Dewey (1938) advocated for learning that was active, provided real-world experiences, and invited students to “participate creatively in the process of their learning” (Freire, 1985, p. 101), instead of memorizing or being filled with the knowledge of others. An integral part in learning through experience is reflection upon these experiences to make meaning and, ideally, create change where it is needed (Dewey, 1938; Freire, 1970). These ideals are still present in many community engagement activities today.

Influence on community engagement. The works of Dewey and Freire have greatly influenced modern-day community engagement efforts. The philosophical foundation of education as a means of preparing individuals to participate in a democratic society is reflected in the public good mission of the higher education sector (Dewey, 1939; Freire, 1970). Creating a learning environment in which the student can explore

and experience a lesson through active participation (Dewey, 1916, 1938; Freire, 1970, 1985, 1998) is mirrored in community engagement activities from service-learning to internships (Mooney & Edwards, 2001; Saltmarsh, 1996). Further, the importance of reflection on the learning experience in order to make sense and, ideally, initiate change and transformation (Dewey, 1916, 1938; Freire, 1970, 1985, 1998) is often a critical step in service-learning and participatory action research (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Strand et al., 2003).

From these theories, a primary role and function of education is helping to create democratically engaged individuals who work towards a liberated society and break down systems of power and oppression. Where Dewey and Freire focus largely on the individual within the classroom, Hartley, and Clayton (2009) present a framework of democratic engagement that reaches beyond the classroom. Democratic engagement is a model focused on how community-university partnerships should function.

Democratic engagement. In 2008 the Kettering Foundation hosted a colloquium to address challenges with the civic engagement movement within higher education and discern ways to “advance institutional transformation aimed at generating democratic, community-based knowledge and action” (Saltmarsh et al., 2009, p.3). The movement of civic engagement was struggling due to unclear definitions and ways to operationalize said definitions (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). The term civic engagement encompassed any activity that connected the campus and the community, and, at its best, held a purpose of preparing students to be responsible citizens (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). Discussions from the Kettering Foundation colloquium led to Saltmarsh et al.’s (2009) creation of the

Democratic Engagement White Paper, which outlines the framework of democratic engagement.

Where civic engagement focuses on the activities and place, democratic engagement focuses on the purpose and process (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). A democratic process is centered on shared power and participation, thus engagement between an institution of higher education and the community should embody these values (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). Saltmarsh et al. (2009) echo the calls of Dewey and Freire as democratic engagement “adheres to the shared understanding that the only way to learn the norms and develop the values of democracy is to practice democracy as part of one’s education” (p. 6). Democratically engaged partnerships do not simply place students in the community to complete a set number of hours, this approach lives the values of democracy in planning and execution.

In the democratic engagement framework, the view of the community focuses on the assets rather than the shortcomings, relationships are reciprocal, and the work is done *with* rather than *for* the community (Saltmarsh, et al., 2009). Democratic engagement sees the community partner as a co-creator of knowledge, “breaking down the distinctions between knowledge producers and knowledge consumers” (Saltmarsh et al., 2009, p. 10). As such, partnerships are inclusive and collaborative (Saltmarsh, et al., 2009). That is to say there is a shared sense of power between the community partner and the campus. One does not bring more knowledge or expertise than the other, rather everyone learns from each other. The ultimate goal of democratically engaged partnerships is change that comes from co-created knowledge (Saltmarsh, et al., 2009).

The works of Dewey and Freire have strongly influenced elements of modern day community engagement efforts. Their philosophies are rooted in the belief that education should prepare students to participate in a democratic society, and these actions should help to create a more just world. Dewey (1916) saw education as a means of replicating social norms. Freire (1970) saw education as a means of disrupting social norms. Implicit in both philosophies is that how we are educated can affect how we, as individuals, operate in society. As such, the current model of civic engagement replicates the imbalance of power and privilege by centering the expertise with the institution of higher education. In short, institutions of higher education are replicating Freire's (1970) banking model within the community.

The philosophies of Dewey and Freire focus on education as a means of promoting democratic values within the context of the classroom. The ideals of Saltmarsh et al.'s (2009) model of democratic engagement extend Dewey and Freire's philosophies to the intersection of higher education and community. Combining Dewey and Freire's philosophies with democratic engagement creates a lens from which to understand the shortcomings of current modes of community engagement and research on community engagement, and a foundation upon which research with regards to community engagement can be built. Focusing on community voice, asking community partners to define what difference could or should be made by higher education partnerships disrupts the current banking model of education in the community (Freire, 1970), it embodies Dewey (1938) and Freire's (1970, 1985) active learning, and honors the values of

democratic engagement (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). These values and practices are embedded with asset-based community development and consensus organizing.

Asset-based community development and consensus organizing. Asset-based community development and consensus organizing are connect practices that support the development and growth of a community. The community development model presented by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) focuses on the assets of individuals and organizations in order to build and improve a community. Asset-based community development draws on consensus building community organizing model, which is centered on collaboration and understanding mutual self-interest, rather than a conflict-organizing model (Eichler, 2007; Green, 2011; Green & Haines, 2012). While there are a variety of approaches to community development, I draw from the practices of asset-based community development and consensus organizing, as they are more closely aligned with the theoretical underpinnings of Freire and democratic engagement.

Definitions and historical context. Community can be defined as a geographical location, social institutions/organizations around which people gather, and/or social interactions based on a common interest (Green & Haines, 2012). Community development is a social process that involves its members in activities that seeks to improve the opportunities and quality of life (Green & Haines, 2012; Robinson & Green, 2011). It is interdisciplinary and driven by practice more than theory (Green & Haines, 2012). The goal of community development is to addresses local issues, as well as broader issues of “inequalities of wealth and power, promoting democracy, and building a sense of community” (Green & Haines, 2012, p. 1). Public participation is a key

component of community development efforts, as public participation is “seen as developmental, educative, and integrative and as a means of protecting freedom” (Green & Haines, 2012, p. 15). Community organizing speaks to the process of mobilizing individuals to take action on an issue (Eichler, 2007; Stoecker, 2003). According to Stoecker (2003), “[t]he focus on community organizing is building organizations controlled by people normally shut out from decision-making power, who then go on to fight for changes in the distribution of power” (p. 493-494). In a study that explored if community organizing and community development can be practice in tandem through community development corporations, Stoecker (2003) notes the differences accordingly: “While community organizing has focused on building community power, community development has focused mostly on building buildings” (p. 494). There are many different approaches to community organizing, with one of the more recognizable being conflict organizing (Eichler, 2007).

Having worked as a community organizer for many years, Mike Eichler developed the consensus organizing model as a way to grow power in a community without relying on the conflict-centered strategies of conflict organizing (Beck & Eichler, 2000). Consensus organizing was born out of Saul Alinsky’s view that “organizers reexamine environments and hold a realistic view of the world” (Beck & Eichler, 2000, p. 93). Table 2.1 illustrates the primary differences between conflict and consensus organizing. Though both are participatory in nature and seek to initiate change, they take vastly difference approaches (Beck & Eichler, 2000; Eichler, 2007). Conflict organizing relies on pitting the haves and the have-nots against each other to redistribute power;

consensus organizing seeks to grow power through identifying mutual self-interest and build unity between the haves and have-nots (Beck & Eichler, 2000).

Table 2.1

Community Organizing Strategies

Topic	Conflict Organizing Strategy	Consensus Organizing Strategy
Issue Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unity, community against a common enemy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ties self-interest of the community to the self-interest of others
Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get community members angry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get community members optimistic
Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target an individual identified as the “holder” of the power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a partner who will benefit from the effort
Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take it away from those causing the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow power for the community and the partner
Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate by pressuring and embarrassing the target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage and energize all of the partners
Initial Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize the largest number of community members possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get everyone to articulate their real interests
Final Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get target to “give in” to demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have all partners benefit
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a new issue in which an injustice unifies a community against a new common enemy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on positive relationships among partners to find new opportunities to involved additional partners

Note. From Eichler, M. (2007). *Consensus Organizing: Building Communities of Mutual Self-Interest*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. p. 41

Community development can be traced to the Progressive Era (Robinson & Green, 2011). Progressives believed that societal problems (i.e, crime) were caused by the “social condition in local neighborhoods” (Robinson & Green, 2011, p. 3).

Progressives focused on engaging the community to identify strategies and action to address the community issues (Robinson & Green, 2011). Community development was institutionalized in 1960s through national policy that focused on poverty (Robinson & Green, 2011). Over the years, three main approaches have emerged: technical assistance, self-help, and conflict (Garkovich, 2011). Technical assistance relies on the expertise of individuals or an organization, typically outside the given community, and focus on

intervention projects such as building physical infrastructure or adopting policies or ordinances (Garkovich, 2011). The self-help approach is centered on educating those in the community to identify and address issues (Garkovich, 2011). Similarly, the conflict approach seeks to mobilize community members to identify and address their needs while fostering the leadership capacity of those involved (Garkovich, 2011). The primary difference between the conflict and self-help approaches is the conflict approach specifically focuses on those experiencing powerlessness (Garkovich, 2011). These practices focus on the self-help approach of asset-based community development, as it centers processes that rely on the expertise of the community (Green, 2011; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

The values and practices of consensus organizing and asset-based community development are intertwined at varying points. Both have a strong focus on building relationships, focusing on the assets, and identifying potential points of collaboration in order to create desired change in a community. Combined with the theories of education as way and means of democratic engagement, these practices inform conceptual framework used for this study.

Conceptual Framework

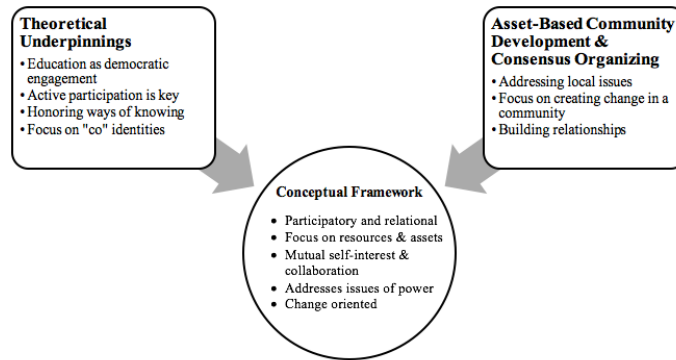
To frame and guide the exploration of community voice in community-university partnerships, the following conceptual framework is conceived by combining the theoretical underpinnings of Dewey, Freire, and democratic engagement, with the practices and values of asset-based community development and consensus organizing. Pulling from these theories and practices, five components that define the Framework are

used. These components are a focus on being participatory and relational, focusing on assets and resources, understanding self-interest and mutual self-interest through collaboration, addresses the imbalance of power, and is change-oriented. Figure 2.1 demonstrates how the theories and concepts work together to build the conceptual framework. The following section expands on each of these components.

Key components of framework. Combining attributes from Dewey and Freire's theories, democratic engagement, asset-based community development, and consensus organizing create a conceptual framework that is centered on community voice and follows a process that is collaborative, and aims to redistribute or balance power. Thus, this conceptual framework is defined by the following components: 1) Participation and relationships are central to the process; 2) Focus on resources and assets of the community; 3) Utilizes a process that is collaborative, seeking to understand the mutual self-interest of those involved; 4) Addresses the imbalance of power; and 5) Is change-oriented. These tenants are aligned and connected with the theoretical ideas of Dewey, Freire, and values of democratic engagement.

Figure 2.1

Construction of the Conceptual Framework



Participatory and relational. This component is centered on building reciprocal relationships and actively engaging with a community. Dewey (1916) stressed the importance of active participation in order to help society grow and reach its highest potential. Freire (1985) insisted that individuals should engage with and reflect on the world around them in order to create desired change. Asset-based community development is centered on relationships and focuses on building and strengthening ties between institutions and individuals who make up the community (Green & Haines, 2012; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). “The asset-based approach assumes that there are many institutional obstacles to the development of places that cannot be overcome through individual action but instead must be addressed through the activities of community-based organizations (CBOs)” (Green & Haines, 2012, p. 12). Building on these concepts, asset-based community development and consensus organizing require collaboration and focus on mobilization based on the mutual self-interest of constituents

(Eichler, 2007; Moore, 2002; Stoecker, 2003; Stoecker & Beckman, 2009). Democratic engagement sees reciprocal, or co, relationships as central (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). As such, the participatory and relational component focuses on participation by all stakeholders, is centered on relationships, and centered on doing *with* rather than *for*.

Focus on resources and assets. The primary goal of asset-based community development is to understand the resources in a community, and then mobilizing the community to maximize the use of these resources in order to benefit its members (Green & Haines, 2012). The consensus organizing model utilizes this approach and focuses on building optimism amongst constituents (Eichler, 2007). These practices align with Freire's (1970, 1985) ideals of honoring individual ways of knowing. Implicit in this idea is that each person has something to offer in the growth and change of society. Similarly, democratic engagement focuses on the assets rather than the shortcomings (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). Pulling these elements together forms a component centered on assets, and seeking to understand the resources of stakeholders.

Collaborative, building on mutual self-interest. Community development “engage[s] the members of the community in determining what issues they want to take on, collectively developing plans and strategies for tackling those issues, and then even doing the actual work” (Stoecker & Beckman, 2009, p.2). It is an inclusive and collaborative process (Moore, 2002). In contrast to conflict organizing, which emphasizes mobilizing the have-nots against the haves, consensus organizing focuses on authentic cooperation between both parties (Eichler, 2007; Stoecker, 2003). Consensus organizing connects “the self-interest of the community to the self-interest of others to achieve a

common goal” (Eichler, 2007, p. 7). This component is intertwined the elements noted in being participatory and relational, and asset-based, which are connected to the work of Dewey, Freire, and Saltmarsh, Hartley and Clayton. In summary, this component holds that understanding self-interest of stakeholders builds into identifying mutual self-interest towards collaboratively working to create desired change.

Addresses power imbalance. Identifying and deconstructing power is a key theme in Freire’s work (1970, 1985, 1998). This is seen in his views of education, and calls for liberation (1970). A primary focus of asset-based community development is to build the leadership and power “of those who have been most excluded and are the most vulnerable” (Stoecker & Beckman, 2009, p.2). Consensus organizing and asset-based community development seek to mobilize those in and outside of the power structure (Eichler, 2007) by honoring and incorporating the expertise and voice of the community (Moore, 2002). A main value of consensus organizing is to honor different ways of knowing and social/political/cultural contexts by listening to community members (Eichler, 2007). The tenants of democratic engagement also highlight the importance of identifying and dismantling power structures (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). This component values the voice of the of voiceless, seeks to redistribute power, emphasizes sharing power and voice through co identities.

Change oriented. The main goal of asset-based community development and consensus organizing is to create change within a community (Beck & Eichler, 2000; Eichler, 2007; Green & Haines). These processes are centered on developing leadership of community and building the capacity of the community, towards the betterment of the

community (Green & Haines, 2012). Consensus organizing and asset-based community development recognizes that change is a collaborative process (Eichler, 2007; Green, 2011). Central to Freire's (1970) theories is the idea of liberation and transformation. Systemic change and the creation of new value and/or knowledge is also central to the values of democratic engagement (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). The change-oriented component seeks to make changes (identified by the community) that better serve all stakeholders, and focuses on growth for all stakeholders, as well as creating systemic changes.

The conceptual framework draws on the theories of Dewey and Freire, ties in current work on democratic engagement in higher education, and borrows values and practices from asset-based community development and consensus organizing. What results is a framework that is participatory and relational, has a focus on resources and assets, is collaborative, building on self-interest, addresses the imbalance of power, and is change-oriented. The framework was used throughout to guide and analyze the study.

Use of framework in the study. The Framework scaffolds the study by informing the research design, methods, and analysis. As a qualitative design, the study is centered on the voice of community partners, and contextualizes what a change-orientation looks like in education-focused community-based organizations. As noted in Table 2.2, the design and methods of the study met criteria within each component.

Table 2.2

Conceptual Framework with Design & Methods

	Participatory & Relational	Focus on Resources & Assets	Collaboration & Mutual Self-Interest	Addresses Imbalance of Power	Change- Oriented
Design					
Qualitative Case Study	x			x	
Research Questions		x	x	x	x
Protocol Questions	x	x	x	x	x
Methods & Analysis					
Sampling Strategy	x	x			
Data Collection	x	x		x	
Data Analysis				x	
Ethics				x	

For example, the research and protocol questions were selected to understand their relationships with University representatives, the assets and resources of the organization, the self-interest of the organization, areas in which power dynamics may be at play, and how they would like to see their partnerships shift and grow. Table 2.3 provides a deeper look at the alignment of research and protocol questions with the conceptual framework.

Summary

This chapter demonstrates the sparse research on community partner impact and voice in community-university partnerships. Research thus far tends to utilize the partnership as the unit of analysis, highlighting the qualities of an effective partnership, the incentives and perspectives of the community partner, and documenting the general outcomes

(Afshar, 2005; Clay et al., 2012; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Mendez & Lloyd, 2005; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Stoeker & Tryon, 2009; Worrall, 2007).

This research highlights the centrality of the relationship between the stakeholders, commitment, trust, and including the community partner as a co-creator (Afshar, 2005; Carney et al., 2011; Clay et al., 2012; Curwood et al., 2011; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Leisey et al., 2012; Mendez & Lloyd, 2005; Miron & Moely, 2006; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Tryon et al., 2009; Worrall, 2007). Community partners are incentivized by the potential to increase organizational capacity (Bell & Carlson, 2009; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Worrall, 2007). Research on the outcomes of community engagement show that community-university partnerships can build the capacity of the community-based organization by increasing or enhancing various types of capital (Bushouse, 2005; Gelmon et al., 1998; Salant & Laumatia, 2011). There are also benefits to the larger community and individuals, such as increased performance or aptitude (Jorge, 2003; Officer et al., 2013; Schmidt & Robby, 2002).

Research also touches on the challenges in research on community-university partnerships and within partnerships. This includes how community is defined and the number of variables involved in community partnerships (Cruz & Giles, 2000). Studies also document the tendency in research to focus on anecdotal evidence rather than outcomes, impact, or significance (Christensen et al., 2013; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Curwood et al., 2011; King et al., 2010; Salant & Laumatia, 2011; Scull & Cuthill, 2010).

Table 2.3
Conceptual Framework with Research and Protocol Questions

	Research Questions	Protocol Questions
Participatory & Relational <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public participation is key Centered on relationships Doing with 		<p>Tell me about your organization and your position within the organization.</p> <p>What is your role in the partnership(s) between your organization and the University?</p> <p>Who do you partner with at the university? And how is the partnership maintained?</p>
	Focus on Resources & Assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify resources in the community Mapping/understanding assets Assumes/starts with considering strengths and possibilities 	<p>How do community organizations define and determine outputs and outcomes for community-university partnerships?</p> <p>How does a community partner determine whether or not a partnership is successful?</p>
Collaboration and Self-Interest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify common interests/goals towards creating strategies for change Understand self-interest of stakeholders Collaborative in understanding what issues are important and what people want to take on Co-identities and roles 	<p>How do community organizations define and determine outputs and outcomes for community-university partnerships?</p> <p>How does the community partner advocate or voice what outputs and outcomes are important for their organization when establishing and maintaining a partnership with the University?</p>	<p>What are the original goals of partnership? What have the outcomes been?</p> <p>What are the ideal outputs and outcomes of this partnership for your organization?</p>
	Addresses Imbalance of Power <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus is on voice of voiceless Seek to redistribute power Co-identities and roles Sharing power and voice 	<p>How does the community partner advocate or voice what outputs and outcomes are important for their organization when establishing and maintaining a partnership with the University?</p>
Change-oriented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Towards making change that better serves the community/institutions Focus on everyone in the partnership growing, systems change, new value/knowledge is created 	<p>How does a community partner determine whether or not a partnership is successful?</p>	<p>How do you know if your partnership with the University is successful? What are some indicators or markers of success?</p> <p>Do you have any advice for the University?</p> <p>Is there anything I didn't ask that you would like to share?</p>

Challenges within the partnership are oriented towards a mismatch in needs and assets and time constraints (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Leisey et al., 2012; Martin et al., 2009; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Worrall, 2007). Specific to research on community-university partnerships with an education-focused organization, the general findings point towards a lack of community voice, a focus on the university perspective, and focus on outreach programs rather than engagement (Barerra, 2015; Collins, 2011; Constan & Spicer, 2015; Kirschenbaum & Reagan, 2001; Lima, 2004; Moskal & Skokan, 2011). The landscape of research points towards the need and importance of including the community partner voice in defining what outputs, outcomes, and impact indicators are of interest for their respective organizations.

To understand and guide this study, a conceptual framework was developed using the theoretical underpinnings of John Dewey and Paulo Freire, values from democratic engagement, and practices of asset-based community development and consensus organizing. Pulling from each of these theories and concepts, the framework was formed and includes five key components. These components are: 1) Participation and relationships are central to the process; 2) Focus on resources and assets of the community; 3) Utilizes a process that is collaborative, seeking to understand the mutual self-interest of those involved; 4) Addresses imbalance of power; and 5) Is change-oriented. The five components were used throughout the study, informing the design, methods, and analysis procedures, which are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Research Methods

The purpose of this study is to discover how the community defines and understands impact indicators for partnerships with a university in the Mountain West region of the United States. Impact indicators are generally defined as markers/ways that a difference/impact is being made. Community organizations partner with the university for a variety of reasons, but what are the desired outcomes from these partnerships? How does the organization advocate for those outcomes in community-university partnerships?

Research Paradigm and Tacit Theories

The research paradigm is rooted in a transformative worldview (Creswell, 2014), as the study is centered on the voice of the community partners, a group that has largely been left out of the conversation, and seeks to initiate change in the ways in which universities include community partners in shaping the measurement of community-university partnerships. The transformative worldview posits, “the research contains an action agenda for reform that may change lives of the participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher’s life” (Creswell, 2014, p. 9). This approach is mirrored in the theories and practices that make up the conceptual framework. Paulo Freire’s (1970, 1985) work centered on liberation, the ideal impact of

democratic engagement is to create new knowledge and change for all stakeholders (Saltmarsh et al., 2009), and a change-orientation is evident in the practices of consensus organizing and asset-based community development (Eichler, 2007; Green, 2011). Research born out of the transformative worldview seeks to address issues of oppression and empower marginalized populations (Creswell, 2014). By using an embedded case study, the results from the study elevate the voice of the community partners while soliciting input on measurement or assessment methods. The intention of this embedded case study was to understand the community partner perspective and begin the process of co-creating ways to measure community-university partnerships that are meaningful for the community partner and the university. Using a qualitative case study design allows for insight into a context or phenomenon, which helps to explain certain behavior (Yin, 2011). Such an approach allows for the use of multiple sources of evidence, which enriches the depth of the study (Yin, 2011).

Positionality

The research design of this study is directly informed by and intertwined with my identity as a practitioner-scholar rooted in a transformative worldview. I strive to be an agent for change in my research and work. My desire to pursue this research stems from the intersection of my experience in the nonprofit and higher education sectors. As an undergraduate student, my involvement as a participant and leader in community service and service-learning was the catalyst to understanding my own identities, power, and privilege. I believe that institutions of higher education should help to address society's most pressing needs (Boyer, 1990) and that this should be done in a way that honors the

expertise of the community (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). Currently, I have the opportunity to practice this ideal in my work as the Coordinator in the Service-Learning Office where the study takes place. In this position, I am tasked with supporting faculty in their development of service-learning courses, and formalizing partnerships with community-based organizations. In past positions, I co-created and managed partnerships between institutions of higher education and community-based organizations in both roles of representing the campus and the community.

Before reviewing the research questions, it is important to document my assumptions around the topic of community engagement, specifically looking at assumptions around democratically engaged partnerships and barriers for community partners. First, based on experience and readings, I believe there are more benefits from democratically engaged partnerships (in contrast to technocratic, transactional partnerships; though I believe there are benefits to these models as well). Democratically engaged partnerships seem to hold more potential for long-term change, as the model of shared power, authority and an inclusive focus on the process as part of the outcomes, rather than simply focusing on the product as the outcome. Further, democratically engaged partnerships demonstrate the ways in which democratic action works in real time. I believe this beneficial to the community partners as they collaborate with other organizations, students in their present context, as well as their future contexts of civically engaged members of society, and faculty as they continue to collaborate with other faculty, students, staff, and community partners. In short, a democratically engaged partnership creates a ripple effect: the ways of knowing and being for all the stakeholders

involved in a democratically engaged partnership are influenced to be more democratically engaged.

From my experience in the nonprofit sector, nonprofit organizations (often the community partner in community-university partnerships) face challenges in partnering with institutions of higher education. Many nonprofit organizations have limited resources and capacity, which can create challenges in partnering with institutions of higher education. In addition, I believe there is limited access for community partners to initiate a partnership with a higher education institution.

In revisiting the conceptual framework of this proposal, recall how the theories of Dewey (1903, 1916, 1938) and Freire (1970, 1985, 1998) and the practices of consensus organization and asset-based community development scaffold democracy and action. Alongside this, consider the ways in which the public good mission emerged in higher education by providing resources and expertise to the community. Fulfilling the public good mission through community engagement, institutions of higher education have effectively created a classroom with and in the community, which begs the question: Are community engagement efforts modeling the cornerstone theories of democracy and action?

The conceptual framework highlights the power and necessity of the individual voice as a means of improving a community. Specifically, Freire (1970) emphasized the issues around power and authority that was often unbalanced in the classroom. In the same way the banking system places the teacher in the role of expert and the student as the empty vessel, community engagement efforts often replicate this model of power and

oppression. All too often, the university is positioned as the expert who will provide best practices to the community served, while overlooking the expertise of the community (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2005). If our education system is to promote democratic engagement and education, then how can we better include the voice of the community partners in community engagement efforts?

Research Questions

With the theoretical grounding of education as a means of promoting democratic engagement, a comprehensive understanding of the literature on community-university partnerships, and keeping my assumptions in mind, this study explored the following research questions:

1. How do community organizations define and determine outputs, outcomes, and impact indicators for community-university partnerships?
2. How does the community partner advocate or voice what outputs and outcomes are important for their organization when establishing and maintaining a partnership with the University?
3. How does a community partner determine whether or not a partnership is successful?

