

May 2019

Living Learning Through Community Partnerships: Students' Voices

Katherine Richardson Bruna

Iowa State University

Linda Pei

Iowa State University

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Recommended Citation

Bruna, Katherine Richardson and Pei, Linda (2019) "Living Learning Through Community Partnerships: Students' Voices," *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*: Vol. 11 : Iss. 1 , Article 8.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/jces/vol11/iss1/8>

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STUDENT VOICES

Living Learning Through Community Partnerships: Students' Voices

The contributions to this issue's Student Voices section of *JCES* remind us of the powerful effect that lived experience has on learning. Despite the differences in the contexts they write about, the authors of both articles describe the insights gained through the opportunity to put into motion the academic content of their university education within the community space. Ultimately, these insights inspire broader realizations about their role in society, as well as the nature of knowledge and the research enterprise.

In the playfully titled "Twas a Thursday in Class," Pentecost, Willis, and Jenkins take on the serious subject of intimate partner violence and sexual assault. The undergraduate students' voices speak to how a service-learning opportunity at a community agency broadened their experience of a human sexuality course by providing the context for translating skills gained through training into implementation of practice. In the end, the authors attest to how this expanded learning context achieved their self-expansion, as they re-evaluate what "being helpful" means and come to understand the importance in their development of navigating both pain and joy.

Susnara, Morgan, and Curtner-Smith also playfully use swimming as a metaphor to help the reader grasp the important role played by their community-based partnership. In "Perceptions of a Sport-Based Youth Development Program: Swim to the Top," these authors attest to the crucial pairing of physical education and academic enrichment, while providing reflection on the connection between our own lives and learning and that of others whom we aim to serve. This reflexivity, as they discover, is a critical element of research, one most appreciated through the kinds of interaction community-based activity construes.

As you read these articles, we invite you to consider, if you have a teaching affiliation at a university, how you might provide these kinds of engaged learning and research experiences for your undergraduate and graduate students. And, if you are reading with a community affiliation, consider how the context of your work might bring substance to the otherwise constrained content of the university classroom. If we bridge to each other, we help students feel learning as living.



Dr. Katherine Bruna
Iowa State University
*Associate Editor,
Student and Community*



Dr. Linda Pei
Iowa State University
*Student Associate Editor,
Student and Community*