

**Journey to Building Community Partnerships
for Successful Service Learning**

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A core requirement for successful service learning is a successful community academic partnership. Although there is much literature on various aspects of service learning, including the impact of service learning on communities, there are few studies in the service learning literature that examine the components, stages, and dynamic nature of community academic partnerships. In the Fall 2004 Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning article, "Service-Learning Partnerships: Paths of Engagement", Dorado and Giles identified various characteristics and stages of partnerships that exist and evolve over time. One of the criterion they used for identifying successful partnerships is the description of a partnership that lasted more than two semesters and that the participants were willing to work together at least an additional time.

This workshop will present information on the evolution of a successful community academic partnership that has existed over two years, currently experiencing the excitement and learning of 16 service learning students, 2 faculty, and several program directors and managers from a multi county social service agency. This service learning partnership shows all signs of continuing and expanding. Each of the three

presenters, community partner; faculty, and service learning coordinator will present their perspective, role and responsibilities in the development, improvement, and maintenance of the partnership. Workshop participants will be involved in a very interactive and fun environment that provides the information and structure to identify key elements and steps to building successful service learning partnerships. Each participant will be given information for assessing their own partnerships. This information will be used by each participant to develop an action plan for building their own successful service learning partnership.