Design and Methodology

In this section, I provide an overview of the research design, leading into the methodology used. To explore the above research questions, this qualitative study examined multiple community organizations through an exploratory, instrumental, embedded case design (Yin, 2014). Qualitative research focuses on understanding the

perspective of an individual or group, and helps tell how and why of the subject matter's story (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2014). There are often concerns around rigor and ability to generalize in qualitative research (Yin, 2014). However, this study followed a systematic approach to ensure rigor.

Exploratory case studies examine and describe a case or phenomenon in the context of the given situation (Yin, 2014). An instrumental case study allows for insight into a particular issue through in-depth analysis (Creswell, 2014; Stake, 2008). Multiple cases help to create a broader understanding of the issue at hand through the examination of similarities and dissimilarities (Stake, 2008). While one singular case study may not be generalizable, each contributes to telling a larger story (Yin, 2014). Embedded case studies explore the noted research questions through multiple partnerships that are collectively bound by a selected focus area (Yin, 2014). For this study, it was important to capture the voice and perspective of community partners, thus the design of a qualitative, exploratory, instrumental, embedded case design was essential. The individual narratives of participants help to tell the story of the community partner experience in community-university partnership. As a voice that has been largely left out of the research and broader conversation, this study adds to the validity of community partner experience by documenting and analyzing their stories. The documentation of these narratives could also help institutions of higher education understand the experience of community partners, and take steps towards improving partnerships.

This study utilized detailed and in-depth data collected from a variety of sources and across various settings (Yin, 2014). The six cases were constructed through the

collection and analysis of various data points, with the focusing being on one-on-one interviews. Analysis was done within and between subunits, thus providing more comprehensive findings for the research questions (Baxter & Jack, 2008). An embedded case study design centers the research on the voice and perspective of the community partners, seeking to understand their individual and collective experiences inclusive of variables such as type, length, and number of partnerships with the university.

This larger case study focuses on one community focus area: Education. Narrowing the research to one focus area allowed for a deeper exploration of one type of community-university partnerships. The focus area was determined to be the most viable through a process of community partner mapping (discussed further in the sampling strategy). The focus area was selected based on the number of organizations partnered with the University within the focus area of Education. The embedded cases consist of six education-focused organizations that are currently partnered with the University. The following sections further explain the sampling strategy, data collection and analysis procedures, consideration of ethics, and validity.

Sampling strategy. The sampling design was multi-staged (Creswell, 2014), as I first identified what partnerships currently exist through community partner mapping, a method modified from a practice of asset-based community development. Multi-staged sampling, or clustering, functions as a means to identify the various components that make up a population (Creswell, 2014). In the asset-based community development model asset mapping is “a process of learning about the resources that are available in a community” (Green & Haines, 2012, p. 12). The initial step of asset-based community

development is to map formal and informal organizations within the community (Green & Haines, 2012). The process of mapping helps to understand the ways in which organizations/institutions can better serve the community (Green, 2011). Through this process, communities can “identify their common goals and aspirations so they can develop strategies that build on local resources to achieve them” (Green, 2011, p. 76). As such, the process of asset-based community development and consensus organizing is built on relationships and is participatory by nature (Green & Haines, 2012; Eichler, 2007; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

For the purpose of this study, the mapping process was used to identify potential participants. To begin the community partner mapping process, a list of engagement opportunities through the University was compiled. This included a list of service-learning classes, co-curricular opportunities (such as episodic volunteer events), and practica. From this list, I worked with the appropriate University personnel to determine which community-based organizations serve as partners for each of these engagement opportunities. Mapping community organizations currently partnered with the University provided a general list of community partners, which were then grouped by focus areas (for example, animals, arts and culture, education, environment, health, and youth). Appendix A outlines community-university partnerships, noting the organization focus area and if partnerships are curricular and/or co-curricular. The final list comprised 68 number of organizations representing 14 focus areas, which are outlined in Table 3.1. The focus areas are animals, arts and culture, community development, education, elderly,

environment, food security, health, housing and homelessness, literacy, recovery and addiction, social services, special needs, and youth.

Table 3.1

Breakdown of Organizations Partnered with the University by Focus Area

Issue Area	Number of Organizations
Animals	3
Arts & Culture	4
Community Development	2
Education	23
Elderly	6
Environment	5
Food Security	3
Health	3
Housing & Homelessness	8
Literacy	1
Recovery & Addiction	1
Social Services	4
Special Needs	1
Youth	4
Total	68

The organizations were categorized based on their organization mission, which were accessed via the internet. The majority of the organizations fell into the category of education, with a total of 23 organizations identified as having an education-focused mission statement. With the majority of the organizations having an education focus, this became the theme that bound the single case. The focus area of education was the most prominent; providing a larger sample from which to recruit.

The complete list of education-based organizations partnered with the University ranged from schools (elementary through high school, private and public, trade and traditional), national and local nonprofit organizations, and politically affiliated

organizations. Table 3.2 outlines the education-focused community organizations, and relevant partnerships with the University. Selected organizations are bolded.

Table 3.2

Education-Based Community Organizations and Current University Partnerships

Organization Name	Focus Area	Curricular Partnerships	Co-Curricular Partnerships
James Madison Elementary School	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education	
Sierra Nevada School Improvement Campaign	Education	Service-Learning, College of Education	Student Engagement Office, Associated Student Body
Community Headstart	Education	Service-Learning	
Springs Elementary	Education	Service-Learning	
Mountain View Middle School	Education	Service-Learning	
Arts & Education	Education	Service-Learning	
ESL Tutoring	Education	Service-Learning	
Spring Brook High School	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education	
Summit High School	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education; School of Medicine; Undergrad Prep; Access College	Student Engagement Office
Undergrad Prep	Education	Service-Learning	
Washington Elementary School	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education	
Mountain View Academy	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education; College of Science	
Math & Science Tutors	Education	Service-Learning	
Smith STEM Academy	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education	
O'Reilly High School	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education	
Willow Glen Elementary School	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education	
Outdoor Explorers	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education	Student Engagement Office, Internships Office
South Valley High School	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education	
South Valley Middle School	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education	
The Early Childhood Learning Center	Education	Service-Learning	
Sierra Nevada School District	Education	Service-Learning; College of Education; University Teacher Education Program	Student Engagement Office, Internships Office
State Regional Science Fair	Education	Service-Learning	

*(*All organization and office names have been changed to ensure confidentiality)*

A purposive sampling strategy was then used to identify potential cases for the study, and later, the individual participants (Creswell, 2007; Esterberg, 2002; Yin, 2011). Purposive sampling allowed for exploration of a topic by narrowing the pool of education-focused organizations to ensure a representative sample (Esterberg, 2002). For this study, the number, type, and length of partnerships with the University were taken into consideration to ensure diversity, thus capturing a representative sample of variables in community-university partnerships. The organizations selected represented different types of partnerships with the University, varying lengths, and multiple partnerships. Types of partnerships ranged from episodic volunteerism to service-learning to internships. Length of partnership ranged from several months to decades. The number of partnerships with the University started at two and varied, with larger organizations and longer relationships being unable to count. Having a diversity in size and programming allowed for a representative sample from education-focused organizations. Representation of different types, lengths, and number of partnerships lends to a broader understanding of how the University engages a whole, versus looking specifically at one type of engagement activity. The differentiation also allowed for inter-case analysis; comparing and contrasting the different variables. With a representative set of organizations identified, the next step was to recruit participants.

A purposive sampling strategy was also employed to identify participants. Participants for this study were recruited based on their affiliation with the organization

and connection to the University partnerships, and in consultation with the Service-Learning Office and organization websites. The Service-Learning Office provided contact information based on their understanding of the partnerships. Potential participants held a variety of positions and proximity to the partnerships with the University. This decision was made to understand the perspectives relative to the involvement with the University, and provide a representative sample towards gaining a representative perspective of community-university partnerships. From here, potential participants were emailed inviting them to participate in the study. All but one participant responded and accepted the invitation. Snowball sampling was also used to ensure I captured additional data relevant to the study but may have otherwise been overlooked in the first step of mapping (Yin, 2011). This allowed for the inclusion of four participants that otherwise would have been overlooked. Descriptions for each case and community partner participants are provided in the following chapter.

Study context. This section provides an overview of the study context. This includes information about the location of the study, university, community-based organizations that represent the embedded cases, and the participants that make up each case. An overview of the background helps to situate the research towards enhanced understanding of the larger context of the study.

City and university. The study was conducted with education-focused community-based organizations located in a small, college town in the Mountain West region of the United States. The university (Mountain West University, or MWU) currently partners with community-based organizations in multiple ways across campus.

As a land grant institution, MWU has a long tradition of community outreach programs and projects. In the past few years, the University has increased its focus on becoming a more community-engaged institution. On the academic affairs side, student and faculty mostly work with community partners through internships, practica, and service-learning courses. On the student affairs side, students often volunteer with nonprofit organizations through clubs and organizations.

The development and institutionalization of service-learning on campus is a newer initiative for the University. In 2013, the Service-Learning Office (SLO) was founded to support this development. The student affairs division recently implemented a focus on civic engagement through episodic volunteer opportunities with nonprofit organizations. The majority of this coordination happens through the Student Engagement Office (SEO). This increased desire to work with the community through curricular and co-curricular pathways has increased the opportunities and processes. This new focus on community engagement presents a unique opportunity for the University to establish a democratically engaged approach partnering with nonprofit organizations by first seeking to understand the community perspective on impact and success in partnership.

Cases. Nonprofits in the metro area are diverse and address a multitude of social issues. As outlined in the previous section, the first step in this study was to map out the various nonprofits towards understanding the landscape of current community partners. This step was vital in understanding the greater landscape of the nonprofit sector and the ways in which the University partners with the local community-based organizations.

The following organizations make up the embedded cases in this study: Sierra Nevada School Improvement Campaign, Summit High School, Mountain View Academy, Outdoor Explorers, Sierra Nevada School District, and the Sierra Nevada Exploratorium. These organizations were selected because of the number of partnerships they had with the University and the duration of partnerships. In total, there were 22 participants in the study. Participants ranged in position, but each was invited to participate because of their role in the partnership(s) with the University. I sought to have at least three participants from each organization, ideally in varying roles and interactions with the University. The diversity in roles and interactions with the University allowed for representative experiences to be captured, rather than focusing on just one type of interaction. In the case of Outdoor Explorers there were only two participants. This was due to two main factors: 1) the organization is relatively small, and 2) there were only two employees who are affiliated with the University partnerships. To maintain participants' anonymity, pseudonyms are used, titles are changed, and identifying information such as race, ethnicity, and gender are not specifically recorded or noted. Below is a brief description of each case and the participants that make up the case. Table 3.3 outlines the organization and participants. A more in-depth write-up of each case is provided in Chapter four.

Sierra Nevada School District. The school district is the only school district in the County. It contains a total of 104 schools (elementary, middle, high, charter, and special needs schools). Participants for this case represent three departments from the District: 1) Volunteer Services: director and program director; 2) District-University collaborations:

coordinator for University partnerships and a teacher on special assignment; and 3) Career and Technical Education programs: director. The School District has a number of formal and informal partnerships with the University. Most notably, the School District has a long-standing partnership with the University's College of Education teacher preparation program.

Mountain View Academy. The Academy is a public, Title I elementary school that serves pre-K through sixth grade in the Sierra Nevada School District. The school has a focus on STEM education. Participants for this case include the school principal, counselor, and STEM program coordinator. The school has formal partnerships with the University via their on-campus classrooms, and is a regular site for the University's school counselor program. There are a number of informal partnerships through service-learning classes and College of Science.

Summit High School. The high school is one of fourteen high schools in the Sierra Nevada School District. The school is designated as Title I, which means it has a high number of low-income students, and serves grades nine through twelve. It is located on the north side of the city and is approximately two miles from the University. Participants for this case are a teacher, two program coordinators from Undergrad Prep and their University counterpart, the program coordinator from Neighborhood School Support, and the program coordinator from Access College. The school one formalized partnership with the University's medical program, in addition to their partnerships with Undergrad Prep and Access College. Because of its proximity to the University and perceived need, the school has had a number of informal partnerships with the University.

Outdoor Explorers. Outdoor Explorers is an outdoor science education nonprofit organization. They serve approximately 20,000 students through their year-round programming. With a smaller staff, the participants from this case are the executive director and education coordinator. Partnerships with the University include internships through the College of Education and the University-funded internship program. Outdoor Explorers has also worked with the University through service-learning classes, episodic volunteerism, and through specific departments on campus.

Sierra Nevada Exploratorium. The Exploratorium is a mid-sized, science-focused museum located in the downtown area of the city. The museum provides informal science education to the public. They have formalized partnerships with a service-learning class, host episodic volunteers from the University, and hosted a traveling exhibit in conjunction with the University. The museum has also participated in the University-funded internship program. Participants for this case include the executive director, program director, and volunteer coordinator.

Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools. This organization ran a political campaign for a measure that would provide funding for the capital improvements of schools in the Sierra Nevada District. The Coalition ran a political campaign to promote the measure during Fall 2016 election. The organization was small, and relatively short-lived due to the nature of its mission. Participants that made up this case are the Campaign Manager, Volunteer Coordinator, and a campaign volunteer who also serves as the Student Body President at the University. Each of the participants were current or recently graduated

students from the University, all were heavily involved with student government on campus.

Participants. There was a total of 22 participants, with at least two participants from each organization. Participants held positions with varying authority and connection to the University partnerships. Eight participants held executive-level roles and thirteen held supportive roles, such as volunteer or program coordinator. All participants were involved with their organization's partnership with the University. To ensure equal representation, at least one person at the executive director level and the program director levels were interviewed. This allowed for depth and breadth of experiences with community-university partnerships. Specific demographic details are omitted to ensure the identities of the participants are protected.

Data collection. Using multiple sources to collect data supports the ability to triangulate the data, thus corroborating the findings (Yin, 2014). For this study, sources included documentation, interviews, and archival records. Documentation and archival records (e.g., memos, email, website content, and organizational materials) are static pieces of information that can be repeatedly reviewed and analyzed (Yin, 2014). Documentation sources can also provide important historical context as well as specific information that is relevant to the study (Yin, 2014). There can be challenges with bias selectivity, which is why it was important to use all materials to triangulate and corroborate the findings (Yin, 2014). Interviews allow for a space to ask questions that are specific and relevant to the study (Yin, 2014). This format was essential for this study, as community voice is central to the purpose of this study and interviews allow for capturing the participants'

perspective. The limitations of interviews as a data collection point are bias and challenges around recalling exactly what was said (Yin, 2014).

Table 3.3

Study Participant List

Organization Name	Participant Name	Participant Position
Sierra Nevada School District	Susan Shepard	Director, Volunteer Services
	Chris Daniels	Volunteer Coordinator, Volunteer Services
	Jennifer Harris	University Coordinator
	Jackie Sanders	Teacher, University-District Teacher Program
	Elizabeth Murray	Director and Principal
Mountain View Academy	Marsha Grant	Principal
	Todd Evans	Program Coordinator
	Claire Walsh	Counselor
Summit High School	Monica James	Program Coordinator, Undergrad Prep
	Reina Cruz	Program Coordinator, Undergrad Prep
	Sarah Jones	University Coordinator, Undergrad Prep
	Ellie Redfield	Program Coordinator, Neighborhood School
	Mike Jenson	Support
	Michelle Stewart	Teacher
Outdoor Explorers	Alex Jackson	University Coordinator, Access College Education Coordinator
	Robert Evans	Executive Director
Sierra Nevada Exploratorium	Rosanna Stanford	Volunteer Coordinator
	David Wagner	Executive Director
	Kristin Gray	Education Programs Director
Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools	Sean Smith	Campaign Manager
	Stephanie Brown	Volunteer Coordinator
	Adam Maxwell	Campaign Volunteer

To address these limitation, research bias is well documented in this chapter and data is triangulated with other data collected. All interviews were recorded with the participants' permission to ensure responses were well-documented.

Interviews. Being able to understand and reflect the community partners' perspective by using their own words fulfills the desire to elevate the voice of a group

that is typically marginalized in this field of study. In line with this, I conducted one-on-one interviews with leaders from each community partner to gain an understanding of how they, individually and as an organization, understand and measure what makes partnerships with the University successful. These interviews were qualitative in nature, thus allowing for open-ended questions and conversation (Creswell, 2014; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2011). Individual interviews provided a deeper understanding the community-based organization and their partnership with the University. This approach is also aligned with the practices of consensus organizing and asset-based community development, which utilizes one-on-one interviews to help the organizer build relationships within the community while understanding the personal interests of community members, and begin to notice a pattern of common concerns (Eichler, 2007). From here, the consensus organizer can begin to frame the shared goal between the various constituents to help resolve or address the issue at hand (Eichler, 2007). In a grounded theory study, Moore (2002) found that community development practitioners use feedback from the community to inform the co-creation of community action and strategies. They listen, engage people in discussion, and observe the community (Moore, 2002).

Collecting data from individual interviews allowed for a balance between depth of responses and quantity of responses (Yin, 2011). An interview protocol outlining relevant topics was used to help guide the conversation and to ensure similar data is collected across all interviews (Yin, 2011) (see Appendix B). As with community development practices, the people leading the change efforts should be asking questions to understand what works, what does not work, what people think should be changed, and where

capacity could be built (Green, 2011). Further, Stoecker and Beckman (2009) suggests questions like “[w]hat does the community want to change? What do they need to accomplish the change? What help is needed from outsiders? What help can the higher education institution provide? What help can other outsiders provide?” (p. 6). Interview protocol questions were guided by the research questions and informed by the conceptual framework, focusing on 1) incorporating elements that were relational towards understanding how the community partner participates in the partnerships; 2) seeking to understand assets and resources; 3) points of collaboration and self-interest; 4) giving voice to power imbalances; and 5) creating space for participants to voice what changes are needed in the partnership (see Table 2.3 for full matrix).

On average, interviews lasted 60-minutes and conducted at a location selected by the participant. Participants were provided an informed consent document outlining the study procedures, risks, and request to audio-record the interview (Esterberg, 2002) (see Appendix C). All participants agreed to have their session audio-recorded, and notes were also taken during the interview (Creswell, 2014; Esterberg, 2002; Yin, 2011). Participants included those who work closely with University students and faculty (i.e., volunteer and/or program coordinators) and higher-level leadership (i.e., executive directors, board of directors). Interviewing people at varying levels of connection and leadership associated with the university partnership provided multiple perspectives, which added to the depth and breadth of the data collected.

Documentation and archival records. In addition to one-on-one interviews, I collected and examined objects such as documents and archival records (Creswell, 2014;

Yin, 2011). This included Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and organizational materials. These data sources provided information on the ways in which the community partner views and approaches the issue addressed by their organization and the ways in which they partner with the university.

The University MOU was a standard document, that focuses solely on legal and risk management topics. While each community partner has an MOU signed with the University, the content is exactly the same with the exception of organization names and dates. The document offered no insight specific to the organizations themselves, but provided information on the University's perspective on partnering.

Organizational materials collected were either found on the internet, were retrieved from each organization's website, or provided by the participant during the interview. These materials provided information on staff, programming, historical context, and specific data points that were often overlooked during the interview process. For example, some participants mentioned the number of people they serve, but were not able to recall the exact number. The organization websites and materials were able to provide exact numbers and information that otherwise could not be recalled. These organizational materials helped to fill in the gaps, and corroborate the information shared in the interviews. The information gleaned from these materials were used largely in the case write-ups.

Data analysis procedures. Data was analyzed using the five-phase model outlined by Yin (2011), which consists of compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. Each step is defined and outlined in the following sections.

The conceptual framework was used to organize and understand the findings. To help minimize unknown biases, I coded each piece of data separately in the first and second rounds of coding, and considered the breadth of codes (and possible connections or disconnections) during the third and fourth rounds of coding (Yin, 2011). To help keep track of organizational decisions, a glossary and analytic memos were created (Esterberg, 2002; Saldaña, 2009; Yin, 2011). This, in turn, supports the reliability of the study, as the notes, glossary, and memos demonstrate consistency throughout the study (Creswell, 2014). The following sections outline each phase of the process and steps taken in the data analysis procedures.

Compiling. In the first phase of compiling, the data is pulled together and organized into a database (Yin, 2011). During this phase, the interviews were transcribed by the researcher and an outside contractor. Transcribed interviews, organizational information, and MOUs were then stored in an NVivo file. NVivo is a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software specifically designed to support qualitative research. Each interview was uploaded as an individual file and labeled by participant and organization. Organization documents (MOUs and organization information) were also uploaded as individual files and labeled by organization. With the compiling phase complete, the disassembling phase began.

Disassembling. During the disassembling phase, the data is broken down into smaller pieces, typically through an open coding processes, which helps to create initial categories (Yin, 2011). In this phase, each data source went through three rounds of open coding: attribute, In Vivo, and structural coding. Open coding was used during the first

round of coding by reviewing data line-by-line and noting salient thoughts, ideas, or concepts (Esterberg, 2002; Yin, 2011).

Attribute coding was the initial step in the coding process. During this step, each data source was coding according to its various attributes (Saldaña, 2009). The process of attribute coding provided important contextual information, and supported data management (Saldaña, 2009). Coding included noting the organization information (size, type of organization, and location), partnership information (type of partnership and number of years partnered) and participant information (position, affiliation with the partnership, and basic demographics). Once this step was complete, In Vivo coding was used.

In Vivo coding allows for use of the exact words or phrases used by the participants (Saldaña, 2009). The In Vivo method of coding is aligned with the conceptual framework, as it keeps the voice of the participant central (Saldaña, 2009). Specifically, this approach helps to address the imbalance of power, which is a main component of the conceptual framework (Eichler, 2007; Freire, 1970; Saltmarsh et al., 2009). As often as possible, the voices of the participants were included in the initial coding process. For example, one participant noted:

but mostly, I find that [the University] is pretty fragmented, like a lot of universities are, so to say that I've worked with [the University], I would say that I've worked with professors or departments, or initiatives, or schools – but that's more how I would describe it. It's a big organization.

This quote was coded as *University is Fragmented*. Structural coding was also used to categorize the data.

Structural coding provides a foundation for future coding cycles by identifying content- or conceptual-based topics (Saldaña, 2009). This was particularly useful when coding the interview transcripts, as each protocol question is connected to one of the components of the conceptual framework. Table 3.4 outlines the structural coding connections between the protocol questions and framework components.

Table 3.4

Structural Coding Using Framework Components and Protocol Questions

	Protocol Questions	Codes that Emerged from Structural Coding Process
<p>Participatory & Relational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public participation is key • Centered on relationships • Doing with <p>Focus on Resources & Assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify resources in the community • Mapping/understanding assets • Assumes/starts with considering strengths and possibilities <p>Collaboration and Self-Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify common interests/goals towards creating strategies for change • Understand self-interest of stakeholders • Collaborative in understanding what issues are important and what people want to take on • Co-identities and roles <p>Addresses Imbalance of Power</p>	Tell me about your organization and your position within the organization.	Organization Information
	What is your role in the partnership(s) between your organization and the University?	Role in Partnership
	Who do you partner with at the university? And how is the partnership maintained?	Maintaining
	What does your organization bring to the community?	What org brings to community
	What does your organization bring to the partnership with UNR?	What org brings to partnerships
	How does your organization measure or understand if the needs of the community are being met?	Measuring need
	What are the original goals of partnership? What have the outcomes been?	Original Goals
	What are the ideal outputs and outcomes of this partnership for your organization?	Ideal Outputs and Outcomes
	Do you face any challenges or obstacles in forming and maintaining a partnership with the University?	Challenges

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus is on voice of voiceless • Seek to redistribute power • Co-identities and roles • Sharing power and voice 	<p>What would you like to change about the process of establishing or maintaining the partnership?</p>	<p>Suggestions for Change</p>
<p>Change-oriented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towards making change that better serves the community/institutions • Focus on everyone in the partnership growing, systems change, new value/knowledge is created 	<p>How do you know if your partnership with the University is successful? What are some indicators or markers of success?</p> <p>Do you have any advice for the University?</p> <p>Is there anything I didn't ask that you would like to share?</p>	<p>Indicators of Success</p> <p>Advice</p>

In addition to coding based on the questions asked, a number of other structural themes emerged. Related to the previous example, the *University is Fragmented* code was lumped into the structural code of *Infrastructure to Support Access*.

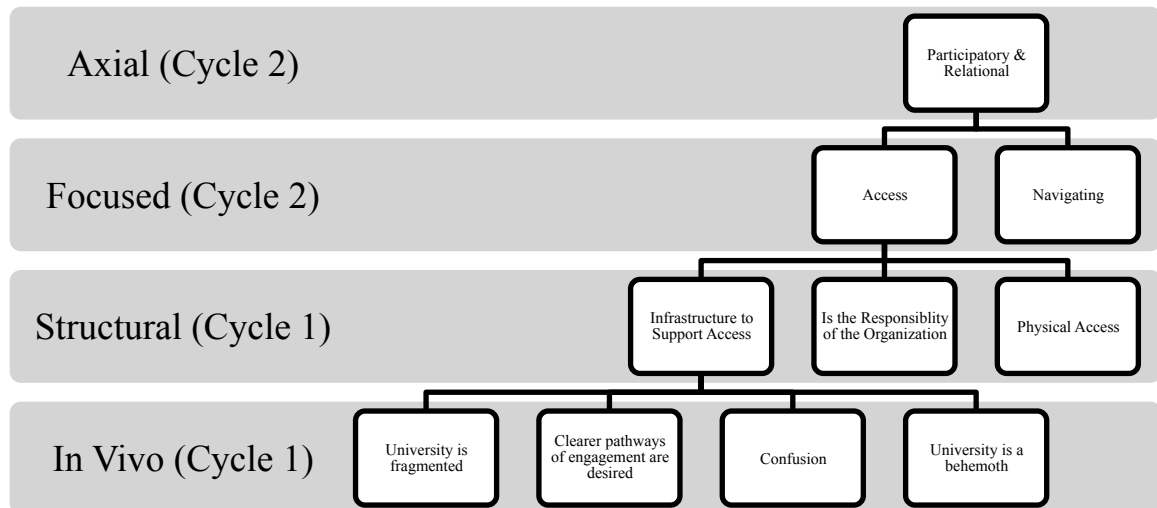
Interview transcripts were coded first, as they provided the bulk of the data sources. Each transcript was coded in full, using the In Vivo and structural coding processes simultaneously. Documents and archival data sources were coded second, using the same steps of In Vivo and structural coding. What resulted was 596 individual codes. In the re-assembling phase, the data went through second cycle coding to determine larger themes (Saldaña, 2009; Yin, 2011).

Reassembling. Once the first round of coding was complete, I then used focused and axial coding during the reassembling phase to link and refine the various categories that emerged (Saldaña, 2009; Yin, 2011). Focused coding connects salient codes in thematic clusters across the data sources (Saldaña, 2009). Axial coding can then be used to further reassemble the data that was split during the initial phases of coding (Saldaña, 2009). The conceptual framework was used as a guide and lens in reassembling the data during the axial coding phase.

Using a focused coding method, the 596 codes were reviewed to see salient patterns and concepts (Saldaña, 2009). Continuing with the example above, *Infrastructure to Support Access* fell into a larger code of *Access*. Figure 3.1 provides a snapshot of how the first cycles of coding led into the second cycle of focused and axial coding.

Figure 3.1

Example of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 Coding Using Participatory & Relational Theme



Starting from the bottom up, the In Vivo codes were categorized into structural codes, which were then organized thematically. Next, the conceptual framework components were used to create broader parent codes. In this example, the *University is fragmented* code spoke to a larger issue of infrastructure to support access to the University. In the focused coding process, it was apparent that there were many types of

barriers and support systems that were connected more broadly to accessing the University; hence the focused code of *Access*.

During the axial coding cycle, it became clear that the most salient codes were aligned with the components of the conceptual framework. In this round of coding, the 596 initial codes were organized into 32 larger codes. From here, the top parent codes were outlined alongside the corresponding sub-codes (see Appendix E for complete table of parent codes with sub-codes and framework components). Next, the framework was used to make meaning of the codes. Table 3.5 provides the continued example through the code *Access*.

Table 3.5

Example of Use of Conceptual Framework in Coding Process

Parent Code	No. of References	Sub-Codes	Connection to Framework
Accessing & Navigating	24	Infrastructure	Participatory & Relational/ Addressing Imbalance of Power
		Social Connections Is the Responsibility of the Organization	Participatory & Relational Participatory & Relational/ Addressing Imbalance of Power

The parent code of *Accessing and Navigating* had 24 references in the data, and was made up of the sub-codes *Infrastructure*, *Social Connections*, and *Is the Responsibility of the Organization*. Considering these themes through the lens of the conceptual framework, it was clear that the infrastructure of the university created a barrier to building relationships, and thus was problematic for being fully participatory for the community-based organizations. This barrier to access also contributed to the imbalance of power between the community-based organization and University. Having

social connections facilitated participation and relationships building, and it also presented a barrier as high-turnover at the University was a noted challenge. The work of accessing and navigating the University seemed to fall on the shoulders of the community partners. This sub-code represented barriers and challenges to being equal in the partnership, which also contributed to the the imbalance of power. This process was used for each of the top parent codes and sub-codes. The next phase of analysis was interpreting to make meaning of the data.

Interpreting. During the interpreting stage, I focused on the five attributes noted by Yin (2011): 1) completeness: interpretation has a beginning, middle and end; 2) fairness: interpretation is one that would be commonly arrived at regardless of who is doing the interpretation; 3) empirical accuracy: interpretation reflects the data collected; 4) value-added: interpretation adds something new and valuable to the literature on the subject; and 5) credibility: interpretation is found as credible and likely to be accepted in the wider field (adapted from p. 207). Maintaining a focus on these attributes ensured the data analysis was thorough (Yin, 2011). The conceptual framework was used as a lens to interpret and make meaning of the data through description, calls to action, and explanation (Yin, 2011). As with the example of *Access*, the coding process started in utilizing the direct quote of a participant, moved into a broader understanding of how the infrastructure (in most cases) prevented community-based organizations from building relationships with the University. Through the lens of the conceptual framework, this code could be put under the theme of *Participatory and Relational*, and *Addressing Imbalance of Power*. To tell the story of the *Participatory and Relational* theme fully, I

combined all of the codes that fell into this theme and organized them based on the areas of social connections, infrastructure, and identity as a true partner. Through the use and interpretation of participant quotes, the ways in the University is meeting and missing the participatory and relational components are illustrated. This process allowed for completeness in telling the story fully and fairness in the representation of the data. The use of multiple participant quotes to support these claims enhances the empirical accuracy. The methodological rigor and use of the conceptual framework to interpret the data supports credibility and adds value to the field of community engagement. The concluding phase further adds value to the field of community engagement by highlighting the significance of the study (Yin, 2011).

Concluding. During the concluding phase of the data analysis procedures, the landscape of findings was examined to understand the greater significance, implications, and suggestions for future study. Towards this end, I first revisited the research questions. Through this process of answering the research questions, the importance of the relational aspects of partnering were highlighted. From there, the implications for the community-based organizations, University, and community engagement policies and practices were considered, along with theoretical implications. In light of the findings and study limitations, future studies were considered to offer suggestions that would further enhance the value and understanding of the community partner perspective.

In summary, the data analysis procedures followed Yin's (2011) model of compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. The conceptual framework was used throughout these steps to guide and make meaning of the data

collected. During this process, great care was taken in considering ethical issues of the research. The following section outlines the steps taken to ensure participants were protected.

Consideration of ethical issues. Though this study puts participants at minimal risks, there are some risks involved in participating in this study, which are noted below. To mitigate and minimize risk, an informed consent form disclosing the function and voluntary nature of the study was presented to, reviewed, and signed by each participant (Esterberg, 2002). Participation in the study is purely voluntary, and was noted as such at multiple points with participants (e.g., in recruitment email, in preparation for the interview, and upon receipt of transcript). The consent form also noted the importance and care for participant confidentiality (Esterberg, 2002).

Considerations for a power differential were accounted for during the study (Esterberg, 2002). Participants may feel coerced or pressured to participate or respond positively if a partnership is already established or they are looking to deepen a partnership with the University. Further, the participant could feel coerced based on position of and relationship to me (as researcher and employee of the University). To help combat these imbalances of power, I took several steps to minimize the the imbalance of power and coercion. Interviews were conducted in the community at a mutually agreed upon location (i.e., the nonprofit organization offices, a coffee shop). Pseudonyms were used for participant names and organizations, and any details that may reveal the identities of the participants and/or their organizations were masked. Because

the study takes place in a smaller city, all identifiers (including city and state name) have been altered or removed.

Trustworthiness

There are number of steps that were taken to support trustworthiness and validity throughout the study. Construct validity was established through collecting and using multiple data sources, and maintaining a study database (Yin, 2014). Using multiple data sources allowed for triangulation of data, and thus, corroboration of findings. The study database provided a systematic way to document findings and researcher reflections throughout the process.

After interviews were conducted, a transcript was provided to participants to garner respondent validation (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2011). Any changes that were suggested by participants were made before the data was analyzed. Allowing for member checks helps to confirm the emergent data (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2011). Respondent validation and feedback helps to increase the trustworthiness and credibility of myself as the researcher and the data, while ensuring research bias is kept in check (Yin, 2011). Case study overviews that are developed from the data were sent to the community partners for verification. This supported triangulation (Yin, 2011). Triangulation in research allows for the researcher to verify the data by comparing it in at least three ways in order to corroborate the themes or ideas that surface (Creswell, 2014; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2011). Using rich, thick description throughout the study further increases the validity (Creswell, 2014). In addition, I worked to maintain transparency around biases and negative or conflicting data (Creswell, 2014). Lastly, reflective documentation was

maintained throughout the process to capture thoughts, observations, and reflections to support the research (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2011).

Limitations

This study seeks to understand the perspective and voice of community-based organizations partnered with institutions of higher education. As with any study, the design has limitations. The primary limitations include the specific focus on education-based organizations and the narrow sample selection and size.

Questions of rigor and generalizability are often the limitation with qualitative research (Yin, 2014). However, this study pursued systematic methods to maintain a high level of rigor. This study does not seek to generalize the findings, but rather add to the literature and knowledge on community partner perspectives. Specifically, this study focuses on education-based organizations. Insights and findings could be specific to this community issue area, thus, more studies like this will help to tell the complete story of community partner experiences inclusive of all organization types. In line with this, the sampling methods had some limitations as well.

To tell a more inclusive story, the sample could have included more voices from the University. Including voices from the larger community (e.g., those who receive services from the community-based organizations) is also a limitation of this study. In an effort to keep the community partners' voices central, the exclusion of these populations was a deliberate decision. Future research including the voices of institutions of higher education and larger communities will benefit the field of community engagement. The

gap in literature, however, is the inclusion of community-based organizations, which is why this study employed the previously described methods.

Summary

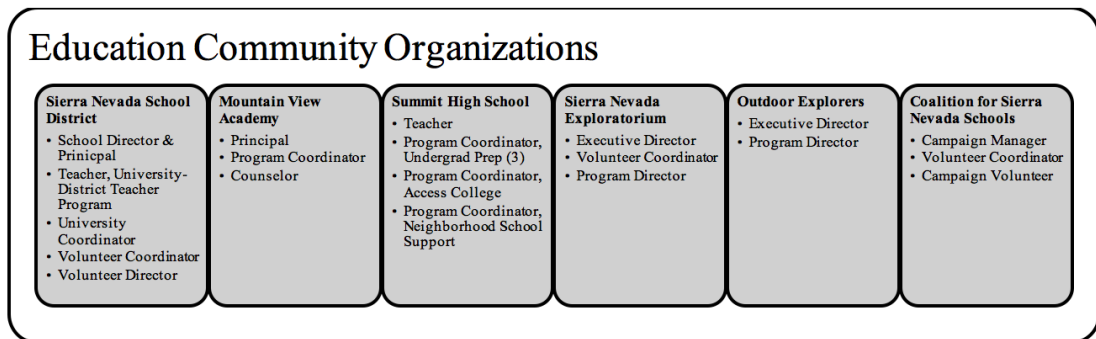
In summary, the presented research uses an embedded case study design to qualitatively explore and understand the community partner perspective of community-university partnerships. Systematic methods were used throughout the study to ensure rigor, validity, and accuracy. The design and methods used allowed for the collection and analysis of data that illuminates the ways in which community partners define, determine and advocate for outputs, outcomes, and impacts of their partnerships with the local university.

Chapter Four: Case Write-Ups

As previewed in chapter three, the following chapter provides a more in-depth look at each of the embedded cases. Each description includes historical background and current context of the organization and participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Stake, 2008). It is the goal of this chapter to bring the cases to life. The cases for this study are all bound by a focus on education. Their mission and function range from outdoor education, to public schools, to a museum. Thus, covering formal and informal modes of education (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1

Visual of Single Case Embedded Case Study



There are six organizations that make up the embedded cases: Sierra Nevada School District, Mountain View Academy, Summit High School, the Sierra Nevada Exploratorium, Outdoor Explorers, and the Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools. From these six organizations, there were a total of 22 participants. Participants ranged in position from executive director/CEO, to program coordinator, to volunteer coordinator, to teacher, and volunteer. There was relatively equal representation of participants who were from the city, and those who were transplants to the city. The majority of the participants attended the University for their undergraduate education. A select few also went on to complete graduate degrees at the University. Pseudonyms are used for all organizations and participants. Personal identifiers, such as race, ethnicity, gender, and age, are purposely omitted to ensure confidentiality of all participants.

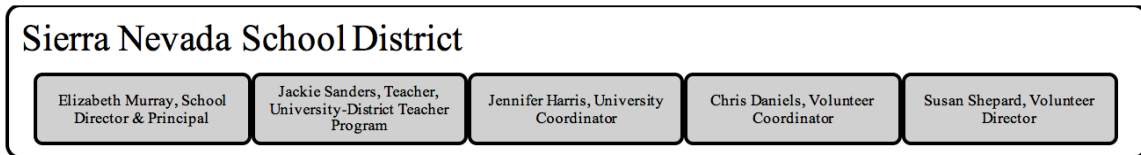
Sierra Nevada School District

The Sierra Nevada School District is the only district in the Sierra County area. The District covers about 6,000 square miles and is comprised of 62 elementary schools, 14 middle schools, 14 high schools, 4 alternative schools (K-12), 8 charter schools, 1 adult achievement school, and 1 school for medically fragile students. The School District consists of 89 departments. The participants for this case represents three of the 89 departments, and one who is a teacher on special assignment. The participants are as follows: 1) Volunteer Services: Susan Shepard, Director, and Chris Daniels, Program Director; 2) District-University collaborations: Jennifer Harris, Coordinator for University Partnerships, and Jackie Sanders, a teacher on special assignment; and 3) Career and Technical Education programs: Elizabeth Murray, Director (Figure 4.2). The

section below describes the various departments and programs that make up the School District case.

Figure 4.2

Case One: Sierra Nevada School District



Thirty-eight of the schools are designated as Title I. A school that is designated as Title I must have a high percentage of children from low-income families. Title I schools receive additional funding to support these students (U.S. Department of Education). The majority of the schools (35%) were built before 1965. There are just under 64,000 students and majority of the students in the District are White or Hispanic (see Table 4.1), and about 47% qualify for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program.

Table 4.1

Student Demographic Breakdown (2013-2014 academic year)

Race	Total Percentage
African American	2.41%
American Indian	1.61%
Asian	4.39%
Hispanic	38.87%
Multiracial	5.37%
Pacific Islander	.99%
White	46.37%

Special Populations	Total Percentage
English Language Learners (ELL)	15.92%
Free or Reduced Lunch Program	47.73
Individual Education Plan (IEP)	13.45

Compiled from State Report Card website

Data from the 2016-2017 years shows a slight dip in the number of ELL students (13.9%) and students who qualify for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program (46.7%). As a whole, the District has a 77% graduation rate, which is slightly higher than the state as a whole (District data website, 2017). The School District “provide[s] over 8000 jobs for people in the community [...] from NDSition services to attorneys to teachers, administrators, accountants” (Jennifer Harris, University Coordinator).

The Volunteer Services department helps to coordinate and place volunteers with various School District initiatives and programs. They recruit, screen, train, and coordinate the placement of District volunteers, “bring[ing] resources to help the school[s]” (Susan Shepard, Volunteer Director). They are the first point of contact for people who want to volunteer with the District. This typically does not include the placement of University practicum students, which is done by the University Coordinator in the Staffing Department, but the Volunteer Services department processes the paperwork. Being the first point of contact for the community, the Volunteer Services department helps to match community resources with school need:

A lot of times community partners wanna come in [and do] a backpack donation or book drives, things like that. With our book drives - all over the community and they wanna help out, but they don't know how, 'cause you know they work the same time schools in, so they [ask] 'How do we really help?' [and] we fix them, clean them up if they're gently used, and then we give them out to the community um to kids. *Chris Daniels, Program Coordinator*

The District has one employee who serves as the main contact for the University (and other institutions of higher education in the area), specifically for placing students in intern and practicum experiences. The University Coordinator helps to bridge the connection between the University and the District, essentially creating a clear path for University students who are interested in working for the District in some way. This is largely focused on teacher preparation and recruitment (practicum placement, career fairs, and orientations). Jennifer Harris, the University Coordinator, believes the Sierra Nevada School District “is a safe place for students to go and receive their education – public education.” Working in recruitment and partnerships, Jennifer noted the vast reach the School District has into the community:

Each of our schools has a community partner, so that’s an important thing that we’ve been able to reach out to community members to be in our schools, to support our students. So that’s another good thing I think our district does, is reaching out to make those partnerships. *Jennifer Harris, University Coordinator*

In addition, the District funds a number of a “teacher on special assignment” or TOSA, positions. three of these TOSAs are placed with the University. This position is a three-year contract in which teachers from the District apply (within the District) and are selected (by the University) to work out of the University in the College of Education. TOSAs are paid through the District. Their role is to teach a few education courses at the University; one of which is a practicum course, which means the TOSA is placing students at various schools within the District. Jackie Sanders, a TOSA at the time of this study, believes the program is beneficial because

We bring a different perspective that maybe you wouldn't get from just a college professor. I bring about fourteen years of classroom experience in just [this county]. So I'm able to help students navigate what that looks like if they're going to stay here and teach in our community. *Jackie Sanders, Teacher, University-District Teacher Program*

The program benefits the University students as well as the School District itself, as students enrolled in the practicum class (taught by the TOSA) are placed at various schools throughout the District. This helps with the Districts' placement workload. The District also benefits from having a District 'insider' train and prepare students who are on track to become teachers in the District. Jackie noted how their position and experience allow them to bridge the gap between the students' experiences and the District's needs:

[F]or instance you know we have such diverse socioeconomic groups out there. If you look at places like Lincoln High versus places like Washington High, totally different socioeconomic groups and diverse populations. So, I think I'm able to bring that in, bring some light into the students who are learning in classes. I also try to place students so that they are ready at an at-risk school, and so they are ready at a non-at-risk school, so they kind of get a vision of both types of environments. So then after the course is over [...] they start their internship process, and I believe the whole process leading up to that really benefits them and benefits [the School District], because now they have teachers that are a little bit more aware of what's involved in the schools, what they look like, so I think

it's been really beneficial to the community, and hopefully brings better teachers that are fully aware of the schools that we have in our county. *Jackie Sanders, Teacher, University-District Teacher Program*

Lastly, the Signature Academies department of the District focuses on the career-based, post-secondary pathway. Elizabeth Murray, the Director, noted that the Academies “prepare our kids – the kids in the community – for what comes next. We prepare them to be good citizens, we prepare them to be good students, and we prepare them to be good workers.” The Signature Academies are sprinkled throughout the District in eleven schools and support students’ development in soft and technical skills. Programs offered are in agricultural science & natural resources, business and marketing, engineering and manufacturing, information technology, media and communication, global studies, health science and human services, international baccalaureate, and performing arts. Partnerships with the University range from the College of Engineering, agriculture programs, journalism, business, and the School of Medicine.

Mountain View Academy

Mountain View Academy is a Title I elementary school in the Sierra Nevada School District. The school is pre-K through sixth grade, with two classrooms that are housed at the University (grades one through three). There are about 450 students and 45 employees (teachers, staff, and support). Participants for this case, listed in Figure 4.3, are the school principal (Marsha Grant), school counselor (Claire Walsh), and STEM coordinator (Todd Evans).

The Academy is centrally located in the city, and less than a mile from the center of the University’s campus. Mountain View Academy focuses on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education. In 2013, the school shifted to a STEM focus. Todd Evans, Program Coordinator, shared, “we became a STEM school because we were fortunate to get an endowment from a lady and she kinda funds us to be able to provide resources to maintain a STEM focus in curriculum.” Thus, students spend at least 50% of their academic learning in the STEM disciplines. The student population is a low socioeconomic, high minority, immigrant population. Table 4.2 outlines the student demographics.

Figure 4.3

Case Two: Mountain View Academy

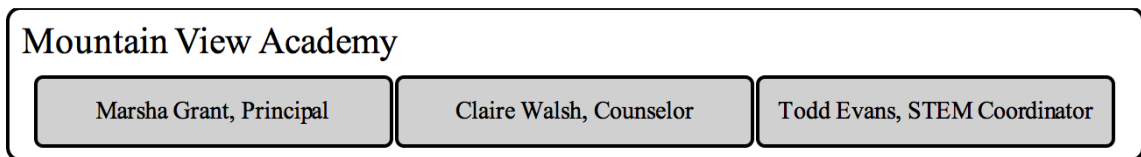


Table 4.2

Student Demographic Breakdown (2013-2014 academic year)

Race	Total Percentage
African American	5.7%
American Indian	1.4%
Asian	6.0%
Hispanic	61.4%
Multiracial	7.2%
Pacific Islander	2.4%
White	13.2%

Special Populations	Total Percentage
English Language Learners	39.2%
Free or Reduced Lunch Program	44.0%

The student population is largely Hispanic. Many of the students are English Language Learners. In the 2013-2014 academic year, the school reported 44% of their students qualified for the Free or Reduced Lunch program. According to Marsha Grant, the Principal, that number is now closer to 100%.

The school is dedicated to care for their community of students and families, and seeks to “safe place, kind of hub for our families and our kids” (Claire Walsh, Counselor). Marsha Grant, the school principal highlighted this aspect of the school’s mission:

People are always amazed at how much social services we do, on a regular basis. You know that’s why I was late with you, there was a little one melting down. And how you have to make sure they’re fed and clothed and feel safe. And all of those things before you’re gonna be able to educate them. *Marsha Grant, Principal*

As such, they have a washer, dryer, food pantry, and clothes closet on campus. “If they have immigration questions, or are fearful to come to school for whatever reason, [Parent Involvement Staff] help moms in a domestic violence situation. So, we kind of end up being almost like a community center” (Claire Walsh, Counselor). The school maintains a number of partnerships with nonprofit and for-profit organizations to help support their students.

The School partners with the University through a number of formal and informal partnerships, and for varying lengths of time. According to the Principal, the strongest partnerships are through the College of Education due to the length of the partnership and institutionalization within both elementary school and University. One such partnership is the Mountain View Academy classroom located on the University campus. The class is a first, second, and third grade classroom. Marsha Grant, Principal, compared the structure and set up of this partnership to that of a “teaching hospital”, where University students have direct access to get hands-on training. About half of the elementary students in the on-campus classroom are zoned for Mountain View Academy, and the other half are on variances (meaning they are zoned for a different area, but have requested to be located in this specific classroom); many of which are children of University employees.

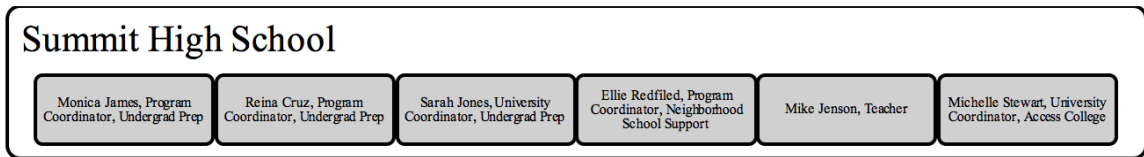
Other partnerships through the College of Education are through the Literacy Department, Counseling and Psychology department, and Teacher Preparation program. The Literacy Department provides on-site tutors throughout the day and in the after-school programs. University students from the Counseling and Psychology and Teacher Preparation Programs often complete their practicum hours with Mountain View Academy. The Academy also partners with the Science and Math departments on campus as well as the Early Learning Center. The school often utilizes the University for regular field trips. They are in the process of creating a partnership with the School of Medicine to create school-based resources for their families.

Summit High School

Summit High School is a Title I high school in the Sierra Nevada School District. The school serves grades nine through twelve. There are about 1,400 students and 125 employees (i.e., teachers, staff, support). Participants for this case, listed in Figure 4.4, are a teacher (Mike Jenson), two program coordinators from Undergrad Prep (Monica James & Reina Cruz) and their University counterpart (Sarah Jones), the program coordinator from Neighborhood School Support (Ellie Redfield), and the program coordinator from Access College (Michelle Stewart).

Figure 4.4

Case Three: Summit High School



Summit High School is located in the northern side of the city, and is about two miles from the University. According to Reina Cruz, a Program Coordinator with Undergrad Prep,

[Summit High School] is definitely one of the high schools with the most minorities, we have—I think it’s over 80% is Hispanic and a lot of them will be first generation college students if they decide to go to college. A lot of their parents are mainly Spanish-speaking, low income type of population. *Reina Cruz, Program Coordinator, Undergrad Prep*

Students at Summit High School “are very much in a diverse environment, accepting of different types of people and different walks of life” (Mike Jenson, Teacher). Table 4.3 provides a breakdown of student demographics.

The student population is largely Hispanic. All students at the school qualify for the Free or Reduced Lunch program. As of 2016, the graduation rate is 74% (district data website). Many of the students graduating and going on to college are first generation college students.

Table 4.3

Student Demographic Breakdown (2013-2014 academic year)

Race	Total Percentage
African American	6.4%
American Indian	.5%
Asian	3.8%
Hispanic	69.6%
Multiracial	3.0%
Pacific Islander	2.0%
White	14.4%

Special Populations	Total Percentage
English Language Learners	13.7%
Free or Reduced Lunch Program	100%
Individual Education Plan (IEP)	14.8%

Compiled from State Report Card website

The School has partnered with the University in formal and informal ways for a long time, though many of the partnerships have “dissolved” because of turnover at the University, and an inability to formalize the partnerships (Mike Jenson, teacher). The most consist partnerships between the High School and University are those with funding outside of the either institution, such as Undergrad Prep and Access College. Both

programs are federally funded and require a connection between the University and High School.

Undergrad Prep is a federally funded grant program that focuses on college readiness. The main goal of Undergrad Prep is “to prepare students and make them aware of their post-secondary options” (Monica James, Program Coordinator, Undergrad Prep) and to “build a college-going culture” (Sarah Jones, University Coordinator, Undergrad Prep). According to Reina Cruz, a program coordinator with Undergrad Prep,

[Undergrad Prep] provide[s] services to help students become ready for college, so college awareness—it’s very broad. We provide them different services to prepare them for that, so like college visits, we do tutoring, we do workshops related to college, we do workshops for parents. We can go over any topic from financial aid to admissions requirements. *Reina Cruz, Program Coordinator, Undergrad Prep*

There are Undergrad Prep programs across the nation. Both the University and Summit High School receive funding to support Undergrad Prep programming. The program coordinators at the high school level are housed at Summit High School, but also serve two other high schools in the area. Summit High School has about 400 students that participate in Undergrad Prep. The program uses a cohort model. The current cohort (two cohorts) started when they were in seventh grade and are currently in tenth and eleventh grade. This is the second cycle of the grant, which means the program has been running for fourteen years. Two program coordinators, Monica James and Reina Cruz, are located on the Summit High School campus, while Sarah Jones, the University

Coordinator, is located on the University's campus. Sarah serves as the main contact and connection for Undergrad Prep program coordinators and students across the State. Thus, if the Program Coordinators want to schedule a campus visit, or recruit volunteers, they would do so through the Sarah. As Sarah explained:

My sole purpose, or one of my hats I guess, is to serve the Undergrad Prep schools. So that means I'm kind of there to provide admissions information, financial aid information, do workshops, hold summer camps here on questions, so I'm kind of whoever the coordinator is at [Summit High School] who works for Undergrad Prep, I'm their counterpart at the institution. So, the coordinator is pushing them towards higher ed and my goal is to kind of pull them in. [...] So, any time a Undergrad Prep student steps onto this campus, regardless if it's [Summit High School] or anyone, it's kind of our responsibility to make sure that they're safe, provide programming for them. [...] We just want to make sure that students and parents realize once their kid leaves the K-12 system, there's someone here that they can contact that they feel comfortable with, like someone's going to catch their kid on this side of the education system. *Sarah Jones, University Coordinator, Undergrad Prep*

The idea behind this funding model is that Undergrad Prep students are supported at their high school and at their local institutions of higher education. Program Coordinators at the high school work with the University Ambassador on certain projects to ensure that participating students and parents are supported towards going to college. Each entity (the University and the High School) has separate programming and support

in addition to the collaborative efforts. This can be anything from college visits to college preparation workshops (i.e., apply for college or financial aid).

Similar to Undergrad Prep, Access College seeks to “provide academic support and college planning to low income students whose parents don’t have Bachelor’s degrees” so students will be successful in college (Michelle Stewart, University Coordinator). Access College is a federally funded grant program. The Coordinator has offices on both the High School and University campuses. The program is housed at the University and the Coordinator manages three different grants. On one grant, the Access College Coordinator works directly with students at two high schools in the Sierra Nevada School District, one of which is Summit High School. The Coordinator, Michelle Stewart, supports 86 students through this grant program. The Coordinator meets directly with students in a variety of areas: academic support, time management, and college planning. Access College offers a number of programming options to support students in gaining admission to college:

Days are spent meeting directly with students... with a lot of academic support, checking grades, helping with time management, organization, college planning, helping them with their college applications, scholarships, helping them complete their FAFSA. [...] So, just kind of a lot of what we do I think is helping students understand what opportunities they have and kind of opening their world up a little bit? [E]xposing them to their different options after high school. *Michelle Stewart, Coordinator, Access College*

Access College has been at the University since 1964. In order to continue receiving grant funds, there must be institutional support from the University and the high school. Grant funds go directly to the University to support Access College overhead and programming.

Neighborhood School Support (NSS) is a national nonprofit organization that has affiliates across the country. The local affiliate has programming in two elementary schools, one middle school, and two high schools, one of which is Summit High School. The model of NSS is to bring community resources to the school in order to support the students' needs. Program coordinators support students on all levels,

It's my job if someone's power goes out, who can I reach out to for help. We run the food pantry on campus with the (Food Security Nonprofit). We bridge the gap between non-profits in the area and anything that could stand between students and their success through high school. *Ellie Redfield, Program Coordinator, Neighborhood School Support*

NSS is relatively new to Summit's campus. Currently, NSS partners with the University through a civic literacy program, and has worked with Greek Life on holiday projects. NSS is looking to regularly recruit volunteers from the University to support their programming at Summit High School.

Informal partnerships consist mostly of episodic volunteerism, in which University students volunteer time to tutor, or help with special events. A mentor program in partnership with the University and a local corporate sponsor was created in

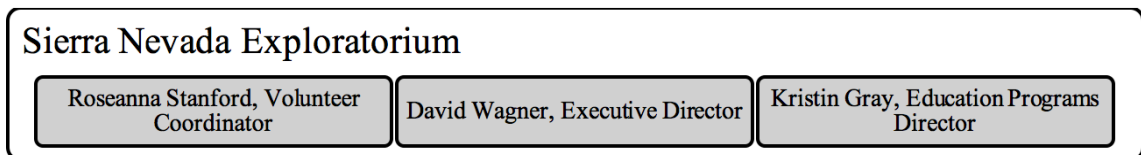
2006. The program just completed its last year of the funding cycle and is currently considering if and how the partnership will move forward.

Sierra Nevada Exploratorium

The Exploratorium is a mid-sized science-focused museum. The Exploratorium Board of Directors consists of 11 professionals from the metro area. One member of the Board is a professor at the University. The organization employs 19 people and has about 250 volunteers. The participants for this case, listed in Figure 4.5, are the Executive Director (David Wagner), Volunteer Coordinator (Rosanna Stanford), and Education Programs Coordinator (Kristin Gray).

Figure 4.5

Case Four: Sierra Nevada Exploratorium



The Exploratorium opened its doors in 2011. The museum founder moved to the region for professional opportunities and having lived in multiple large cities, they saw a value in museums. Seeing that there were no museums in the region for children, in 2004 they began mobilizing members of the community to create what is now known as the Sierra Nevada Exploratorium. The group of volunteers that initially led this charge had no experience in the museum field, nor did they engage any professionals from the field. The museum was built by a committee of people who were passionate about providing a museum space, but had no experience in creating and managing a museum. Initial

employees had no museum experience. The conception and early foundation of The Exploratorium was based purely on seeing a need and having an interest in creating a museum for children.

A market study was conducted, the organization was incorporated as a 501(c)3, and a capital campaign was started to fund the build out for The Exploratorium. All of this happened in the span of seven years, which is considered a very fast pace in comparison to similar organizations. During a seven-year period, the museum went from an idea to a market study, to a nonprofit, to capital fundraising, to build out. The organization currently occupies about 60,000 square feet of museum experience, which puts them in the mid-size museum category. The Exploratorium is located in the downtown area of the city. Nearby are an art museum and an automobile museum. This creates a museum district of sorts that lends to the cultural opportunities that the city is trying to promote and re-invigorate.

During the capital campaign process, the mission and focus of the organization came into question. The organization was initially intended to be a children's museum, but the founding committee now wanted the organization to be a hybrid museum that was part science center, part children's museum. The Exploratorium purchased a building in the downtown area of the city, and continued to refine its mission and programming.

Shortly after opening, the museum hit turbulent times. In the span of 18 months, the Exploratorium went through three Executive Directors, which was cause for concern for a number of donors. Simultaneously, the organization struggled to find its footing with the community. At this point, a major donor stepped in to provide leadership to the

Board of Directors, funding for an executive search, and underwrote a portion of the Executive Director's salary for the first year.

The current Executive Director brings a number of years in the museum field, and upon arrival pushed the Board to make a decision on if the museum was to be a children's museum or a science museum. According to the Executive Director,

The mission of the organization [is] to create a hands-on interactive learning environment for our community with science, technology, engineering, art, and math. There's nothing in there that says for little kids. So, from a mission standpoint, you guys have a bigger vision for what you want to try and accomplish. From a pragmatic standpoint, if we allow [the museum] to be seen as a place only for families with young children, the market is not going to be big enough to sustain what you've created here. So, we have to appeal to a larger audience.

Every science center is a de facto children's museum, but it doesn't work the other way around. Because a science center truly thinks about designing spaces and programs that are appealing to all ages, not just eight and under, which is primarily the demographic for children's museums. The other important part of that from a mission standpoint is if I can create an experience here where the adult is just as engaged as the child, um, you know we can create cool exhibit experiences all day long, but there's no better model for learning for a child than seeing the adult in their life learning, having fun, asking questions, and experimenting. *David Wagner, Executive Director*

As such, the Exploratorium shifted its focus to a science center that is accessible to anyone. Rosanna Stanford, the Volunteer Coordinator, noted, “it’s starting to be a really important space, like safe space for kids to come and learn a bit—a little bit more about science and be more engaged with the scientific community and, um, have fun while you’re doing it.”

The Exploratorium has partnered with the University formally and informally since opening their doors in 2011. The most notable partnership was a traveling exhibit that highlighted the work of a faculty member from the University. Additionally, the organization has on-going relationships with some of the departments on campus (science, education, microbiology). For example, a microbiology class helps to develop curriculum for the summer camps. The Exploratorium also participates in the University-sponsored internship program, and utilizes volunteers from student clubs and organizations.

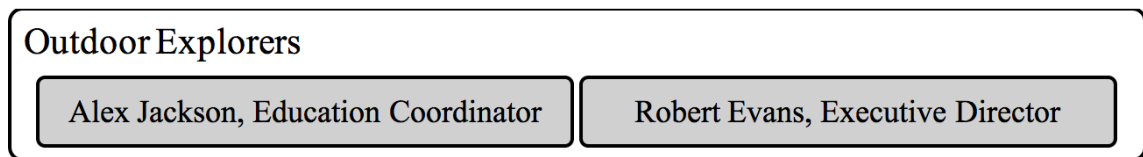
Outdoor Explorers

Founded in 2006, Outdoor Explorers is a medium-sized nonprofit that seeks to “improve critical thinking and student achievement through outdoor science education” (Alex Jackson, Education Director). In addition, the organization focuses on building natural resource stewardship with young people. The organization employs just under 20 full-time staff and a number of seasonal and part-time staff. They utilize about five-six regular volunteers, and about a dozen interns from the University. They have three locations in the Sierra Nevada region. Other locations partner with nearby universities as well. The Board of Directors consists of 10 professionals from the Sierra Nevada region.

One board member is a retired faculty from the University. The participants for this case, listed in Figure 4.6, are the Executive Director (Robert Evans) and the Director of Education (Alex Jackson).

Figure 4.6

Case Five: Outdoor Explorers



The organization was founded to provide opportunities to educate and connect youth to the natural world, “[O]ur mission is to improve critical thinking and student achievement through outdoor science education. And the other component of our mission it to bring national resource stewardship, so an ethic of natural resource stewardship to young people” (Alex Jackson, Education Coordinator). Outdoor Explorers target youth in first through sixth grade. Over 50% of the students they serve come from low-income families. When asked what the organization brings to the greater community, Robert Evans, the Executive Director, shared the following perspective:

[F]or the greater community, we serve nearly a quarter of every elementary school students every year in science education - in a background of where kids might get an hour a week of low-quality science education if they’re lucky in local areas. *Robert Evans, Executive Director*

Outdoor Explorers serves almost 20,000 students a year through their various programming. This includes field science expeditions in the Sierra Nevada region,

residential outdoor science camp, and reaching out to families and the community to promote outdoor science education. Alex Jackson summarized the organization's efforts:

we're educating students in the STEM fields and building the next generation of problem solvers and critical thinkers that will directly benefit the communities that they live in, and hopefully the global community as well. So we, we really feel like we're bringing [pause] – were building a scientific—we're helping to build a scientific mindset amongst our young people that are gonna help them be more productive citizens. *Alex Jackson, Education Coordinator*

The organization has several formal and informal partnerships with the University. They have three internship programs: 1) a general internship for outdoor education that any University student can apply for (unpaid); 2) a University-funded internship; and 3) a program-specific internship with the College of Education. The general internship is unpaid and students can come from any program. They complete anywhere from 20 to 50 hours in a semester. There have been six interns from the University-funded program. This program is funded by the Associated Student Body, and pays for a University student to intern with the organization for a semester. The program only happens in the Spring, and Outdoor Explorers has been part of the funding program since its inception. The Education Director recruits three students each semester for the College of Education internship, which is a paid internship.

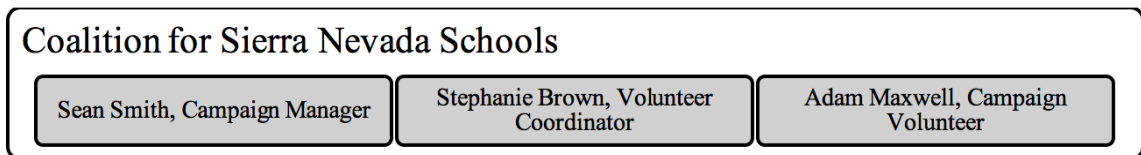
In addition to these formalized partnerships, Outdoor Explorers partners with the University informally through other departments, programs, and mechanisms: service-learning, College of Social Work, Wildlife Biology program, and episodic volunteerism.

Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools

The Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools took form in early 2016 with the intent to promote the passage of a county bill called SNQ-3. The bill proposed an increase in sales tax to fund the capital needs of Sierra Nevada Schools. The Coalition was run mostly by volunteers, employing only a campaign manager. The Coalition participants for this case, listed in Figure 4.7, are the Campaign Manager (Sean Smith), Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator (Stephanie Brown), and a campaign volunteer who also serves in a prominent student leadership role at the University (Adam Maxwell).

Figure 4.7

Case Six: Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools



Sierra Nevada County Schools have issues of overcrowding, and safety concerns about the infrastructure of the buildings:

We have a huge problem with overcrowding, and a lot of safety concerns about the infrastructure of the buildings, like leaking roofs, asbestos abatement requests that haven't been funded. This problem has been bounced back from the legislator to the ballot box for a lot of years. This was really a campaign to get that—that campaign was going to be back on the ballot and to get people to vote yes, to implement a sales tax increase to help fix these problems. *Stephanie Brown, Volunteer Coordinator*

According to the Coalition website, “One in five schools are severely overcrowded, one in three have dangerous conditions, there are 220+ makeshift classrooms, and one-third of the schools have not been renovated in more than a generation” (Coalition Website, 2016, paragraph 2). Table 4.4 provides a breakdown of the current Sierra Nevada Schools’ average enrollment, and classroom utilization.

Table 4.4

School Capacity Overview – Averages

School		Enrollment		Classroom Utilization	
Name	Count	Built	Age	% of Base Cap.	% of Total Cap
Elementary	62	1975	42	93.4%	96.3%
Middle	14	1979	38	84.2%	97.2%
High	13	1980	37	99.6%	104.8%
Total	89	1976	41	93.3%	97.6%

Table is compiled from the Coalition’s website.

Table 4.4 illustrates the need for increased physical capital for Sierra Nevada Schools. The average age of Sierra Nevada Schools is 41 years old, and schools are currently over 95% capacity.

In 2015, a state bill authorized the formation of a committee tasked with considering a tax increase to improve Sierra Nevada County schools. The committee looked into potential methods for funding the capital needs for county schools, and found the best method was a sales tax increase. From here, a committee of community, business, and labor leaders formed with the intent to take political action on addressing the capital needs of the Sierra Nevada School District through a county Bill (SNQ-3).

Passing SNQ-3 would mean increasing the sales tax for the sole purpose of funding the construction, renovations, and repairs of Sierra Nevada schools. SNQ-3 appeared on the November 2016 ballot. The committee eventually hired a professional team to manage, advocate, and advertise for the passage of a SNQ-3. This team worked with community members and organizations to support the passage of SNQ-3, which passed in November 2016.

When asked what the campaign brought to the community, Stephanie Brown had this to say:

Well I think especially because this campaign season in this election was so... ugly at points, like really splitting people apart which was really tough to see, I think this was kind of a glimmer of hope in all of that. It was a really cool thing to see so many people come together for one thing. I mean we had the president of the Economic Development Authority, you know, with the Chamber of Commerce, with the teachers' union all in the same room trying to figure out what best ways we can get this to pass. That was just really cool to see, especially in this time when people just assume politics are going to be red and blue all the time. People can really come together from different backgrounds and occupations, you know everyone has a different reason why they want to vote yes too, but just seeing them come together it just really showed that we do have a strong community and people do really care about schools and the future of our community. *Stephanie Brown, Volunteer Coordinator*

Sean Smith echoed these sentiments, “I think seeing that in a state of what was often a vindictive and dividing election last year, I think that it was a bright spot within [the county]. People can come together from both sides of the aisle.” The Coalition was a unifying movement during an otherwise divisive election season. Regardless of party lines or professional affiliations, leaders across the county came out in support of the measure that would ultimately improve schools. This was a grassroots effort that worked, in large part, because of the immense need in schools throughout the county.

The Coalition’s partnership with the University was a grassroots movement, garnering the support of University students. This was due in large part because University faculty and administration could not promote their views on the bill since the University is a state-funded entity. Alex Smith held a unique role in that they was a campaign volunteer and held a prominent student leadership position on campus:

I was able to do it a lot more because then I could serve both roles and be a community person advocating for the topic and the [title of student leadership role] advocating for the topic as well. At first it was just me, and then I kept with it because I personally really thought the issue was important. *Alex Smith, Campaign Volunteer*

Alex was involved in the coalition and campaign from the beginning, and helped to connect the Coalition to the campus. The University’s Associated Student Body and Graduate Student Association provided support by writing a resolution stating that University students supported SNQ-3, and by creating a student group that helped to campaign on campus. University students also supported the campaign by canvassing

neighborhoods to promote and educate residents on SNQ-3. Another unique quality about the Coalition and its relationship to the University is the majority of the campaign leadership have deep connections to the campus. The Campaign Manager is University alumni, and previously served in a leadership position within the student body government, and the Volunteer Coordinator is a current student at the University.

The voices of these 22 participants, representing six education-focused cases, are central in the findings of this study. Participants represent various points of connection with the University, and bring a range of experiences in their partnerships. Their narratives are important in telling the story of how community-based organizations partnered with a university voice and advocate for outputs, outcomes, and impacts; and provides insights on how we can begin to understand what indicators are important to measure in community-university partnerships. The following chapter focuses on the findings of the study.

Chapter Five: Findings

Stacey Muse (Researcher): *Do you have any advice for the University?*

Elizabeth Murray (Sierra Nevada School District): *Yeah, they need to coordinate among departments better. They need to know what their darn vision is, and they need to see themselves as a community partner. I think in a lot of ways they don't. I still think there's this 'well, we served some kids from our community, but we get kids from everywhere and we're a university,' so I think they need to see themselves as an integral community partner. [...] [The University] bring[s] thoughtful conversation, they bring culture, they bring a vision of knowledge and an acceptance of being smart. I think the University has done that for us. We are so lucky to have a university in our town, but that doesn't make them better than. It doesn't make them untouchable, or that their voice carries more weight than others. So, I guess I would like to see a little bit of humility. That they have to listen to the community and help respond to the crises that are happening in our community.*

Elizabeth's advice to the University speaks to the common threads throughout this study. There is a great appreciation for what the University brings to the community, however, there are strong feelings of disconnection between the campus and the community. The disconnection seems to be the result of a lack of transparency and coordination within the University. Compounding these issues is the strong perception that the University identifies as separate and 'better than' the rest of the community. The confusion within and the perceived arrogance of the University creates relational distance from the community, which prevents partnerships that are rooted in being participatory and relational, focused on assets, collaborative, equal, and change-oriented. In this chapter, I present the data which have been analyzed using the conceptual framework presented in chapter two. In doing so, the partnership barriers and support structures experienced by the participants are illuminated. Grounded in the theoretical concepts of Dewey and Freire, the framework draws on the values of democratic engagement, asset-based community development, and consensus organizing. The framework scaffolds the exploration and understanding of community-university partnerships by mapping out several key components required for democratically engaged, change-oriented partnerships. These components are as follows: 1) is participatory and relational, 2) focuses on resources and assets, 3) understands and identifies mutual self-interest towards collaboration, 3) addresses the imbalance of power, and 4) has a change-orientation. Findings from the study highlight how these components are connected and can work together to create more democratically engaged partnerships. The data provides insight into how community partners define and determine outputs, outcomes, and impact

indicators for their partnership with the University, and what aspects of the partnership are important in determining whether or not the partnership is successful. Lastly, the findings illustrate what supports and prevents community partners from voicing and advocating for what outputs, outcomes, and impact indicators are important for their organization.

This chapter is organized in six sections. In the first section, I discuss the ways in which community-university partnerships are or need to shift towards becoming more participatory and relational. This includes the importance of social connections, barriers in access and navigating the University, and the University developing a partner identity. In the second section, I focus on the participant-identified resources, assets, and self-interest. The intersection of these three components are represented in the third section, which describes the synergistic potential that could come from collaboration between the community-based organizations and University. I address the power differential often experienced by the participants when partnering with the University in the fourth section. Finally, I close the chapter with a summary of the findings.

Doing *with* Rather Than Doing *for*

The first theme is centered on relationships. That is, participatory, relational partnerships are key. Relationships are the foundation of being able to collaborate in meaningful ways (Eichler, 2007; Moore, 2002; Stoecker, 2003; Stoecker & Beckman, 2009). These relationships should be reciprocal, and focus on doing work *with* rather than *for* the community partner (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). The findings point towards how the participants forge and maintain partnerships with the University; highlighting the

importance of social connections, university infrastructure, and how the University engages as a partner.

The roots of partnership: Social connections. Having a personal connection with someone from within the University seemed to be a key component for participants trying to build partnerships. For many, this was the way to gain access to the larger University and the lynchpin for maintaining partnerships. However, participants noted significant challenges in maintaining a partnership in light of the transitory nature of the University. For some, once a relationship was sustained, this led to a broader network across the University. Jennifer Harris, the University Coordinator with the Sierra Nevada School District shared, “I think sometimes what happens when you form these partnerships is that people start hearing about them, and then they start contacting you.” Jennifer experienced a ripple-effect when partnering with the University. While this was not the case for most participants, Jennifer’s response demonstrates the importance of social connectedness, and a widely shared belief amongst participants that one connection will lead to more connections.

This thinking was evident in how Mike Jenson, from Summit High School, explained their strategy for building a mentor program with the University, and demonstrates the challenges with a singular connection: “it really became a ‘who do you know.’ Can we get into somebody’s ear, and it was just of build, build, build.” Mike’s main connection from the University was a graduate student who helped to identify potential contacts across campus. There was a sense of urgency for Mike to make as many connections as possible to help solidify the partnership. Despite the initial efforts,

the partnership with the University was never institutionalized. This was in large part due to the fact that the student graduated and any connections made were lost with their departure. In this case, the partnership was dependent on Mike and the graduate student. Once the graduate student moved on, the partnership crumbled. Juxtaposed with Jennifer's ripple-effect experience, Mike's partnership was not able to move past the one graduate student due to the short-term nature of the student's time at the University. The transitory nature of the University (both students and faculty/staff) does not allow for the time needed to create relationships that are co or *with*.

The challenge of working with students was prevalent across all cases. This was captured in some of the typical challenges of scheduling (e.g., academic calendar versus calendar year), but mostly the issues were centered on the reliability of students. Alex Johnson spoke about his experience in working predominantly with students and characterized these as "one-off" and "not long-term at all" because of the turnover with students, and the lack of follow-through. Stephanie Brown's experience echoed these challenges:

I think it's common amongst university students to kind of commit to something and not follow through [...] They're all excited and want to post their picture with their sign and their t-shirt, but when it comes to doing it—the hard work—it's not always there. *Stephanie Brown, Volunteer Coordinator, Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools*

Stephanie represents an interesting cross-section. Stephanie was an undergraduate student at the time of this study and is part of an outlier case that experienced very little

challenges in establishing and maintaining a partnership with the University. Yet, they still noted similar struggles in working with the student population. While finding a social connection was key to gaining access to the University, the transitory nature of the University presented a major challenge to building and maintaining relationships that would keep a collaborative partnership going. Building and sustaining a partnership often rested on the shoulders of one person within the University. For many, the dependence on one person presented an obstacle, as the University experiences high turnover with students and staff.

The issue of student and staff turnover was highlighted by participants as an obstacle in maintaining social connections with the University. When asked about any challenges or obstacles in forming and maintaining a partnership with the University, Kristin Gray from the Sierra Nevada Exploratorium shared an anecdote about turnover and the threat it poses to building partnerships:

I always make this joke: I'll be like, 'oh my gosh, you know so I'm working with Margaret – who the hell is Margaret? – She's actually in an office two doors down from you' – because [the University] has a lot of places, you have turnover. You have people who are there for their Masters or their PhD – they're starting these great things. They're so excited, but this maybe isn't their final community. And as somebody who moved – I moved all over the West in my 20s, I feel like I'm a pretty interesting person, I'm pretty interested in things, but being part of a community is different, right? Putting down a little bit of those roots and just, the way that a relationship or partnership can grow over time when you've been able

to put – like some of those relationships that I’m working with still, like, we’re like 5 years in. Right? It’s such a well-paced of how to build that. They know who I am and what our organizational integrity is, right? And it allows you to think about all of these other things and see a little bit of the ecosystem. *Kristin Gray, Education Programs Director, Sierra Nevada Exploratorium*

Kristin’s starts out light, describing the disconnection that results from turnover. As Kristin continues in sharing their experience, the depth of the toll taken on trying to build and maintain relationships is revealed. Academia brings a level of transience, which in turn prevents roots from growing. These are the roots of personal lives; the relationships that create an ecosystem that becomes a community. The relationships that make up the partnerships - that make up the community - cannot grow if the nature of a community’s population is to change every few years. Susan Shepard from the Sierra Nevada School District echoed Kristin’s sentiments, noting the depth of the impact this reality has on the University’s relationships with community-based organizations: “it’s constantly building of relationships and um, you know re-establishing your program. I’ve been doing it for 14-15 years.” Susan’s comment was said with much exhaustion. It was clear that this aspect of working with the University made their job very difficult, but necessary as their organization relies heavily on volunteers.

The majority of participants identified the personal connection as key, but not easy to obtain regardless of turnover. Todd Evans the Program Coordinator for Mountain View Academy noted,

Like for me, most teachers aren't going to go out of their way to reach out to the university and go through all the hassle and steps of contacting this person, and then getting transferred to that person and blah blah, just to find somebody that might be able to do something for you. *Todd Evans, Program Coordinator, Mountain View Academy*

There is a clear realization that a point of contact to initiate a partnership is needed, and often times hard to maintain. These findings demonstrate the importance of social connections as a means of accessing the University and towards building a sustainable partnership. Connected to these sentiments, participants expressed challenges due to not understanding the University infrastructure, which was problematic in understanding how to make connections and navigate the University.

Navigating a maze. For many participants, the University is a huge, confusing organization that is largely closed network. Participants shared not knowing where to start, who to talk to, and not understanding how the various departments and offices are connected. The lack of understanding the organization and interconnection of the University created confusion around how to forge a pathway to engage with the campus. In short, the infrastructure of the University presents a barrier to build relationships preventing partnerships from being cultivated.

Amongst participants there is a sense of confusion and a lack of awareness with regards to who to contact, how to make partnership connections, and/or how offices and departments on campus work together. Todd Evans from Mountain View Academy notes, "there's so many different departments and sub-departments, I guess you could call

them, I'm not sure how you would phrase that, but they have so many different resources that we have no idea about." Like many other participants, Todd sees the University as having beneficial, untapped resources simply because they do not know where to look. Participants see the University as a viable partner, but the lack of clarity or understanding with regards to how to access the University creates challenges. Mike Jenson from Summit High School echoed the disconnection between desire to partner and confusion around where to start,

I would like to see the ability to meet with... I guess... I don't even know who it would be, but I'm thinking like your office or something, to have a meeting with them, to say 'hey how can we work together to do some things, what kind of programs can we do?' *Mike Jenson, Teacher, Summit High School*

Mike's comment captured the challenges perfectly. Just as Mike was mapping out what change they would like to see in the process of partnering, they realize they do not know the landscape the various offices and departments in order to know where to start.

Another challenge is the perception of how the individual offices, departments, and colleges work together. This seems to add to the confusion of how the community-based organization is partnering or can partner with the University. As Chris Daniels from Sierra Nevada School District noted, "anytime there's an event, so I don't know who exactly holds these events because it kind of gets—for me from the outside looking in doesn't really work because I think they're all together and they're not." For example, three different offices may contact the School District: all want to connect students to the School District to complete some type of volunteer hours. From the community-based

organization's perspective, it is not always clear how those three offices are similar, different, and/or how they interact. Participants see the University as having valuable resources, but they have a lack of understanding regarding who useful points of contact are in order to initiate the conversation. Because of this, there is a strong desire for clarity around who is doing what on campus, what resources are available, and how the community-based organization can access those resources.

But certainly having more clarity through each department, where you go through to talk about partnerships, for us it's getting us to that highest person in that department that you possibly can. Whether it be the dean, or the associate dean, or something like that, but where to figure out who to go to in each department that might be in charge of partnerships. *Robert Evans, Executive Director, Outdoor Explorers*

The core message in Robert's suggestion was mirrored throughout the majority of participant responses: The University could be a valuable partner, if only it was clear whom organizations could contact to forge partnership opportunities. When asked about obstacles or challenges faced in forming or maintain a partnership with the University, Mike Jenson from Summit High School stated, "I think that some of the things that definitely come into play are knowing who to talk to, knowing who to get in touch with." Similarly, Rosanna Stanford (Sierra Nevada Exploratorium) shared this suggestion for change: "knowing the, the best point of contact for me to talk to. Sometimes, you know, I'll just put things out to whatever email I find or whoever I think I know and then it'll be the wrong person [...] So maybe knowing like a main point [of contact] to get things out

to.” Like many of the participants, Mike and Rosanna were uncertain who a possible point of contact could be in order to forge a partnership. Community-based organizations want to see a clear pathway through which they can engage and partner with the University, instead of navigating the complex University systems.

The desire for clearer pathways of engagement was a salient theme throughout the study. As explored above, participants experienced confusion and frustration in their attempts to access and navigate the University. Clearer pathways of engagement are needed to demystify how and with whom to connect within the University. When asked if they had any advice for the University, David Wagner from the Exploratorium stated:

I would also say, and more tangible, is that the University should probably make it really clear that they’re open for business with partners with us. I’m not alone in the community of looking up at the helm going, ‘How do we do something with these guys?’ *David Wagner, Executive Director, Sierra Nevada Exploratorium*

David saw the University as potential partner, but the lack of infrastructure to support access and navigation in forging partnerships left him (and others in the community) feeling confused and frustrated.

When asked if they had any advice for the University, Alex Johnson from Outdoor Explorers proposed the idea of having a clear path of engagement for those wanting to partner,

if there could be a way to centralize the community engagement so that it wouldn’t be such a maze of trying to figure out who to work with and who to talk

to. And within that centralization maybe there's a centralized process for partnerships. *Alex Johnson, Education Coordinator, Outdoor Explorers*

Alex, like other participants, thought a more centralized model of community engagement within the University could help element some of the struggles experienced by participants. From the outside looking in, the University seems to be a confusing maze with no clear starting point. Engagement between the community and the University seems to be stunted by the lack of clarity around how to access and navigate the institution. Sean Smith from the Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools wanted the University to consider the following:

How can [the University] position itself as an institution and a community partner that isn't just for its alumni or for academics or for elected officials or for business leaders? How can the university position itself as an institution that is accessible and approachable by a diversity of stakeholders? *Sean Smith, Campaign Manager, Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools*

As noted by many participants, the University is seen as a having a wealth of resources that could benefit the greater community, but it is not easily accessible for most. Though Sean Smith was a recent graduate of the University, and was involved in student government, they still saw the University a space that is not easily accessible or approachable.

These issues of accessing, navigating, establishing, and maintaining were summed up well by David Wagner's (Sierra Nevada Exploratorium) experience in build on the

success of one partnership. In the initial partnership venture, the museum hosted a traveling exhibit that highlighted the work of a professor at the University. From David's perspective, the original goals of the partnership were met, and they were now considering how they could continue to partner with the University in mutually beneficial ways:

Okay, now how do we build on that success? How do we continue this? What's the next tangible thing that the University can, you know, play a role in and be supportive. You know, the notion of having a generic presence in the museum just hasn't caught on yet, which was really kinda our end game of trying to create a long term sustainable relationship; that just isn't happening yet. I think it's probably because it's too abstract of an idea. And there's just—the University has so much going on, there's just a lot of cats to herd to see if there's enough of a pipeline to feed [the project]. So, were looking at how do we continue to grow on the success that we had with [the traveling exhibit]. *David Wagner, Executive Director, Sierra Nevada Exploratorium*

David recognizes that their desired outcome of having an on-going University presence in the museum was perhaps too abstract to catch on, but they also touch into a bigger issue at play: there is a lot happening at the University and, for participants, takes a lot of energy to figure out if the work of 'herding cats' is worth the potential outputs. The work of 'herding cats' to see if 'there's enough pipeline to feed [the project]' tends to fall on the community-based organization, a theme that will be expanded on in a later section. David's comment represents a perception from these community partners is that the

University does not prioritize how they engage with the community enough to create clear pathways of engagement for community-based organizations. These challenges in accessing the University create barriers in establishing relationships that can lead to partnerships.

Only Under Grad Prep, which is a federally funded grant that connects the High School and the University, felt like they had a clear, established path to engage with the University,

We've tried in the past to reach out to other departments, but it just—it's better to just go through [University Coordinator] where she, she—she already knows the campus, she knows people who work there and um, you know, if you wanna set up an education field trip, then she knows exactly who to contact. *Monica James, Under Grad Prep, Summit High School*

Participants representing this partnership expressed previous challenges with partnering, but they worked together resolve those issues through better communication and organization. It is important to note that their collaboration is strongly encouraged through the grant funding. With both partner organizations invested, involved, and growing together, participants expressed how this lends to sustainable, integrated programming that will benefit the greater community.

Through the lens of a democratically engaged, asset-based, consensus-organizing framework, participants see the potential of building meaningful relationships with the University, but there does not seem to be an infrastructure to support clear pathways of engagement for community-based organizations. Not understanding the landscape or

infrastructure of the University, specifically towards partnering, seems to prevent community-based organizations from building relationships that could turn into the desired change-oriented, reciprocal partnerships. Whether the participants were discussing the ideal outcomes for the partnership with the University, advice, or suggestions for change, the perception of University infrastructure seemed deeply connected to creating the relationships needed for an effective partnership. Connected to these findings is the current perception of how University's identity as a partner.

University's partner identity. Creating clearer pathways of engagement seems to be connected to the deeper concept of the University developing and identifying as a fellow partner. The voices of the participants painted a picture of the University being disconnected and disinterested in engaging as an equal partner. As identified by the participants, the University as a whole needed to develop an identity as a co-partner. This includes shared responsibility for the partnership and being mindful of desired partnership characteristics.

Participants expressed feeling that the responsibility of forging a partnership with the University is mostly on the shoulders of the community-based organization. Elizabeth Murray from the Sierra Nevada School District described their role in the partnership, "In most cases my role is the driver, like I'm the one pushing on them." When asked about their role in the partnership and how their partnership with the University maintained, most positioned themselves as Elizabeth did: the driver, the one pushing to maintain the relationship. Marsha Grant from Mountain View Academy saw their role as "to seek out partners and also to foster the relationships." Marsha's role is to take the lead on finding

and maintaining the partnerships their school has with the University. In a more democratically engaged partnership, this responsibility would be shared between both organizations.

With the community-based organization carrying the responsibility of accessing, navigating, and establishing and maintaining partnerships with the University, it is clear that community-based organizations are putting a lot of time and effort into connecting with the University. David Wagner, from the Sierra Nevada Exploratorium, illustrated why they think this dynamic exists, and the effect it has on community partners:

The university is engaged in so much, with so much leadership going in so many different directions, that it's tough to get any one idea up off the ground and supported because you need the support of 5, 6, 10 different departments or people and approval processes, all of which are moving on their own timelines, and [there is] inter-competition in and amongst the campus, and so trying to introduce from the outside, there are natural processes of the University that are designed to— it's an immunity system and we're the parasite in some cases. And [...] that can be a challenge to navigate all that and it—and that requires us to make a significant investment of our time and resources for something that any step of the way could be shut down and just, you know, not ever happen. *David Wagner, Executive Director, Sierra Nevada Exploratorium*

David saw the University (and others like it) as an immunity system, of sorts: a closed system whose primary goal is to protect itself. In David's metaphor, the community partners take on a parasitic quality, as they try to carve out a connection into the closed

system. Parasites feed on and live off of the host (the University in this example). A parasite-host relationship is the antithesis of a democratically engaged partnership, which would be more closely aligned with a symbiotic relationship that is mutually beneficial. In talking about their ideal outputs and outcomes of a partnership, Robert Evans also touched on this concept of the parasitic and symbiotic relationship:

So, I almost view it on a continuum, where at first the university didn't want to do any partnerships, now they're open to partnerships, but they... The partnership is not so close that we are symbiotic I guess? We're coexisting to benefit but not symbiotic. That third partnership [symbiotic relationship] would be really incredible where the university counts these partnerships with their community and likewise we count the university. You know we bring a joint group of donors to see this program, so those kind of things. That or the university publishes the idea of the partnership into the broader higher ed. community. *Robert Evans, Executive Director, Outdoor Explorers*

The partnership that Outdoor Explorers has with the University seems to have evolved from the University not wanting to be involved, to becoming more open to the idea. Robert believes a mutually beneficial (symbiotic) relationship would be ideal since it would benefit both organizations in large, expansive ways. Yet, because the University seems to treat community partnerships as parasitic, the participants feel they are forced to do the work of convincing the University that a partnership could become symbiotic. Going back to David's quote, they note that this process takes a lot of work, using valuable resources of the organization. Despite the amount of time invested in carving out

a connection, there is not always a return on the investment. David's follow up to this comment was that this was a "high risk-high return relationship" (David Wagner, Executive Director, Sierra Nevada Exploratorium). While participants see the University as a valuable resource, the question is whether or not it's worth the time and resources. The nature of the University being a closed, challenging system to network combined with the experience of the University not holding equal responsibility in the partnership seems to create the perception that the University is not a true, equal, or willing partner. Participants noted a number of other characteristics that added to the perception of the University not being an equal partner. As Elizabeth Murray noted: "I would like to see a little bit of humility. That they have to listen to the community and help respond to the crises that are happening in our community" (Elizabeth Murray, Director and Principal, Sierra Nevada School District). From Elizabeth's perception, a part of being a partner is being more externally focused and engaged with the greater community. David Wagner builds on this idea:

And there's a lot of other institutions in this city and the region that would benefit from a relationship with the University, and the University would benefit from being a part of, but they certainly haven't hung a shingle out that says 'Hey, come be a part of this great stuff we're doing.' It's very internally kind of focused, 'We're great, we're doing great things.' You're not alone in that greatness and there's a lot more to be had if more of us are involved. *David Wagner, Executive Director, Sierra Nevada Exploratorium*

The latter part of David’s comment speaks to the idea that the greater community has a lot to offer if the University would embrace the assets of the community and saw itself as a partner, and the perception that the University is arrogant in its posture towards the greater community. Elizabeth and David expressed frustration in the lack of collaboration, which was centered on the University’s sense of power and authority. These elements seem to create barriers in developing partnerships that are honoring the assets and expertise of the community, collaborative, and mutually beneficial.

Participants noted wanting the University to “just reach out” (Todd Evans, Mountain View Academy) and to “encourage faculty and staff to keep regular communication with their partners” (Alex Jackson, Outdoor Explorers). As Jennifer Harris from the School District put it,

Just like any relationship there are bumps in the road, so we do try to communicate a lot. Usually when I come up to do stuff I’ll stop by their office and say hi, which is what I’ll do today, just stop by and say hi and how are things going and touch base, because it’s important to keep those relationships going. They do the same thing also when they’re down in our neck of the woods. *Alex Jackson, Education Coordinator, Outdoor Explorers*

Alex feels that working at the relational aspects of partnering, such as communication, would help the University become more partner-oriented. Chris Daniels (also from the School District) noted a similar sentiment,

if we communicate—we could all probably communicate a little better. Um, whether it’s weekly,—uh, not weekly, no one needs that [laughter], but no

monthly is good time to check in, ‘Hey, how are you doin? Are you needing any assistance with this or that? Just communicate a little more frequently. *Chris Daniels, Volunteer Coordinator, Volunteer Services, Sierra Nevada School District*

Being in regular, dependable communication is seen as helping to build the relational elements that are central to democratic, asset-based engagement. Participants see that these characteristics are needed to participate equally in a relationship-based partnership. Many partnerships represented in this study are considered successful by the participants, but it seems the University is not engaging as an equal participant, or creating space for the relational aspects of community engagement.

Never any struggle. Yet, there existed one outlier. The outlier in case was the Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools. This political campaign was able to build strong relationships through a grassroots movement with the student population. A key difference from other cases is that all participants from the Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools were either recent graduates or current students, and all of them held or currently hold positions in student government on campus. While other participants struggled with navigating the University and understanding who to talk with, Sean Smith, the Campaign manager, did not. When asked if there was anything they would like to change about the process of establishing or maintaining a partnership with the University, Sean stated, “I was so drawn to the university because I was so involved in the university. I was not fearful of or confused by or intimidated by navigating the system.” Sean’s response acknowledges that the University can be an intimidating setting for many, but because of

their experience and inside knowledge of the University, Sean did not see partnering as a challenge. Sean continued:

But I think other people look at the behemoth that is the university, [the University], and want to do similar partnerships and do engagements, I think people who haven't navigated that system or doesn't have contacts on the "inside", I think that would be discouraging for a lot of people. I think that there are probably a lot of missed opportunities because of that. *Sean Smith, Campaign Manager, Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools*

Sean touches into the exact struggles expressed by other participants. The University is a complex system, which makes it challenging to navigate.

Adam Maxwell, a current student who worked on the campaign, felt that there was "never any struggle" with establishing or maintaining the partnership between Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools and the University. Similarly, Adam was involved in student government and held a high-ranking position with associated student body. They were recruited by Sean, the campaign manager, who previously held a high-ranking position in student government when they were a student at the University. As someone who volunteered and helped to engage student volunteers, Adam never experienced any struggles because of their familiarity with the University, and insider identity. Connecting this back to the earlier metaphor of the University being an 'immunity system', it seems the University is a largely closed system. From this case, it seems having first-hand and recent experience with the University helped in understanding how to access, navigate, establish, and maintain a partnership with the University. The recent or current student

status, and position within student government provided a working knowledge of the University (infrastructure and social connections), and their deep connection to the student body (via their student government positions) allowed them to receive support from a grassroots movement amongst the larger student population.

It is also important to consider other variables that may have contributed to the participants of this case not experiencing any struggles with relational and participatory aspects of partnering. These variables include the time-sensitive nature of the partnership and the clarity around the ideal outputs and outcomes. Unlike the other partnerships represented, the campaign had a hard stop with the November elections. While there were long-term aspirations that students would stay civically engaged because of their involvement with the campaign, the end goal was to get the measure passed. Alongside the definitive timeline, the participants noted that the original goals for the partnership were to get students involved, and get students to vote. Adam Maxwell stated that the original goal of the partnership was “attract young voters to the campaign”. Stephanie Brown noted that “the campaign just really wanted to get young people and students involved, because they’re a lot of people that are voting.” When asked about ideal outputs and outcomes, the responses were centered on helping to spread the message of the campaign through education and awareness of the issues. As Sean Smith shared, much of the work of student volunteers was to “help deliver [the] message” of the campaign. Stephanie Brown and Adam Maxwell saw longer-term benefits to the partnership through student involvement. Stephanie shared their ideal outputs and outcomes:

I think it's really important for a university to be involved in the community, just because I think it's a really beneficial relationship for the university. I think it makes the students feel more comfortable and at-home when they're there.

Stephanie Brown, Volunteer Coordinator, Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools

The ideal outputs and outcomes would benefit the involved students by giving them an opportunity to become more involved in and aware of the community. Stephanie felt that this awareness and involvement would lend itself to students feeling more comfortable with the city. Adam focused on the potential long-term benefits that would result from the measure being passed: "Just a higher level of students coming into the university is the only thing I can think of" (Adam Maxwell, Campaign Volunteer, Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools). Stephanie and Adam both saw potential long-term benefits despite the short-term partnership.

A salient difference between this case and other cases was the short-timeline and intended outputs and outcomes. Where other community-based organizations were looking to establish long-term, sustainable partnerships, the Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools had a hard-stop to their partnership, and no long-term opportunities for involvement. Thus, building relationships that would last beyond the campaign was not as important as the defined outputs and outcomes, which were to raise awareness and get the measure passed. The original goals and ideal outputs and outcomes were not heavily linked to building relationships or continued work on wide-spread change. The student participation in this particular partnership focused on the end goal of getting the measure passed, not implementing the change that would come from the passing of the measure.

Lastly, the Campaign leaders intentionally targeted the student population to mobilize the message of the campaign, and because the campaign leaders had a high level of knowledge of the University and an internal platform (i.e., student government), they did not perceive any struggles in establishing and maintaining a partnership.

Creating a partnership with the University seems to be predicated on figuring out who to talk with in order to get a project or program moving. For some, this is complicated by the rate of turn over within the University. Being able to make a social connection within the University helps to make the partnership more relational, thus, setting the partnership up to be meaningful for all involved in the partnership.

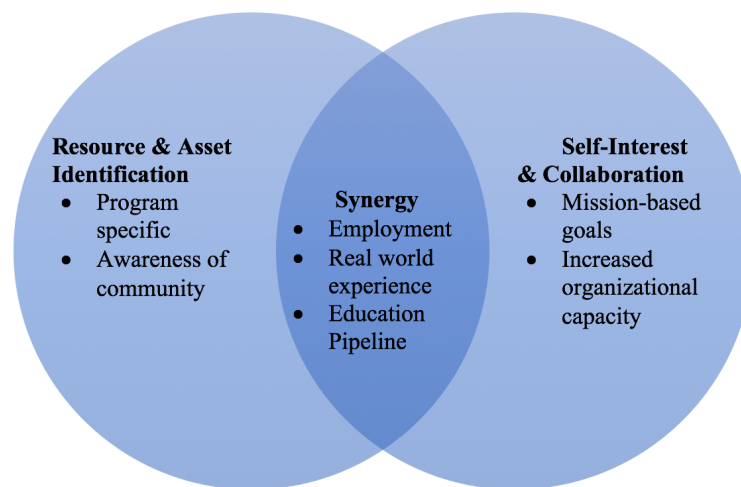
Towards Synergistic Partnerships: Understanding Resources, Assets, Self-Interest and Collaboration

The themes of resource and asset identification, mutual self-interest, and collaboration are represented separately in the Framework, but as analysis progressed it became clear that these components, when combined, lead towards change-orientation, which is yet another theme in the Framework. Figure 5.1 provides a visual representation of how these elements work together to result in change-oriented, synergistic partnerships. Highlighted in the findings is what the participants identified as assets, resources, mutual self-interest, and how through collaboration with the University, synergistic partnerships could be formed. The ways in which the organizations could or currently collaborate is apparent through current partnerships, but the concepts that emerged seemed to go beyond simple collaboration, and touch into a more dynamic space, which is why the term synergy is used instead of change-oriented.

This section is divided into two sections: assets and resources, and self-interest. The first section discusses the assets and resources of the community-based organization and University, as identified by the participants. The second section covers the community-based organizations' areas self-interest. In reference to Figure 5.1, this section covers the two larger circles and the following section discusses the intersection of synergy.

Figure 5.1

Theme Intersection



Gateway to the community: Assets and resources. Resource and asset identification starts with an asset-based assumption by considering the strengths and possibilities. It also uses a methodology of seeking to understand the assets and resources within a community through asset-mapping. This theme captures what participants identify as resources and assets of their organization and of the University. The community-based organizations' assets and resources identified by participants are

connected to program-specific goals or attributes, and the access to and awareness of the community. In addition to the organization-specific assets and resources, participants identified that they provide a gateway to the community for the University. The primary asset of the University, as identified by participants, is having many resources from which the organizations could potentially benefit.

With all of the organizations being education-based, each one felt they were providing resources to the community through education. Kristin Gray saw the size of the Exploratorium as a main benefit because it allowed for the ability to shift programming more quickly. This, in turn, made them a good partner to larger organizations that could not be quite as nimble:

They can't afford to be on the cutting edge, oh and there's a lot of red tape [with] a big administration, and we're small. We have 40 staff and half of which are part-time, so we're a very small place. So, if we decide we want to dive into something like coding, we can think up some experiences and make them happen pretty quickly. *Kristin Gray, Education Programs Director, Exploratorium*

In addition to benefiting the community through their respective missions, one organization noted vast resource of employment opportunities they provide for the area:

We provide over 8,000 jobs for people in the community—from nutrition services to attorneys to teachers, administrators, accountants... I mean it's pretty vast. We've got about 4,000 teachers but we've got about 4,000 other employees. *Jennifer Harris, University Coordinator, Sierra Nevada School District*

Participants believe engaging with these community-based organizations would also help University staff, administrators, and students understand the needs and assets of the greater community. Sean Smith from the Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools saw their primary asset and resource as one that allowed students to become more civically aware and engaged in their community:

You're knocking on peoples' doors, and you're learning about the diversity in your community, about the economics in your community, about the inclination for people to be civically engaged in your community. I think an intended outcome is that you get to really learn about the parts of your community that perhaps you never would have. *Sean Smith, Campaign Manager, Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools*

A large part of the Coalition's work was to canvas neighborhoods to raise awareness and support for the SNQ-3 bill. Sean saw this activity as giving the student volunteers an opportunity to learn more about the communities around the University. Sean also saw the University's engagement with community-based organizations as a way to increase the civic engagement of students: "Any organization that is seeking to partner with the university [...] is providing that opportunity, and another avenue through which students can be civically engaged" (*Sean Smith, Campaign Manager, Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools*). As a recent graduate of the University and community partner of the University, Sean brought a unique perspective. They were able to see from both sides how becoming engaged with the community had a two-fold benefit for the students: the opportunity at hand (e.g., tutoring), and the opportunity to be civically engaged. For

Sean, this was creating awareness of the community, and engaging with the community in a meaningful way. The partnerships between the campus and community-based organizations seem to serve as a gateway, of sorts, to the greater community.

I think we bring access to the community. So, by virtue of being at two thirds of the elementary schools, and then working with a quarter of the kids every year, we provide that kind of window from the university to the schools, if that makes sense. *Robert Evans, Executive Director, Outdoor Explorers*

Community-based organization's primary programming serve the general public. Thus, the opportunities that arise from partnering with the University provide a place for students to learn about their local community. In the same way participants identified the assets and resources they brought to the partnership, they also identified that the University has a wealth of resources that their organizations could tap into.

A main incentive for partnering with the University seems to be to access the vast resources. Todd Evans, from Mountain View Academy, felt the University "is such a huge resource for us, that I feel like it's been really under used by our school." Similarly, Ellie Redfield (Neighborhood School Support Program) thought their program "should take more advantage of the resources the university has" (Ellie Redfield, Neighborhood School Support Program Coordinator, Summit High School). Some of these resources were identified as the facilities at the University. This included the museums, labs, and the various programs that students otherwise would not be exposed to:

Again, with that mindset of going to college, it was also 'hey we don't have the facilities, we don't have the abilities, can you help us with that?' That was a big

part of it, and a lot of times that's what it is, whether it's a facility, a lab, a med lab, or you guys have people who can help our kids understand different programs, different options. *Mike Jenson, Teacher, Summit High School*

Being one of the older schools in the city, Summit High School lacks a number of facilities that would enhance student learning. Mike Jenson saw the opportunity to partner with the University as one that would provide improved educational opportunities, and expose their students to college.

Nearly all of the participants commented on seeing the University has having resources that could be aligned with their organization's needs and assets. This ranged from physical space, to education, to volunteers, to the talent and expertise of faculty and students. The assets and resources of the University seemed to be directly connected to how the organizations could benefit through partnering. Identifying the self-interest of the organization is the next component related to the process of creating change-oriented partnerships.

Self-interest. Self-interest speaks to what is important for the organization. The ideal balance in the Framework is identifying the mutual, or shared self-interest between the partnering organizations. This includes identifying common interests or goals towards creating strategies for change, and understanding self-interest of stakeholders. Since this study focuses on the voice and perspective of the community partner, the findings highlight what participants saw as the self-interest of the organization they represented. This led to identifying ways the community-based organization could collaborate with the University, and ultimately build a partnership that is synergistic; helping to create

wide-spread change for all stakeholders. The areas of self-interest identified by participants are connected to the mission of the organization, and the potential for increased capacity through partnerships with the University. This theme captures the factors participants saw as important for their organization and ways they could collaborate in order to increase the organization's capacity and, therefore, fulfill the organization mission.

The school-based organizations spoke to things like academic success or improvement, college-readiness, and generally took a holistic view when it came to meeting the needs of their students and families. Mike Jenson highlighted this holistic approach and cyclical nature of their organization's work:

We could see more for sure and I think that's always kind of got to be our goal, to give the kids a push to get there and then stick around to give back to the community and develop a stronger—especially in this area—a stronger sense of community and a bigger impact within the lives of the people who are still around. *Mike Jenson, Teacher, Summit High School*

Participants who represented informal education spoke to being able to see the impact of their work in the community; ultimately, if and how they fulfilled their respective missions:

I guess a truly ideal outcome of the partnership would be a way where we make a really big impact specific to us with science education in the community, but just broadly, we're able to make it jointly together—a bigger impact on the community. *Robert Evans, Executive Director, Outdoor Explorers.*

At the end of the day we're held accountable to our students' growth, so I think it's really important that they're not doing, you know, an isolated, um you know, that they don't have an isolated goal for themselves, that were integrating it into what our goals are for our kids so that our teachers don't feel that they're losing a day of the week. *Marsha Grant, Principal, Mountain View Academy*

Regardless of the specific programs offered by the organizations, the thread throughout was making a positive impact on the communities they served. Giving back, investing in, supporting the growth of the greater community is clearly a priority for the participants and their respective organizations. In order to have the greatest impact possible, participants saw a need for supporting and growing the capacity of their organizations.

Increasing the capacity of the organization or programming was a prominent theme in the self-interest of the organizations. Sarah Jones (University Ambassador for Undergrad Prep) and Reina Cruz (Program Coordinator for Undergrad Prep) both spoke about the desire to have more events throughout the year, and identified this as an indicator of success for the partnership with the University:

I would say the amount of events that we are able to schedule throughout the school year [is an indicator of success]. I would say we have about maybe three to five events with [the University] and then on top of that our [University] representative and then the team there, they come to our school site multiple times throughout the school year. So, I would say the constant presence is a sign of success. As well as our students who regularly participate, they already know them, whereas those that don't participate or who are new, it takes a while for

them to warm up to them, they recognize her, they say hi, they know who she is... just that the students know that she's there and she's a contact is a good sign.

Reina Cruz, Program Coordinator for Undergrad Prep, Summit High School

Reina saw that having more events between Summit High School and the University through the Undergrad Prep program, would help to increase the likelihood that their students would feel more comfortable with the University representative (Sarah Jones). The hope is that the exposure to the University and comfort with Sarah will increase the chance of the students' enrolling and persisting at the University. Reina believed that this end goal was more attainable if the capacity of the organization was increased through the number of collaborative events between Undergrad Prep and the University. Along the same lines, the Executive Director of the Exploratorium noted the priority of increased attendance, membership, and donor support. Alex Jackson (Outdoor Explorers) cited the importance of having regular interns: "Well, for us simple metrics include number of interns we were able to recruit for this specific program. Calculating the impact in terms of extra numbers of students we see in the community, or extra number of programs we're able to deliver."

Generally speaking, the self-interest of the organizations seems to be to continue fulfilling their respective missions. This is described by participants as reaching programmatic goals, as well as more abstract goals like "making an impact on the community." Participants see the University as having resources that can help build the capacity of the organization, which supports furthering the mission of the organizations.

Continued growth and sustainability was another area of self-interest identified by the participants.

Seeing the relationship grow seems to help the partnership (and programming) grow, which is a salient desire of the community partners. Robert Evans from Outdoor Explorers spoke to this desired growth:

if it is actively growing and people are engaged in it, then I think that—oddly enough this might not be a very measurable outcome, but it is very easy for us to know on our end if a partnership is a good partnership or a bad partnership because a lot of that is just how it makes you feel. *Robert Evans, Executive Director, Outdoor Explorers*

For Robert, a successful partnership is one that is continually growing, and where people feel engaged. It is in the self-interest of the organizations for the partnerships with the University to grow so the services provided to the community increase and expand. The growth of the personal relationships would ultimately lead to a mutually beneficial partnership which would lead to greater benefit to the community. Chris Daniels noted, “we wanna grow with them and help the students: our students and their students at the same time” (Chris Daniels, Volunteer Coordinator, Volunteer Services, Sierra Nevada School District). Chris saw the benefit of their organization growing with the University, and the mutual benefit that would result. Ultimately, this mutual benefit would trickle out to the community. Michelle Stewart, the University Coordinator for College Access, shared a similar sentiment: “I think the more you can partner with your community whether it’s through community schools, community organizations, the stronger the

university is going to be, the stronger your community is going to be in turn” (Michelle Stewart, University Coordinator, College Access, Summit High School). Michelle, whose position is located at the University, saw the connection between growing partnerships and a growing community. Other areas of self-interest were represented in what participants identified as desired and actual outputs, outcomes, and impacts of the partnership and the indicators of a successful partnership. By and large, the areas identified fall into the category of increasing the quality of the partnership.

Quality of the partnership. Using the conceptual framework to understand the self-interest of the community-based organizations, participants were asked about the original goals of partnership, the actual outputs and outcomes, the ideal outputs and outcomes of the partnership, and how they know if their partnership with the University is successful. Participant responses were categorized by outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Poister et al. (2014) define outputs as “what a program actually does and what it produces directly; outcomes are the results it generates” (p. 57). Outputs are the immediate results of a program, and outcomes are the cumulative results of the outputs. Impacts are the long-term consequences of the outcomes (Stoecker & Beckman, 2009). Reviewing participant feedback in the categories of outputs, outcomes, and impact showed no clear pattern. However, what emerged from this process was a focus on the quality of the partnership, which created an unexpected fourth category that seem to point towards the quality of the partnership being both a means and an end.

As an example, Elizabeth Murray's response when asked about the ideal outputs or outcomes, their response was representative of the equal focus on outputs, outcomes, impact, and quality of the partnership:

I think those were the ideals, that we increased the dual-credit opportunities, we have increased accessibility, we have strengthened relationships with the college and our teachers, the college and our students. We've really started collaborative projects that benefit our community, and at the end of the day the work that we all do is to benefit our community. That's our city, our state, or our nation. That's the work we do. *Elizabeth Murray, School Director & Principal, Sierra Nevada School District*

The output is increased dual-credit opportunities, which leads to the outcome of increased accessibility. In turn, the quality of the partnership is improved through strengthened ties and increased collaboration. Elizabeth, like many participants, sees these collaborations as potentially benefitting the larger community, which was a long-term impact. Table 5.1 illustrates the prioritized responses according to community-based organization, categorized by outputs, outcomes, and/or quality of the partnership.

Table 5.1

Breakdown of Top Responses by Organization and Question

Organization	Ideal Outputs and/or Outcomes	Original Goals of the Partnership	Actual Outputs and/or Outcomes	Indicators of Success
School District	Equal focus on Outputs, Outcomes, and Quality of Partnership	Outputs	Equal focus on Outputs, Outcomes, and Quality of Partnership	Outcomes
Mountain View Academy	Quality of Partnership	Outputs	Outputs & Outcomes	Outcomes
Summit High School	Outcomes	Outputs & Outcomes	Outcomes & Quality of the Partnership	Outputs
Sierra Nevada Exploratorium	Output & Quality of the Partnership	Outputs & Impacts	Outputs and Quality of Partnership	Quality of Partnership
Outdoor Explorers	Quality of Partnership	Quality of Partnership	Impact	Outcomes & Quality of Partnership
Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools	Outputs	Outputs	Outcomes	Equal focus on Outputs, Outcomes, and Quality of Partnership

When asked about the ideal outputs and/or outcomes, participants from the Sierra Nevada School District had an equal focus on the outputs, outcomes, and quality of the partnership with the University. Mountain View Academy focused primarily on the quality of the partnership, Summit High School focused on outcomes, Sierra Nevada Exploratorium focused on outputs and the quality of the of the partnership, Outdoor Explorers focused on the quality of the partnership, and Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools talked mostly about outputs. The majority of participants noted outputs as the original goals of the partnership. Sierra Nevada Exploratorium mentioned impacts in addition to outputs, and Outdoor Explorers focused on the quality of the partnership. All

other organizations focused mainly on outputs. The actual outputs and/or outcomes were split, with the Sierra Nevada School District having an equal focus on outputs, outcomes, and the quality of the partnership; Mountain View Academy focusing on outputs and outcomes; Summit High School focusing on outcomes and the quality of the partnership, the Exploratorium focusing on outputs and the quality of the partnership; Outdoor Explorers focusing on long-term impact, and the Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools focusing on outcomes. In terms of indicators of a successful partnership, the responses were split between outcomes (four out of six organizations) and the quality of the partnership (three of six). Participants largely focused on the quality of the partnership as an indicator of success, but it was often on equal footing with outputs and/or outcomes. As demonstrated by Table 5.1, there was no clear pattern within or between cases. However, responses about the quality of the partnership emerged throughout the protocol questions and cases as both a means and an end. Attributes of a quality partnership include being mutually beneficial, reciprocal, equal, sustainable, and growing or evolving. In addition to defining what constitutes a quality partnership, participant feedback pointed to an emphasis on building a quality partnership as an indicator of success and an end goal.

The attribute of being mutually beneficial was salient throughout participant responses to questions about outputs, outcomes, and indicators of success. Participant responses helped to further define what this means for community-based organizations. When asked about indicators of success, Rosanna Stanford from Sierra Nevada Exploratorium highlighted mutual benefit and helped to define what that meant to her: “I

think as long as it's mutually beneficial where maybe [the University students] gain a skill that they can add to their resume, and we gain a new perspective or new project we can do or we made a program happen because we have the extra help." The connection that Rosanna makes is that the quality of the partnership – being mutually beneficial, in this case – lends itself to desirable outputs such as gaining professional experience, and being able to deliver a program or project.

Alex Jackson said their original goals were “to create a truly collaborative internship that benefits [Outdoor Explorers], as well as the University, and that can help our organization reach our mission.” While fulfilling the mission of the organization was important, the priority was on building a collaborative, mutually beneficial program. Specifically, for Alex’s organization, this meant helping to fulfill their mission. Alex Jackson and their colleague, Robert Evans continued to help define mutual benefit when discussing indicators of success:

Make sure that the goals are being reached on both sides of the table. *Alex Jackson, Education Coordinator, Outdoor Explorers*

The second component is that people are willing—on both sides—to put the time and money, to publicize what we’re doing, or attracting people, those types of things. *Robert Evans, Executive Director, Outdoor Explorers*

When goals are being met for the community-based organization and the University, the partnership seems to feel successful. In addition to the partnership function of meeting the goals for the University and the community-based organization, Robert Evans spoke

to the desire for equality alongside being mutually beneficial. The thread of equality in the partnership runs throughout participant responses, but seemed to be called out specifically when asked about outputs, outcomes, and indicators of success.

Elizabeth Murray from the Sierra Nevada School District captured the significance of having equality in their recounting of a specific partnership with someone from the University:

In most cases my role is the driver, like I'm the one pushing on them. That is not the case with [the College of Agriculture], because [name redacted] and I are equal partners, we have as much invested, it's so mutually beneficial, and he recognizes it. So, it is mutually beneficial for my other partners but they don't necessarily recognize it as a high priority. [He] sees it as a very high priority. In that case I would say we are definitely partners, we hold hands and we take equal responsibility, but in the other cases I would say that I'm the driver. I've got to continue to knock on the door and say "hey, when can we meet? Let's do this, have you thought about this?" *Elizabeth Murray, School Director and Principal, Sierra Nevada School District*

In this one specific partnership, Elizabeth feels that they are an equal partner with their University counterpart. Elizabeth attributes this equality to their mutual self-interest: "So our relationships are forged out of a mutual need to provide a better outcome for students." Elizabeth also feels that their colleague from the University has as much invested in the project and outcomes as they do. Equally important, their University partner sees the partnership as a priority. Elizabeth's partnership with the College of

Agriculture is equal across the board, mutually beneficial, and grounded by mutual self-interest. This investment also lends itself to the partnership being sustainable for both organizations, which was another priority for the participants and closely tied to mutual benefit.

Participants drew a connection between mutual benefit and sustainability, which was also an important component of a quality partnership. Alex Jackson from Outdoor Explorers shared their perspective, demonstrating how these two qualities are connected:

Ideally, it's that benefitting both sides model. So, we wanna be helpful to the university so the university will see us as a bright spot to send interns. We want college-aged students to want to come work with us and in turn our goal has been to set up these systems where it's impacting our organization. *Alex Jackson, Education Coordinator, Outdoor Explorers*

Again, the focus on building and improving the quality of the partnership seems to be aligned with the potential for other outputs and outcomes. In this case, Alex believes that if Outdoor Explorers is a "bright spot" for the University, then the University will want to direct students to do internships with Outdoor Explorers.

Marsha Grant, the Principal of Mountain View Academy, similarly highlighted the importance and qualities of being sustainable, mutually beneficial, and evolving as an ideal outcome:

Number one that it's sustainable. That if I am not in this position, or that the teachers are not in this position. Um, number two that it's a win-win on both; that they're getting something out of it, we're getting something out of it. Um, and

number three that it continues to grow, that it's, I mean it's always been a form of kinda like [pause] optimal frustration. I feel like there's this optimistic, amazing opportunity, but am I using it in the right way? Uh, and so just constantly, not revamping, but just reassessing and looking for ways to make it, it stronger.

Marsha Grant, Principal, Mountain View Elementary School

All of the elements Marsha touched on relate to the partnership itself: sustainable, mutually beneficially, and evolving. Marsha's comment highlights the desire for creating partnerships that can last beyond the tenure and/or without the leadership of one single person; that the partnership between the organization and university needs to function and continue regardless of who is in charge. They go on to note the importance of a mutually beneficial partnership. According to Marsha, the partnership should provide a benefit to both the University and their organization in order for it to be sustainable. Connecting these two pieces, they recognize the cyclical nature of nurturing a partnership that can be sustainable: it has to grow with the organizations involved. That growth, from Marsha and Alex's quotes, continues because of the mutual benefit. The cycle of mutual benefit and growth builds towards a sustainable partnership.

Creating a partnership with the University that is integrated and sustainable was a noted an indicator of a successful partnership, and priority throughout participant responses. David Wagner of Outdoor Explorers jokingly stated, "[t]he first [indicator] is if it survives the first year. That is a really important indicator of success because all of the times we make the approach of testing something out, if it doesn't work, usually we'll walk away." David's comment touches on the willingness to experiment and see if a

partnership is worth the time and effort invested. Knowing when to walk away is relative to each person and organization, but being able to grow through the setbacks was a priority for Chris Daniels from the School District:

I think it's important with moving parts all over the place, people getting new jobs, switch, move. And they—it continues and grows. And ideally, I would like to see that happen, but I think as long as you—I mean 'cause there's gonna be hiccups, there's gonna be problems, there's gonna be miscommunications, sicknesses, illnesses, things like that come up, but I think at the end of the day we're gonna say the students benefitted on both sides and we can continue this and actually grow it because we found something that we need here. *Chris Daniels, Volunteer Coordinator, Volunteer Services, Sierra Nevada School District*

Chris seemed to understand the various obstacles that might arise when trying to build and maintain a partnership. Being able to grow through those setbacks was an ideal outcome for Chris and the organization. Persistence through the challenges seem to contribute to the growth of the partnership, which was fulfilling the self-interest of their organization.

It seemed that the participants saw the quality of the partnership as key to achieving other output and outcome goals, as well as being a primary goal of the partnership: The quality of the partnership is both the means and an end. According to participants, attributes that make up the quality of the partnership include being mutually beneficial, sustainability, and evolving. The focus on these attributes seem to point to the

importance of the quality partnership between the community-based organization and the University. The growth of a quality partnership seems to be a high priority for the participants. These qualities see, to contribute to the organizations' ability to increase their capacity and impact on the communities they serve. As the participants identified the assets and resources of the organization alongside their self-interest, what emerged were ideas on how to collaborate with the University in ways that benefit all stakeholders. These ideas went beyond the typical mutual benefit of win-win, and tapped into dynamic partnership that could create widespread change, which is a key component of the conceptual framework.

Pipelines: Collaborating on Mutual Self-Interest to Create Synergy

As noted in Figure 5.3 (above), the areas in which the community-identified resources and assets, and self-interest overlap, creates a space for change-oriented, synergistic partnerships. This theme represented areas that the participants identified as points of mutual self-interest and collaboration: the intersection of the needs and assets of the organization with those of the University. Participants excitedly shared ideas about collaborating to create pipelines for real world experience and employment, and increased access to higher education. All of which, in turn, would better the greater community.

Participants saw their partnerships with the University as an employment pipeline for University students by giving them hands-on experience and training. The opportunities they provided through partnerships with the University allowed students to get real world experience, and possibly become employed by the organization someday.

Susan Shepard, from the Sierra Nevada School District saw the value of giving students applicable, real-world experience: “We’re giving your students experience in a work environment, experience in K-12, if they’re going into teaching.” Similarly, Jackie Sanders, also from the School District noted, “I think it brings more of a realistic view for students. It helps students see another perspective, which gives them a broader understanding of what it’s like to be a teacher.” From the participants’ perspectives, interacting with these community-based organizations allows university students to get real world experience that is relevant to their future as a professional.

For the School District in particular, the connection between the university students’ real-world experience and future employment was a clear point of interest and desire:

Cultivate more of a grow-your-own pipeline so that we can increase the amount of teachers and people that are in education. I think that would be a great way to partner with [the University]. I’ve heard of places across the country that have done things similar to that. I don’t know what we need to do to do that. I just— every time I get out there to talk to someone at student teacher prep: ‘pipeline! Let’s do a pipeline. Can we make it happen?’ So, we’re slowly starting to try and do something, I would just love to see [the University] really jump more on that because that’s part of increasing the teacher prep program up here. *Jennifer Harris, University Coordinator, Sierra Nevada School District*

The pipeline Jennifer describes allows University students to gain relevant education and experience through partnering with the District. This also benefits the District, as those

same students would be the future teachers within the District. Through collaborative efforts the District and the University would benefit as institutions; University students would benefit in experience, career preparation, and future employment; and the greater community would benefit from having a steady stream of qualified, high-quality teachers.

Even if a student was not planning to go into the education field, participants saw the opportunity for the university student to develop their soft skills, thus benefitting the student and benefitting future employers. Rosanna Stanford touched on this through this example:

I think what's really most important—we talk a lot about this with the microbiology students: when you're studying to become a scientist, you don't realize that when you get out a lot of times a lot of your job is talking with the public and breaking down that science, and making it accessible. *Rosanna Stanford, Volunteer Coordinator, Exploratorium*

Traditional classroom education provides the theory, but, from Rosanna's perspective, experience working in and with the community allows students to apply what they have learned in the classroom, and hone a skill that will be valuable for them in the future.

While most of the participants spoke to the experience and potential employment for university students who want to become educators, Alex Jackson from Outdoor Explorers highlighted nuanced learning that can happen through working with their organization. Alex saw the opportunities for students giving them “a ton of useful experience working with people, getting to understand how a nonprofit operate, becoming a better educator, and gaining skills in working with children.” Many

participants noted that this experience would not only benefit the university students by giving them hands-on experience, but that it would also benefit the organizations if the students sought employment with their organizations after graduation.

Another asset participants identified is their organization's ability to support and build an education pipeline, as most of them focus on improving academics and creating a college-going culture. All of the organizations have an education focus and many of the programs offered by the organizations build the academic skills of K-12 students. Participants see this as the point of mutual self-interest: the asset and resource of building academic skills and college going culture fulfills the organizations' missions and it benefits University where many students could attend.

Participants from elementary school, high school, and school district identified that having their students see college as accessible was an important priority for them. Two of the programs at Summit High School, Undergrad Prep and Access College, focus specifically on creating a college-going culture and helping those students be successful in college. Other programming at Summit High School supports this as well:

When the [mentor program] first started at this school, the graduation rate was below 40%. We are now closer to 80%, so it's made a drastic improvement in so many different things along the way but ultimately the realization that college is kind of the next step, not just a great leap for many of our kids. *Mike Jenson, Teacher, Summit High School*

At least one participant from each organization noted the resources their organization has in supporting post-secondary education. This asset and resource was also identified as part of the mutual self-interest of the organizations and the University.

As Monica James, the Undergrad Prep Program Coordinator at Summit High School put it, “[we] prepare them enough so they can enroll into [the University] and be prepared to complete their education there.” Taking that one step further, Elizabeth Murray, the Director of Applied Education Programs with the School District stated, “I think we have the potential to bring a great caliber of student to [the University].” Most participants saw their programs as developing the students that would potentially attend the University, which would benefit the University because of the quality of students fed into the pipeline. Although the Sierra Nevada Exploratorium is not a formal classroom, the Executive Director noted the mutual self-interest:

From the student pipeline perspective, we’re reaching students earlier than the University might, you know? We see 17,000 kids a year come through on school field trips. Not all of them are college bound, not all of them know they could be college bound. I think typically a lot of students don’t start thinking about University studies until they’re upper middle and high school, and some cases even in high school they’re not thinking about it until senior year arrives and graduation is looming. So, we can reach students earlier in the pipeline than I think a lot of traditional Universities do. *David Wagner, Executive Director, Sierra Nevada Exploratorium*

Providing educational services and promoting college is a key resource of all of the organizations, and it seems that most of the participants saw this as something that would benefit their organizations as well as the University. A few participants identified an additional strategic connection between their organization and the larger University with regards to the education pipeline:

I think it brings a built-in base of potential students. So right there, you're looking at potential revenue. A lot of our kids are very much dependent upon financial aid so there is kind of one of those barriers—paying for school, out of the way. So, for the university there's kind of a group of kids that could be not only increasing diversity on campus but bringing revenue, so that's a big deal for them. That's a good thing for sure. I would say that the diversity piece, we need discussions about how—our kids especially, they go up there and nobody looks like them—that's a huge thing for the university to capitalize on. That's—in my opinion, that's kind of a two-for-one. You've got kids that you don't have to necessarily worry as much about the funding right off the bat, they're kind of secured with financial aid, then you're bringing diversity to your campus. I mean it's a Tier 1 university, it's kind of a huge piece to their advertising. *Mike Jenson, Teacher, Summit High School*

Similar to the example of the School District's desire for a 'grow-your-own-pipeline', Mike saw the potential for the organizations' mutual self-interest to grow into a synergistic partnership. They saw their school and students as the perfect target because of what they could bring to the University down the line, and what how it would support

their students. This partnership would benefit their students who have lower graduation rates and low access to higher education. The University Ambassadors for Undergrad Prep and Access College noted similar benefits for the University:

A majority of the students we serve are Latino background, so I think it definitely helps diversify the student body here at the university. *Michelle Stewart, University Coordinator, Access College, Summit High School*

If I'm thinking just strategically since [the University] is shooting to be a HSI—Hispanic Serving Institution—the majority of students that are part of the Undergrad Prep cohort are Hispanic, and so that's a huge group of students I have been in contact with since they were in 7th grade that I've visited every year, that I've talked to on the phone, video, Skype, whatever it is, these students have been in contact with me and they have known [the University] since 7th grade. So that's a pretty... I mean if I could show, like look at all these students from Undergrad Prep who are Hispanic that are coming—that I think really helps to reach the institution's goal of being an HSI... and we just happen to have this group of students I have direct contact to. *Reina Cruz, University Ambassador, Undergrad Prep, Summit High School*

From Reina and Michelle's perspectives, working with the students from Summit High School would benefit the students themselves with regards to programmatic support and increased exposure and access to higher education. This would benefit the University by supporting their goals of diversity and becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution. The hope

and assumption from the community-based organizations is that through these partnerships, more underserved students would have the exposure, education, and opportunity to attend and graduate from the University. Participants thought this would be a big win for the University, for organizations like Summit High School and Mountain View Academy because they would be able to report that an increased percentage of their students went on to obtain postsecondary education.

Moving beyond simple collaboration, participants identified a number of ways that their interests aligned with the perceived interests of the University, and how those partnerships could fulfill multiple goals for all stakeholders involved. These ideas ranged from employment pipelines to education pipelines. The mutual self-interest identified by the participants demonstrates how the University's partnerships with community-based organizations can be mutually beneficially, and grow into partnerships that provide widespread change for the both organizations and the people they serve.

Addressing Imbalance of Power

This theme focuses on the voice of those of who are typically silenced, seeking to redistribute power, and sharing power and voice. It is centered on developing co-identities and roles. As noted in other sections, participants shared a number of ways that power goes unaddressed, and they provided many ideas on how to re-balance power in the relationship (most of which are noted in the next section). A core piece in addressing the imbalance of power is that participants do not see the University as a good partner. Rather, they see the University as a self-centered, closed off immunity system that does not recognize there are other organizations making a difference with the community. This

positioning parallels Paulo Freire's critiques of the power dynamic between teacher and student that ultimately results in a banking model (1970). In the banking model, the teacher is the knowledgeable authority and the student is a passive, empty vessel to be guided and filled by the teacher (Freire, 1970). In many ways, this model seems to be replicated, as it is the perception of the participants that the University sees itself as the knowledgeable authority and sees the community-based organizations simply as a space for students to experience and learning; the community-based organizations are often a means to the University's educational ends. From the perspectives of the participants, the University is not a good partner. This is apparent through relational barriers experienced by community-based organizations and the lack of awareness of the surrounding community. These represent barriers to creating equal partnerships add to the experience of lop-sided power differential between the University and the community partner.

Relationally, there were a number of challenges that were highlighted in the previous sections. One of the biggest barriers that emerged as a power differential is the overwhelming sentiment from participants that establishing and maintaining a partnership with the University is the responsibility of the organization. Almost every participant spoke to how part of their role in the partnership with University faculty is to reach out, make connections, and keep the partnership going. Mike Jenson, a teacher at Summit High School states, "my realization in trying to partner with the university is it takes an enormous amount of legwork from a much more grassroots level." Similarly, Todd Evans, the Program Coordinator from Mountain View Elementary: "More so when we reach out to a lot of the Department heads, they put us in touch with graduate students."

Though some participants found working with graduate students to be a good experience, Todd's statement has an almost hand-me-down quality to it. The community-based organization must put in a lot of work to keep a partnership going with the University, and sometimes the faculty's portion of partner work gets passed down to students.

Much of the relationship-based issues that reinforced a power differential seems to be connected to the closed system of the University, which was characterized as a "maze" and a self-preserving "immunity system" that fights off "parasites" (i.e., outside organizations). This closed system presents obvious barriers in building individual relationships, but what was highlighted in the findings is how this closed system lends itself to the perception of a lack of interest or understanding about the surrounding community. The CEO of Outdoor Explorers retold a story illustrating the lack of understanding the community:

I was meeting with one of the senior leaders of the university and I won't mention them by name, but we were talking about 7th street, and amazingly he asked where 7th street was. And I had to gently remind him that we were talking about community outreach, and not being able to identify 7th street, which is a just outside of the university, is a little bit embarrassing. So, as much as the university is on the job, they could walk across the street a little more. [laughs] So I'm really glad that you're doing this work. *Robert Evans, Executive Director, Outdoor Explorers*

The CEO was surprised that a person in a leadership position at the university lacked the basic understanding of an area just outside of the perimeter of the University. This

seemed to speak to the general lack of understanding of the community as a whole and reinforces the perception of the University being an isolated, closed, immunity system.

The isolation and self-protecting nature seems to contribute to feelings of the University being better than or the expert teacher, in Freire's (1970) critique of the banking model. This positioning seems to create dissonance in the University's identity as a partner. Elizabeth Murray from the School District shared their thoughts on advice for the University:

They need to know what their darn vision is, and they need to see themselves as a community partner. I think in a lot of ways they don't. I still think there's this 'well, we served some kids from our community, but we get kids from everywhere and we're a university' so I think they need to see themselves as an integral community partner. Not have this arrogance of 'we're the workforce solution.' Well, you're not the workforce solution. That's not what a four-year degree is, it's not a workforce solution. It is a great opportunity, we are an opportunity.

What [the University] brings to this community—I will never live in a community that doesn't have a university because of my experience with [the University]. They bring thoughtful conversation, they bring culture, they bring a vision of knowledge and an acceptance of being smart. I think [the University's] done that for us. We are so lucky to have a university in our town, but that doesn't make them better than. It doesn't make them untouchable, or that their voice carries

more weight than others. *Elizabeth Murray, Director and Principal, Sierra Nevada School District*

Elizabeth's statement captures many aspects of the findings of this study. There is a general lack of understanding and transparency with regards to what is going on at the University, and how community-based organizations can partner. Compounding this issue, the University comes across as arrogant in what they offer as an institution. The University is seen as having has immense resources that could benefit the community in a number of ways, and does not seem to understand how the institution could benefit from the greater community. From Elizabeth's perspective, it sees itself as separate from the community and better than. Because of this self-centered arrogance, the University is not able to see or embrace what mutual benefit or reciprocity could be, thus reinforcing elements that create barriers for partnering with the community, and increases the power differential.

Many of the issues raised in the findings link back to the imbalance of power. In considering the other four components of the framework alongside the voices of the participants, it seems the imbalance of power goes largely unaddressed. Relationally, participants felt the barriers in accessing and navigating the University prevented them from creating and maintain partnerships. This included the social aspects as well as the infrastructure of the University. The closed-off nature of the University combined with overlooking the assets, resources, and expertise of the community partners seems to add to the perception that the University is disinterested and 'better than' other community-

based organizations. All of which seems to effectively complicate potential change-oriented, collaborative partnerships.

Summary

The findings from this study demonstrate that community-based organizations partnered with the University define and determine outputs and outcomes for their partnership with the University through identifying the resources and assets of both parties. From there, they try to collaborate out of their mutual self-interest. However, for the community partners that participated in this study, voicing and advocating what outputs and outcomes are important hinged on their ability to work through a number of obstacles in accessing and navigating the University. When the participants were able to work through the barriers and establish a partnership, they saw their partnerships as successful when their organization capacity increased and they were better able to fulfill their organization's mission. Participants also identified that the quality of the partnership was both a means and an end. Creating a mutually beneficial partnership was a priority, as it would encourage the University to continue partnering, which would in turn help build the capacity of the community-based organization.

Findings from this study expand on previous studies by further defining what makes a partnership successful and the characteristics of a quality partnership. The centrality and importance of the quality of the partnership was highlighted, demonstrating a positive correlation between the quality of a partnership and the community-based organization's capacity to define, voice, and advocate for the desired outputs, outcomes,

and impacts. Findings also indicate several changes that the University (and other institutions like it) can make in order to improve their community engagement efforts.

The conceptual framework used points to effective partnerships being grounded in each of the five components. A successful partnership is centered on relationships and doing *with* rather than *for*. It recognizes and honors the assets and resources of the community-based organization and University. Through understanding self-interest, a successful partnership builds on mutual self-interest through collaboration. Embodying these components allows for the imbalance of power to be addressed and synergistic, wide-spread change to occur. This study holds a number of implications for the University in this study, as well as other institutions (community-based organizations and institutions of higher education) that are seeking to understand the impact of community-university partnerships

Chapter Six: Implications & Discussion

This embedded single case study focuses on the voice of community partners in order to explore how community-based organizations understand and advocate for the desired outputs and outcomes of their partnerships with an institution of higher education. The single case was bound by the focus area of education. Six community-based organizations with an education-oriented mission made up the embedded cases and consisted of a school district, an elementary school, a high school, two education-focused nonprofit organizations, and a political coalition. Using a conceptual framework grounded in democratic engagement, consensus organizing, and asset-based community development, findings from this study shed light on how community-based organizations define and determine outputs and outcomes for their partnerships with the University, how partnered organizations advocate and voice these desired outputs and outcomes, and elements that make a partnership successful. In summary, findings point towards relationship building as a central component of successful partnership. However, a salient theme is that accessing and navigating the University is a barrier for community-based organizations, and the onus of forging and maintaining a partnership with the University tends to fall on the community-based organizations. Participants easily identified the

assets of their organizations and the University, and could envision ways a partnership with the University could benefit everyone involved. Yet, participants did not see the University as embracing an identity as a true partner, thus, the long-term vision of these partnerships seem to fall short. Overall, participants felt the University positioned itself as greater than, rather than an equal partner. Lastly, participants provided extensive feedback on how the University can change to become more accommodating as a partner and agent for change with the community.

Findings hold important implications for Mountain West University, institutions of higher education, community-based organizations that wish to partner with higher education, as well as the theories and concepts that guide work in the community engagement field. This chapter discusses the implications related to the findings of the study, recommendations, suggestions for future research, and general conclusions. This study sought to answer three main research questions: 1) How do community organizations define and determine outputs, outcomes, and impact indicators for community-university partnerships?; 2) How does community partner advocate or voice what outputs and outcomes are important for their organization when establishing and maintaining a partnership with the University?; and 3) How does a community partner determine whether or not a partnership is successful? This chapter summarizes the answers to these questions, discusses the implications related to the findings of the study, recommendations, suggestions for future research, and general conclusions.

Relationships as the Cornerstone: A Review of the Research Questions

The research questions that guide this study broadly consider how participants 1) define and determine outputs, outcomes, and impact indicators for their partnerships with the University, 2) voice or advocate for the desired outputs and outcomes, and 3) determine whether or not a partnership is successful. A review of the research questions illustrates the importance and centrality of the participatory and relational components of a partnership between the University and community-based organizations. These findings build on previous studies by confirming the importance of the quality of the partnership, and demonstrating that a higher quality of relationship can help to address the imbalance of power by creating more space for community-based organizations to voice and advocate for their self-interest. As such, these findings have important implications for community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, and theory. The following section summarizes the findings, implications, and recommendations according to the research questions.

Research Question 1: How do community organizations define and determine outputs, outcomes, and impact indicators for community-university partnerships?

There is no clear process by which participants determined what the outputs, outcomes, and impact indicators are or should be for their partnerships with the University. Most participants provided ideas of what the outcomes, outputs, and impact indicators are for their specific organization, but still lacked clarity. The outputs, outcomes, and impact indicators are directly connected to understanding the organization's self-interest, which is a key component of the framework. Understanding

self-interest, resources, and assets are a primary step towards identifying the mutual self-interest shared with another organization (the University, in this case) (Eichler, 2007).

Per the conceptual framework, with the mutual self-interest(s) identified, a collaborative partnership can move forward in making change.

Participants were focused on the work of establishing and maintaining a relationship, in large part because the University did not put forth equal effort in establishing and maintaining partnerships. Because the onus of forging and maintaining a partnership is on the community partner, defining the outputs, outcomes, and impacts for the partnership were overshadowed. This dynamic is indicative of a power differential that needs to be address in order to create more democratically engaged partnerships. If desired outputs, outcomes, and impacts are not identified for each partnership, it will be hard to measure what difference the partnership made. This makes understanding the cost-benefit of sustaining a partnership difficult for both the University and the community-based organization. As such, the University needs to take steps towards being a better, more collaborative partner, and community-based organizations should determine what their ideal outputs, outcomes, and impacts are for each partnership with the University. Clarity on what the organization wants out of the partnership will help them better advocate for their desired outputs and outcomes.

One element that was unexpected in the participants' responses was the importance of the quality of the relationship between the community-based organization and the University. When asked about indicators of success and outcomes and outputs (ideal and actual), a number of participants spoke about the quality of the relationship

between their organization and the University, alongside programmatic outputs and outcomes. These qualities include characteristics like being mutually beneficial, reciprocal, and sustainable. These findings are aligned with and expand on the literature on qualities of an effective partnership (Afshar, 2005; Carney et al., 2011; Clay et al., 2012; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Tryon et al., 2009; Worrall, 2007). What the findings from this study contribute is a deeper understanding of how these qualities are defined, the importance of quality relationships, and how moving towards defining and achieving desired outputs and outcomes are dependent on such a relationship. Namely, findings from this study further define what it means to be mutually beneficial, equal, reciprocal, and how these qualities lend to a sustainable partnership. This indicates that while programmatic outputs and outcomes are important, the participants see the relationship as a key element. This is especially poignant when it comes to questions about how to measure impact of community-university partnerships. As demonstrated by the findings, building a quality partnership is both a means and ends: participants identified the quality of the partnership as an indicator of success, ideal and actual output or outcome, and original goal of the partnership. Measuring the outputs and outcomes of a partnership cannot happen if the relationships between the University and the community-based organizations are not a central focus, and the quality of the partnership should also be considered in assessing the impact of a partnership.

This question about how to measure impact is prevalent on the MWU campus and is represented in the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, a sought-after

designation for MWU. The University needs to pay more attention to building and maintaining relationships with community-based organizations, as this will help the balance the power differential between community partners and the University, and create space for clarity in how to measure outputs, outcomes, and impacts of their various partnerships. These findings also hold implications for the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Research Question 2: How does the community partner advocate or voice what outputs and outcomes are important for their organization when establishing and maintaining a partnership with the University?

The majority of the participants noted that they held the bulk of the responsibility in establishing and maintaining their partnership with the University. Because establishing and maintaining the partnership was central, advocating and voicing desired outputs and outcomes were secondary. Through the lens of the conceptual framework, this highlights that the partnerships with the University reinforce the imbalance of power, with the University holding the majority of the power. First, the responsibility of establishing and maintaining a partnership with the University is unequally held by community-based organization. Second, because a significant amount of energy is going towards establishing and maintaining, the community-based organization is essentially silenced with regards to advocating and voicing priorities for the partnership.

Only three participants mentioned future plans for aligning their respective organizations' missions with University partnership opportunities. All three had long-standing partnerships through the College of Education, with two of the three having

institutionalized partnerships through internships and/or student-teacher placements. These examples of institutionalized partnerships and a focus on future plans imply that advocating for and voicing what outputs and outcomes are important for the community-based organization happens separately from establishing a partnership. Advocating for and voicing desired outputs and outcomes becomes more of a focus when maintaining the partnership. In other words, step one is to make the connection and begin building a partnership; step two is to begin discussing desired outputs and outcomes. In contrast, a truly democratically engaged partnership would embody identifying the common interests and goals in a collaborative, relational manner (Dewey, 1916; Eichler, 2007; Freire, 1985; Green & Haines, 2012; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). However, these findings also imply that there is more space for the organization to voice and advocate for the outputs and outcomes that matter to them when the University fully engages, or is an equal partner in maintaining the partnership. Through the lens of the conceptual framework, this indicates that the University does not fully embody or strive to be in democratically engaged partnerships.

There is an obvious power differential with the community-based organizations holding the majority of the responsibility of establishing and maintaining partnerships with the University. Participants see the University as having an indifferent posture towards engaging with the community, at best. At worst, this stance comes across as disinterested and arrogant. All of the participants saw the University as having resources that could benefit their respective organizations, and they saw the University as holding potential for synergistic partnership that would benefit their constituents and University

students. The current power differential contributes to a culture amongst community-based organizations of focusing on creating a partnership with the University, over the consideration of measurable outputs and outcomes. This has the potential to reinforce a deficit model in which community-based organizations are content with getting some level of attention or reciprocity from the University, rather than measuring if a partnership with the University is yielding positive outcomes for the mission and programs of the organization. Presumably sharing equal responsibility in establishing and maintaining the partnership will help to address this power differential between the University and the community-based organizations. Several studies point towards how reciprocity in the partnership helps to break down imbalances of power and privilege (Afshar, 2005; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Worrall, 2007). If the University is as concerned with the relational aspect of the partnership, there will be more space for the community-based organizations to voice what outputs and outcomes are important for them. This will also help the University address the ongoing question of how to measure the impact on the community.

Research Question 3: How does a community partner determine whether or not a partnership is successful?

As previously noted, a major theme in the findings is the importance of the relational aspects of partnering. Participants want stronger, sustainable partnerships with the University in the hopes that these partnerships will yield a benefit for their organization and constituents. These findings are aligned with previous studies that indicate a main incentive for participating in community-university partnership is the

potential for increased capacity for the community-based organization (Bell & Carlson, 2009; Afshar, 2005; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Worrall, 2007). When asked about indicators of a successful partnership, fifteen participants talked about having a sustained, integrated, mutually beneficial partnership with the University. Sustained, integrated partnerships were defined as being built into the mutual programming, and with a continual presence. This was envisioned as the partnership being built into the program curriculum and continues to grow and evolve with both organizations. Mutual benefit was envisioned as achieving goals for both organizations. Six noted receiving positive feedback from the University (student and/or faculty) is an indicator of success. Other areas that demonstrate success are related to improved programmatic outcomes, increased organizational capacity, benefit to the greater community, and future employment of student volunteers. These findings help to further define the characteristics of a meaningful relationship by using the components of the conceptual framework. This includes being mutually beneficial, collaborative, and change-oriented. Further, findings reinforce the centrality of building meaningful relationships demonstrating that the relational aspects are both a means and an end for community-based organizations. As with the conceptual framework, which seeks to create positive, sustainable, engaged change, embodying participatory and relational components is required when establishing and maintaining a partnership (Dewey, 1916; Eichler, 2007; Freire, 1985; Green & Haines, 2012; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). As MWU and other institutions of higher education seeking to be more engaged with the community consider how to measure or understand the success of a partnership, it will be important to consider the relational

aspects. In tandem with this, institutions of higher education and MWU must become more participatory in their partnerships with community-based organizations.

The thread throughout the findings of this study is the importance of building and maintaining relationships, and highlighted how the quality of the partnership can help to address imbalances of power within the partnership. Findings from this study build on previous studies by demonstrating that the participatory and relational elements are factors in the perceived success of a partnership, a gateway to being able to better measure and assess the difference made by the partnership, and a means of rebalancing the power differential between the University and the community-based organization. The findings from this study hold important implications for community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, programs and policies that support community engagement, and theory. The following sections discuss the implications and recommendations for each of these categories.

Implications & Recommendations for Community-Based Organizations

For community-based organizations, the primary findings show that participants easily identified their organization's assets, self-interest, and contributions to the campus and the community. Beyond this, participants identified the assets of the University, and ways they could build synergistic partnerships that could have broad, transformative change for multiple stakeholders. Participants had a harder time articulating and defining the desired and actual outputs, outcomes, and impact indicators. However, it was clear that the quality of the partnership was a key component for participants. These findings demonstrate the importance of understanding and voicing the assets, resources, and self-

interest of the community-based organization. Without this grounding, it will be all too easy for the community-based organizations to operate out of a deficit model, and lose sight of the cost-benefit for the organization.

Creating partnerships: Understanding resources, assets, and self-interest.

Analyzing the participants' responses illustrated how simple collaborations can work even in a partnership that is not fully rooted in each of the five components of the Framework. These components are 1) understanding the resources and assets of the community, 2) participation and relationships are central to the process, 3) collaborative and seeking to understand the mutual self-interest of those involved, 4) addressing the imbalance of power, and 5) is change-oriented. Collaborations without the five components can work, but may not be sustainable, or transformative. Both the community-based organization and the University needs mindful of the components in order to have a strong, synergistic partnership. That is to say, a partnership that is dynamic, growing, and benefitting the greater community. The change work needed for this to happen falls largely on the University, which will be discussed in the following section.

In the practice of asset-based community development and consensus organizing, identifying the resources and assets brought by each organization or entity is critical (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). Participants easily identified the resources and assets their organization brought to a potential partnership with the University. Yet, participants expressed feeling like the University did not recognize these assets or resources. Studies echo this, noting the importance of valuing the expertise of the community (Carney et al.,

2011; Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Miron & Moely, 2006). This pattern of not recognizing or valuing what the community-based organization bring to the partnership increases the the imbalance of power and exclusion. Continued, it could reinforce a deficit-based way of thinking, and create some dissonance in the organization embracing its own assets. This may result in the organization taking whatever they can get, or partnering with the University without considering the cost-benefit.

Issues around power need to be addressed predominately by the University, but some actions can be taken by the community-based organizations to help push against these imbalances of power. Community-based organizations seeking to partner with the University should consider the assets and resources they bring, and give voice to these strengths when forging partnerships with the University. For example, in the case of Outdoor Explorers, participants identified the organizational assets of providing training and exposure a variety of professions to University students through their internship programs. As Outdoor Explorers seeks to create more partnerships with the University, they can leverage these assets by highlighting that students enrolled would receive hands-on training in nonprofit management, outdoor education, and curriculum building. This positions Outdoor Explorers as the expert in the field, and better positions them to define what qualities they're looking for in students, or how the University can contribute in a meaningful way to the partnership.

Understanding the assets, resources, and self-interest will help the community-based organizations carve out partnerships that are mutually beneficial. Using the example above, Outdoor Explorers should also consider what are their short- and long-

term goals, and how could a student or faculty member support these goals. Continued understanding of the University's self-interests will also benefit community-based organizations looking to partner. Continuing with the example of Outdoor Explorers, the assets are experiential learning and professional training, and the self-interest is curriculum development. Who on campus may be interested curriculum development for outdoor education? There could be the interest convergence, or mutual self-interest, between Outdoor Explorers and the College of Science, or a specific faculty member who is studying outdoor education. Having a firm understanding of what the community-based organization can bring to the partnership and what they hope to get out of it will help in determining and advocating for the desired outputs and outcomes of the partnership.

Defining outputs, outcomes, and impact indicators. Participants did not clearly define or differentiate between outputs, outcomes, and impacts. The lack of clarity could be due to the way questions around these topics were asked, but the finding is important none the less. What surfaced from the questions about ideal, desired, and actual outputs and outcomes, and indicators of a successful partnership, is the importance of the quality of the partnership between the community-based organization and university. This included attributes such as being mutually beneficial, or a partnership that continues to grow, and building a stronger relationship with the University. These findings indicate that while outputs and outcomes are important, they are more easily defined and achieved when the partnership is mutually beneficial, equal, and sustainable. With the example of Outdoor Explorers, the quality of the partnership was a top priority for the ideal outputs

and outcomes, the original goals of the partnership, and indicator for success. As such, participants from Outdoor Explorers felt the actual outputs and outcomes were most closely aligned with broader impact on the community. This indicates that clarity on the outputs and outcomes will lead towards achieving desired impact.

Community-based organizations seeking to partner with an institution of higher education need to continue to stay grounded in understanding and voicing the assets and resources they bring to these partnerships. Without clearly defined outputs and outcomes, it will be impossible to measure what difference these partnerships are making. Being clear on organization's assets and desired outputs and outcomes helps to lay the foundation for voicing and advocating for what is important for the organization. This also helps with clarity on the cost-benefit of participating in the partnership. Being able to measure and understand the benefit and costs of a partnership will help community-based organizations protect the often scarce resources and mission-aligned programming. These implications and recommendations will help community-based organizations as they partner with institutions of higher education. In turn, there are a number of implications and recommendations for institutions of higher education towards improving partnerships with community-based organizations.

Implications and Recommendations for the University

A salient issue throughout the study pertains to the pathways of engagement within a University. Participants identified social and infrastructure barriers that made accessing and partnering with the University challenging. An overarching element to these challenges is that the participants did not see the University, as a whole, as a good

partner. Findings point to a need for the University and institutions of higher education to identify as a community partner (rather than a solitary institution), and create clearer pathways so that community-based organizations are more easily able to forge partnerships with the University. The purpose of the study was to explore and understand how community partners understand and communicate outputs and outcomes of their partnership with the University. Alongside the salient issues mentioned above, what emerged from the study is potential shifts in theory to better understand what components are needed to strengthen a partnership towards making change that better serves the organizations and the community.

Doing with: Developing a partner identity. As a whole, the University was not seen as a good partner. Some of these sentiments were connected to the perception that the University sees itself as “better than”, and not seeing partnerships community-based organizations as something that could benefit the University. As noted by Carney et al. (2011), there should be a sense of co between the community partner and the university for the partnership to be effective. This is also in line with the practices of democratically engaged partnerships (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). While many participants noted their one-on-one relationships at the University were good, overall, they did not see the University as open or willing to partner. In short, participants felt that University sees itself as only having resources. This posture from the University creates challenges in addressing the imbalances of power and building meaningful partnerships. Based on participant feedback, the University needs to develop and embrace a partner identity.

Findings from this study mirror the findings reported through a number of studies on effective partnerships. Effective partnerships are centered on a relationship and there is a true sense of partnership with both parties taking on responsibility and authority (Afshar, 2005; Carney et al., 2011; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Leisey, Holton, & Davey, 2012; Miron & Moely, 2006; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Worrall, 2007). Findings from this study further define what a quality partnership looks like, and confirm that a quality relationship between members of the University and the community-based organization is vital to creating and sustaining a partnership. Though the majority of the participants noted challenges in creating and maintaining a relationship with members of the University, they expressed the desire and need for these types of connections. Participants also noted the desire for the University to be a partner that contributes equally to the partnership. Findings confirm the importance of building co-relationships between community-based organizations and institutions of higher education and extends findings from previous studies by demonstrating how a quality partnership creates space for community-based organizations to voice and advocate for their self-interest.

Developing an identity as a true partner means exemplifying what the research shows about qualities of an effective partnership (covered in Chapter Two). This includes things like listening to the community, communication, respect, and reciprocity. These relational characteristics were mentioned throughout participant narratives. To this end, MWU (and others like it) can consider ways to support individual faculty and staff in their community engaged efforts. This could include increased training and awareness-building on qualities of an effective partnership, rewards and recognition for engaged

faculty who exemplify democratically engaged partnership, and increased value on community engagement as an institution. As seen from participant feedback, the perception of the University is built on individual relationships and larger systemic actions of the University. Recognizing and rewarding democratically engaged partnerships helps to foster the ethos of becoming a true, equal partner.

Connected to these ideas, the University must recognize the community-based organizations bring a wealth of expertise and assets that can benefit the University, as well as the greater community. Recognizing the assets and expertise of the community is highlighted in the theories and methods of asset-based community development, consensus organizing, and democratic engagement (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Green, 2011; Green & Haines, 2012; Eichler, 2007; Robinson & Green, 2011; Saltmarsh et al. 2009; Stoecker, 2003; Stoecker & Beckman, 2009). Honoring and valuing the expertise community-based organization bring to a partnership with the University helps to balance some the power differentials that were noted in the findings and in other studies (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2005). Overlooking the expertise of the community-based organizations can reinforce a view that the community is a laboratory, which feeds into Freire's (1970) critique of the banking model and increases the issues around power and exclusion. Findings from this study demonstrate how a lack of partner identity adds to the perception of the university being separate, isolated, and positioned as 'better than'.

Recognizing that the University is part of the community, and on equal footing with other community-based organizations will help address some of the imbalance of

power (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). As posited earlier using the conceptual foundations of Freire (1970), the University has positioned itself as the ‘one with knowledge’ and the partnerships with the community tend to fall into the banking model. With Dewey’s (1916) theories in mind, this is creating and maintaining a social norm that will continue to be replicated until the voices of the community-based organizations are heard and they are seen as “co” (Freire, 1970). As such, the University’s engagement with the community, and thus, the fulfillment of the public good aspect of their mission, will fall short of true democratically engagement partnerships. Such partnerships are becoming the standard for community engagement in higher education, as noted by the revival of civic education (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, n.d.; Boyer, 1996; Hartley, 2009; Mehaffy, 2005; National Taskforce of Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012) and the emergence of the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, which asks if the community has a voice in the planning of community engagement efforts (Driscoll, 2008; Weerts & Sandmann, 2010; Swearer Center, 2017).

When the University is able to see and honor the resources and assets of the community-based organizations (and its members), the partnership between the two will be more equal. Findings from this study and others that focus on the partnership as the unit of analysis point towards a need for equal partnerships between the institution of higher education and community-based organizations. As part of this shift, the University must create clear pathways of engagement for community-based organizations.

Pathways of engagement. Participants noted the ways in which their organization could be more prepared, and organized, to effectively partner with the University. And, participants clearly stated that while the personal relationships meet a level of success once they have been initiated, the University as a whole lacks the infrastructure to support partnerships with community-based organizations. While one may gain access through a social connection, the turnover of faculty, staff, and students complicates the ability to grow and maintain the partnership. In short, one-on-one social connections are the building blocks of a partnership, and the partnership cannot grow in a transient environment if there are no other means to support the partnership. The University cannot begin to engage partnerships that are participatory and relational if those on the outside cannot figure out how to access the people and the resources within the University. Creating a defined path for community-based organizations to engage with the University would help eliminate the confusion experienced by participants. This defined starting point could help potential and current community partners know where the potential partnership points are located within the University. The University infrastructure needs to be reconfigured in a way that clears a path for community-based organizations to access and establish partnerships. Likewise, there may be infrastructure changes that community-based organizations can make to improve efforts in accessing and establishing a partnership with the University. This could mean creating an office or center for community partnerships, or centralizing community engagement efforts into one office. The University could also create a cohesive community engagement committee that includes representation across campus and the community. Or, my

simply, create a page on their website that clearly states how organizations can access the University and forge partnerships. These changes will begin to address some of the imbalance of power experienced by the community partners, and help manage the barriers to partnering with the University.

As noted in the study, participants identified social and infrastructure barriers to accessing the University, and there was an overwhelming feeling that it was the community-based organization's responsibility to maintain the partnership. In addition to shifting the ethos of the University to develop and embrace an identity as a community partner, the University needs to implement an infrastructure that allows community-based organizations to better understand how they can connect to the University in meaningful ways. The conceptual framework guiding this study is rooted in being participatory and relational, yet it is clear from the findings that the participants believed the University does not make space for relationships and participation with the community. There are a number of practical steps the University could take to help create a space that facilitates relationship building with the community. This includes moving towards a centralized model of community engagement and making engagement efforts more transparent.

In reviewing relevant literature and over 100 institutions of higher education that have the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, Welch and Saltmarsh (2013) found a centralized office for community engagement was a common, and recommended practice. These community engagement offices or centers oversee all institution community engagement efforts, which includes curricular, co-curricular, and partnership functions (Welch & Saltmarsh, 2013). As represented by the data, MWU

engages with the community in many ways, across many areas of the University. Mostly commonly, this is through their Student Engagement Office, Service-Learning Office, and Internships Office, but as indicated by the data, engagement also happens with specific faculty, departments, and students. In short, there is no centralized process for how the community and the University connect. From the community-based organization perspective, the University is a somewhat closed, highly intricate system. To gain access requires a lot of work on behalf of the community-based organization. Organizations spend a lot of time trying to understand the system and build relationships. These barriers put the community partner in the position of needing to figure out the University's internal system, thus creating a sense of exclusion and increases the power differential. This further promotes the image of the University as the ivory tower, an entity that is separate from the community, rather than part of the community. The University should consider centralizing engagement efforts, such as instituting a center for community engagement or a center for community partnerships. The University could also put resources towards marketing to increase transparency on what is going on at the University and how the community can partner. Regular community engagement communications supported building the relationships between members of the campus and community-based organizations (Welch & Saltmarsh, 2013).

Implications & Recommendations for Community Engagement Support Systems

The data from this study points to a need for institutions of higher education and community-based organizations to focus on building those relational aspects in order to better measure or understand the difference being made by such partnerships. This holds

important findings for organizations and systems that support and promote higher education community engagement. Support systems provided through the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement and Campus Compact lead the way in how institutions of higher education engage with the community. Processes for recognition, such as the community engagement classification, could do more to put relational aspects of partnering at the center of measurement and recognition. Organizations and programming, such as Campus Compact, could be more inclusive and mindful of the community partner perspective towards modeling democratically engaged partnerships.

For example, the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement requires institutions to report on the impact of the university on the community, and how the community's voice is integrated into community engagement efforts. The data demonstrates that impact is not easily measured without first considering the relational aspects of the partnership, further the quality of the partnership is just as important as the intended impact. The Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement application currently asks institutions to describe how they attend to mutuality and reciprocity, but it does not appear until page 15 in the section on Outreach and Partnerships (Swearer Center, 2017). If questions about partnerships appeared sooner, it would communicate a higher priority. Further, the nomenclature of "outreach" runs counter to democratically engaged partnerships as it implies doing for rather than with the community.

Continuing with the example of the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, the application asks if the community has a voice in the community engagement planning efforts and provides a space to explain how this is done,

emphasizing elements like reciprocity (Swearer Center, 2017). This demonstrates that the community partner voice is valuable, which can help institutions of higher education see the value and importance of involving community partners in institutional processes. It would add value to the field if in addition to asking these questions, the Swearer Center (which oversees the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement) and parallel organizations provided more opportunities for higher education professionals to learn how to do this through using something like the conceptual framework presented in this study.

Similarly, Campus Compact could shift programming to more inclusively support community-based organizations seeking to partner with institutions of higher education. Currently, programming is centered on institutions of higher education. Awards and recognition opportunities are for students and faculty, there is support for building campus civic engagement, and funding for institutions of higher education to develop “small-scale, short-term experiments” that can expand the field of community engagement (Campus Compact, 2018). Campus Compact also recently launched a professional credentialing program for community engagement professionals. The program provides training and competency development for higher education professionals (Campus Compact, 2018). What is largely lacking in the Campus Compact offerings is support for community-based organizations. To provide more inclusive programming, Campus Compact could replicate the opportunities provided to higher education institutions and professional, but with a focus on community-based organizations seeking to partner in meaningful ways. For example, fellowships and

awards for nonprofit leaders; infrastructure support towards building meaningful partnerships with institutions of higher education; funds that put money in the hands of nonprofits instead of institutions of higher education; a professional credentialing program for nonprofit leaders. By expanding the support services to community-based organizations, Campus Compact could support leadership and capacity growth on both sides of the partnership, which models the principles of democratic engagement and creates space for community-based organizations to be part of the conversation.

Towards Understanding Synergistic Partnerships: Theoretical Considerations

The Framework used built on Dewey and Freire's ideas of education as democracy, democratic engagement, and principles from asset-based community development and consensus organizing. Combined, the framework provides five components that can serve as guides or indicators of an impactful partnership.

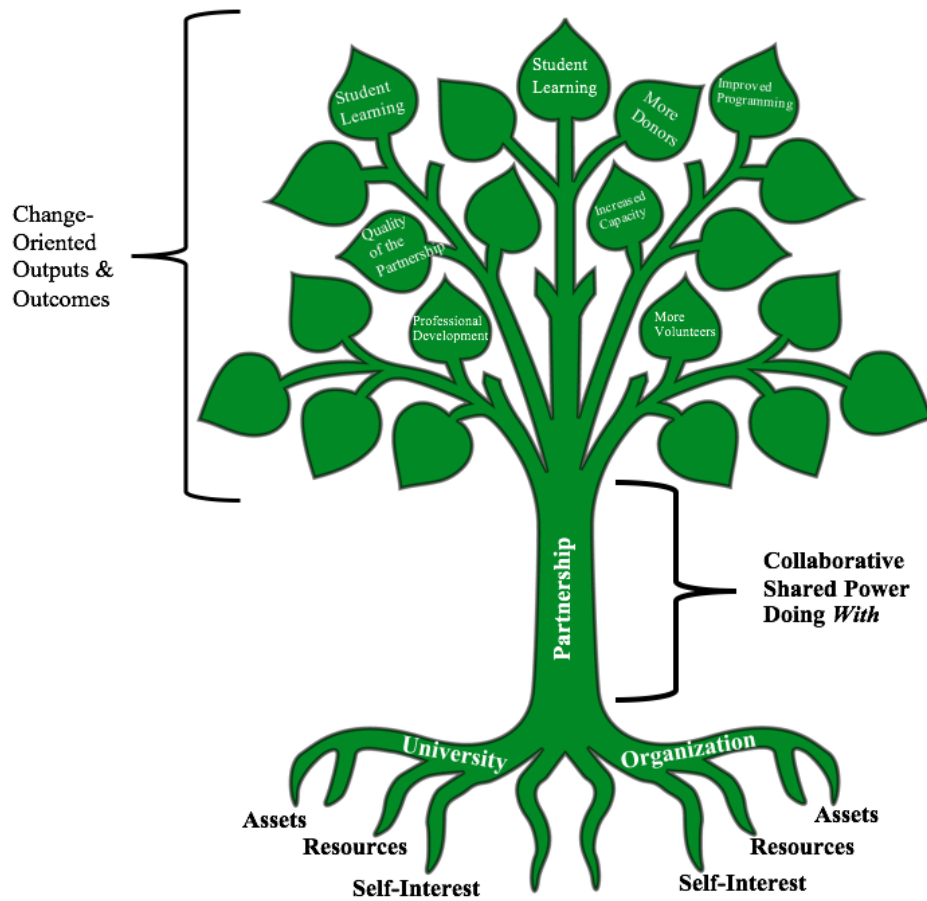
Participants who felt the most satisfied with their partnership with the University had a strong relationship with at least one person at the University. This finding is in line with the literature on qualities of an effective partnership (Afshar, 2005; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Leisey, Holton, & Davey, 2012; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Worrall, 2007). Throughout the cases, participants identified qualities and strategies that either supported or could increase support for their partnership(s) with the University.

These qualities and strategies are in line with the conceptual framework that is rooted in democratic engagement, and focuses on creating change through asset-based development and consensus organizing. The guiding principles of the framework, and the findings from this study indicate that a synergistic partnership is the ideal. That is to say,

a partnership that creates system-wide change and benefits all stakeholders involved. Based on the findings, I hypothesize that the strength of the partnership and its ability to become synergistic is dependent on developing each of the guiding principles of the framework. Figure 5.1 illustrates how the conceptual framework can be operationalized.

Figure 6.1

Components Needed for a Synergistic Partnership



One of the participants used the metaphor of creating roots in order to build partnerships. Their words helped to visually represent how the conceptual framework can be operationalized. In Figure 6.1, the roots (assets, resources, and self-interest) of a university and organization are grounded separately. They come together to form a partnership that is collaborative and equal, and then produce change-oriented outputs and outcomes. The leaves represent specific outputs and outcomes that were noted by the participants. In this illustration, each organization each organization is grounded in the assets and resources they offer to the community, as well as what components are needed to further their mission/goals. In other words, each organization needs to identify their self-interest. What is their ideal end goal? The grounding of one's roots is a continual, evolving process; ideally, happening simultaneously. Once the roots are there, the organizations can begin to consider how they can collaborate to create a synergistic, change-oriented partnership. Implicit in this process are the qualities of an effective partnership that lend itself to minimizing and addressing the imbalance of power within the relationship. These individual and collective processes should be iterative and evolving as the organizations grow separately and together.

Implications for Understanding Quality of the Partnership

The findings from this study expand on previous studies by further defining what makes a partnership successful and the characteristics of a quality partnership. Tryon et al. (2009) refer to communication and relationships as “the heart of partnership” (p. 96), and many studies have noted the qualities of an effective partnership include mutual benefit, reciprocity, equality, and sustainability (Carney et al., 2011; Clay et al., 2012;

Ferman & Hill, 2004; Gelmon et al., 1998; Leiderman et al., 2002; Tryon et al., 2009; Worrall, 2007). This study confirms these findings while providing a deeper understanding of how these qualities are operationalized, and the connectedness of these questions in building a successful partnership. Findings imply that the qualities of an effective or successful partnership have a somewhat cyclical nature, as they are both a means and an end for partnering. For many, improving the quality of the partnership was identified as a desired and actual outcome, an original goal, and indicator of success. This indicates that the process of partnering is just as important as other programmatic outputs and outcomes. This is especially important for institutions of higher education and the community engagement efforts that support them, as it helps to re-center the conversation of ‘how do we measure impact’ to ‘how do we have a quality partnership’.

In using the conceptual framework to analyze the data, it was clear that the majority of the responses fit into at least one of the five components. The relational and participatory component had the largest quantity of codes, yet none of the research questions were directly related to this component. With the exception of the focus on assets and resources component, the participatory and relational component was connected to all of the other components. The relational aspects are required for collaborating through mutual self-interest, to address imbalances of power, and to create partnerships that synergistic. This demonstrates the centrality and importance of the relational aspects of partnering between the campus and the community. In light of this, universities, faculty, community engagement professionals, and the organizations and

systems that support them need to consider how the relational aspects can remain centralized, and discover ways to measure and understand these elements.

Suggestions for Future Study

This study examined the perspectives of twenty-two individuals, representing six education-focused community-based organizations that partner with one university. The study makes strides towards elevating and centralizing the voice of community-based organizations partnered with institutions of higher education, and provides insights on how the landscape of higher education needs to shift in order to better understand the difference made by partnerships with community-based organizations. The field of higher education community engagement needs to continue to seek to include and understand the voice and perspective of community-based organizations. As such, the following section outlines recommendations for future study.

First, this study looks specific at one community focus area. While the findings could be generalized for a variety of community-based organizations, an examination of different types of organizations will increase our understanding of community voice and perspective. Along with considering different types of organizations, intentionally including and focusing on different types of voices (e.g., organization position, gender, ethnicity, etc.) will further our understanding of the highly nuanced elements of higher education community engagement. In addition, repeating this study and including perspectives from members of MWU will also provide more insight on partnership matters.

Future studies should also consider community-based organizations located in cities with more than one institution of higher education. This research was conducted in an area with one university. A study located in a region with more than one university may also afford researchers to recruit participants directly from the community, rather than seeking a sample based on a university's roster of current community partners. Such a study may also illuminate whether or not having multiple partner options makes a difference in how community-based organizations voice and advocate for their desired outputs, outcomes, and impacts.

To bolster the efforts of creating clear pathways of engagement, a deeper study on how community-based organizations access and navigate institutions of higher education should be conducted. This was a major theme in the findings, and it would be interesting to understand how the findings shift based on university type, and/or organization type. Comparisons to how community-based organizations partner with non-higher education institutions could also help shed light on best practices that can be adopted by institutions of higher education.

Lastly, demographic information was left out of this study as a way to protect the identities of the participants. The field of community engagement will benefit from future studies including and analyzing demographic information alongside understanding community partner voice and perspective. A deeper look at these findings through the lens of race, gender, connection or affiliation with the university, and economic standing can provide more insight into the supports and challenges of creating and sustaining democratically engaged partnerships.

Conclusion

If institutions of higher education want to fulfill their public good mission through community engaged work, they must address the theories and concepts that guide their work, as well as their policies and practices. Findings illuminate what the community partners see as important areas for change within their field, and opportunities for the University to improve the ways in which they partner and assess community engagement efforts. Findings put a spotlight on the relational aspects of partner work, and provide important insight into partnership development for institutions of higher education and community-based organizations. Often times we want to jump to the end point of measuring the partnership impact, or seeing the benefits of a partnership, but what this study and others demonstrate is importance of the relationship between organizations. Institutions of higher education and organizations that promote community engagement must consider measuring the relationship alongside impact indicators. Co-defined and identifying impact indicators will be more easily accomplished with the relationship between the university and the community organization is central. Building up the importance of building the relational and social aspects of partnering will also help improve the pathways of engagement for community partners.

As demonstrated by this study, the relational components of partner work are intricately connected. Focusing on the relationship allows the organizations involved to collaborate in mutually beneficial ways that work to deconstruct imbalances of power and create change. A centralized focus on the relational aspects of partnering with

community-based organizations, will reinvigorate the call for higher education to participate in the transformation of our communities.

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Appendices

Appendix A – List of Community Partners

Organization	Focus Area	Curricular Partnership(s)	Co-Curricular Partnership(s)
Humane Society	Animals	ED 100	
Sierra Nevada SPCA	Animals		Yes
SPCA Thrift Store	Animals		Yes
Sierra Nevada Arts	Arts & Culture		Yes
International Center	Arts & Culture	SPA 405	
Little Theater	Arts & Culture	SEM 200	
Sierra Nevada Exploratorium	Arts & Culture	SEM 200	
Sierra Nevada Kiwanis Club	Community Development	SEM 200	Yes
Community Network	Community Development	ED 100, SPA 405, NDS 471	
Maxwell Elementary School	Education	SPA 405	
Coalition for Sierra Nevada Schools	Education	ED 100	Yes
Head Start	Education	CFS 231	
Desert Springs Elementary	Education	ED 100	
Mountain West Middle School	Education	ED 100	
Arts & Education	Education	SEM 200	
English Language Acquisition Tutors	Education	SPA 405	
Birch High School	Education	ED 100, SPA 405	
Undergrad Prep	Education	ED 100	
Jessie Elementary School	Education	SPA 405	
Mountain View Academy	Education	SCI 100, SCI 130, SPA 405	
STEM Tutors	Education	SEM 200	
STEM Academy	Education	ED 100	
Lifelong Learning Center	Education	GERS 201, ED 100	
Willow Glen High School	Education	ED 100	
Hurley Elementary School	Education		
Outdoor Explorers	Education	ED 100	
North High School AVID	Education	ED 100	
Northwest Middle School	Education	ED 100	
The Goddard School	Education	CFS 231	
Sierra Nevada School District	Education	ENGR 305, ED 100, SPA 405	
Sierra Nevada School District Volunteer Services	Education	ED 100	
Western Regional Science Fair	Education	SCI 130	
Memory Care	Elderly	GERS 201	

Sierra View Center	Elderly	GERS 201	
Lifelong Learning Center	Elderly	GERS 201	
University Center for Aging	Elderly	GERS 201	
Ages Continuum	Elderly	GERS 201	
County Senior Services	Elderly	GERS 201	
Regional Farming Initiative	Environment	SEM 200	
Environment Change	Environment	SEM 200	Yes
Sierra View Parks Care	Environment	SEM 200	Yes
Science and the Environment	Environment	SEM 200	
County Parks and Recreation	Environment		Yes
Community Food Pantry	Food Security	SEM 200	
Sierra Nevada Food Bank	Food Security		Yes
Urban Gardeners	Food Security	NDS 471	Yes
Immunization Advocacy	Health	SEM 200	
Children's Cancer Foundation	Health	ED 100	
Planned Parenthood	Health	SEM 200	
Catholic Charities	Homeless/Housing	SEM 200, NDS 471	Yes
Sierra Nevada Housing Authority	Homeless/Housing	GERS 201	
Sierra Nevada Initiative for Shelter & Equality	Homeless/Housing		Yes
Salvation Army	Homeless/Housing	COMM	Yes
Gospel Mission	Homeless/Housing		Yes
Homeless Community Care	Homeless/Housing	SEM 200	
The Resource Center	Homeless/Housing	SEM 200	
Volunteers of America Family Shelter	Homeless/Housing	SEM 200	
Sierra Nevada Library System	Literacy	SPA 405	
Recovery and Care Center	Recovery/Addiction	SEM 200; NDS 471	
Safe Haven	Social Services	SEM 200	
The Clothing Closet	Social Services	SEM 200	
Sierra Nevada CASA Foundation	Social Services		
Sierra Nevada Social Services	Social Services	SEM 200	
Down Syndrome Network of Sierra Nevada	Special Needs	SEM 200	
Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Sierra Nevada	Youth	SEM 200	Yes
Boys and Girls Club	Youth	SEM 200	Yes
Children's Community Resource Center	Youth	SPA 405	
Safe Kids Sierra Nevada	Youth	SEM 200	

Appendix B – Interview Protocol/Guide

The researcher will give a brief introduction of the study (to understand the community perspective in community-university partnerships). The questions below will serve as a guide, as the researcher will ask other relevant questions in a more conversational approach.

1. Tell me about your organization and your position within the organization.
2. What is your role in the partnership(s) between your organization and the University?
3. Who do you partner with at the university? And how is the partnership maintained?
4. What does your organization bring to the community?
5. What does your organization bring to the partnership with UNR?
6. How does your organization measure or understand if the needs of the community are being met?
7. What are the original goals of partnership? What have the outcomes been?
8. What are the ideal outputs and outcomes of this partnership for your organization?
9. Do you face any challenges or obstacles in forming and maintaining a partnership with the University?
10. What would you like to change about the process of establishing or maintaining the partnership?
11. How do you know if your partnership with the University is successful? What are some indicators or markers of success?

12. Do you have any advice for the University?

13. Is there anything I didn't ask that you would like to share?

Appendix C - Informed Consent Form

Cover Page

The study being conducted holds a two-fold purpose: 1) to help the University of [State], [City] better understand the perspectives of our community partners, and 2) is original research of the researcher, Stacey Muse, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of her doctoral program.

This study is approved by the Institutional Review Boards of the University of [State], [City] and the University of Denver. If you have any questions about this project or your participation, please feel free to ask questions now or contact Stacey Muse at 619.885.3774 or staceymuse@gmail.com at any time. You may also contact Dr. Judy Kiyama, the faculty sponsor, at Judy.Kiyama@du.edu.

You may ask about your rights as a research participant. If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about this research, you may report them (anonymously if you so choose) by calling the University of [State], [City] Research Integrity Office at 775.327.2368. You may also contact the University of Denver Human Research Protections Program by emailing IRBAdmin@du.edu or calling 303.871.2121 to speak to someone other than the researchers.

The data gathered from this study will benefit the University and the greater field of service-learning and community engagement. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

University of Denver
Consent Form for Participation in Research

Title of Research Study: Exploring the Community Perspective of Community-University Partnerships

Researcher(s): Stacey Muse, Doctoral Candidate, University of Denver

Study Site: [City, State]

Purpose

You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of this research is to understand the perspective of nonprofit organizations partnered with a university.

Procedures

If you participate in this research study, you will be invited to participate in a 60-minute interview. With your permission, the interview will be recorded. From there, the interview will be transcribed and returned to you for your approval. Participating in this study will require approximately two hours of your time (between the interview and transcription review).

Voluntary Participation

Participating in this research study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to continue with the interview for any reason without penalty or other benefits to which you are entitled.

Risks or Discomforts

Potential risks and/or discomforts of participation may include speaking candidly about your experiences partnering with university faculty and administrators. Participants may be concerned that such candor would jeopardize their partnership with the university. However, the information you provide will be held in strict confidence and measures will be taken to ensure your confidentiality.

Benefits

Possible benefits of participation include: improving current and future partnerships between your and other nonprofit organizations that wish to partner with a university. The results of this study will provide the larger field of higher education community engagement with valuable insight to the community partner experience and perspective.

Confidentiality

The researcher will use pseudonyms and maintain all files to keep your information safe throughout this study. Your individual identity will be kept private when information is

presented or published about this study. Data will only be accessible to the researcher, and kept in a locked file cabinet and/or a password-protected computer.

However, should any information contained in this study be the subject of a court order or lawful subpoena, the University of Denver might not be able to avoid compliance with the order or subpoena. The research information may be shared with federal agencies or local committees who are responsible for protecting research participants, including individuals on behalf of Stacey Muse.

Questions

If you have any questions about this project or your participation, please feel free to ask questions now or contact Stacey Muse at 619.885.3774 or staceymuse@gmail.com at any time. You may also contact Dr. Judy Kiyama, the faculty sponsor, at Judy.Kiyama@du.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns about your research participation or rights as a participant, you may contact the DU Human Research Protections Program by emailing IRBAdmin@du.edu or calling 303.871.2121 to speak to someone other than the researchers.

Options for Participation

Please initial your choice for the options below:

The researchers may audio record me during this study.

The researchers may NOT audio record me during this study.

Please take all the time you need to read through this document and decide whether you would like to participate in this research study.

If you agree to participate in this research study, please sign below. You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

Participant Signature

Date

Appendix D – Framework and Research Question Table

Framework Asset-based Community Development and Consensus Organizing	Design Qualitative, Case Study	Research Questions	Protocol Questions
Participation and Relational <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public participation is key • Centered on relationships • Doing <i>with</i> 	Data Collection (interviews) Sample Selection (length of partnership)		Tell me about your organization and your position within the organization. What is your role in the partnership(s) between your organization and the University? Who do you partner with at the university? And how is the partnership maintained?
Resource & Asset Identification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify resources in the community • Mapping/understanding assets 	Sample Selection Data Collection (review organizational materials)	How do community organizations define and determine outputs and outcomes for community-university partnerships? How does a community partner determine whether or not a partnership is successful?	What does your organization bring to the community? What does your organization bring to the partnership with UNR? How does your organization measure or understand if the needs of the community are being met?
Collaboration and Self-Interest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify common interests/goals towards creating strategies for change • Understand self-interest of stakeholders • Collaborative in understanding what issues are important and what people want to take on 		How do community organizations define and determine outputs and outcomes for community-university partnerships? How does the community partner advocate or voice what outputs and outcomes are important for their organization when establishing and maintaining a partnership with the University?	What are the original goals of partnership? What have the outcomes been? What are the ideal outputs and outcomes of this partnership for your organization?
Addressing Imbalances of Power <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus is on voice of voiceless • Seek to redistribute power 	Data Collection (review partnership materials)	How does the community partner advocate or voice what outputs and outcomes are important for their organization when establishing and maintaining a partnership with the University?	Do you face any challenges or obstacles in forming and maintaining a partnership with the University? What would you like to change about the process of establishing or maintaining the partnership?

Change-oriented

- Towards making change that better serves the community/institutions

How does a community partner determine whether or not a partnership is successful?

How do you know if your partnership with the University is successful? What are some indicators or markers of success?

Do you have any advice for the University?

Is there anything I didn't ask that you would like to share?

Appendix E – Focused and Axial Codes with Related Conceptual Framework

Components

Parent Code	No. of References	Sub-Code	Connection to Framework
Challenges	71	Infrastructure	Participatory & Relational/ Addressing Imbalance of Power
		University as True Partner	Participatory & Relational/ Addressing Imbalance of Power
		Social Connections Challenges Working with University Students	Participatory & Relational Participatory & Relational
Establishing & Maintaining	57	Infrastructure	Participatory & Relational
		Is the Responsibility of the Organization	Participatory & Relational/ Addressing Imbalance of Power
		Social Connections	Participatory & Relational
Indicators of Success	45	Benefit to the Community	Collaboration & Self-Interest
		Benefit to the Organization	Collaboration & Self-Interest
		Quality of the Partnership	Collaboration & Self-Interest
What Organization Brings to Partnership	43	Access & Awareness of Community	Focus on Resources & Assets
		Pipeline	Collaboration & Self-Interest
Ideal Outputs & Outcomes	43	Quality of the Partnership	Collaboration & Self-Interest
		Benefit to the Community	Collaboration & Self-Interest
		Benefit to the Organization	Collaboration & Self-Interest
		Pipeline	Collaboration & Self-Interest
Actual Outputs & Outcomes	38	Quality of the Partnership	Collaboration & Self-Interest
		Benefit to the Organization	Collaboration & Self-Interest
		Benefit to University Students	Addressing Imbalance of Power
Original Goals	35	Quality of the Partnership	Collaboration & Self-Interest
		Pipeline	Collaboration & Self-Interest
		Benefit to the Organization	Collaboration & Self-Interest
Advice for the University	31	Infrastructure	Participatory & Relational/ Addressing Imbalance of Power
		University as True Partner	Participatory & Relational/ Addressing Imbalance of Power
Accessing & Navigating	24	Infrastructure	Participatory & Relational/ Addressing Imbalance of Power
		Social Connections	Participatory & Relational
		Is the Responsibility of the Organization	Participatory & Relational/ Addressing Imbalance of Power