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Publication Date

1997-03-01

Working Paper 97-03

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March 1997

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Realizing the Potential of HUD's Community Outreach Partnership Center Program

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THE
UNIVERSITY-OAKLAND
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Introduction

The most important U.S. federal government effort to stimulate partnerships between government, universities, and community based organizations to address urban problems is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's five year demonstration Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) program, initiated in 1994. Under the COPC program HUD has awarded approximately $ 20 million to over fifty institutions of higher learning to allow them to form university/community partnerships. Universities use COPC funds for outreach and research assistance to city agencies and community-based organizations related to housing, economic development, community development, and social services. Whether or not the COPC program or related federal university/community partnership programs can be successfully institutionalized so that the type of university/community partnerships they have created will remain viable in the long term is uncertain.

The authors are associated with the Bay Area Community Outreach Partnership Center (BAYCOPC)--a consortium of San Francisco State University (SFSU), U.C. Berkeley, and Stanford University which was awarded a COPC grant in 1994. They have been active in university/community partnership activities in the Bay Area and in national discussions about ways to link government, universities, foundations, and communities.

This article will discuss the contribution university/community partnerships can make to the solution of urban problems, describe the COPC program's approach, illustrate COPC's potential based on SFSU and BAYCOPC experience, and advance a theoretical framework and operational suggestions for institutionalizing university/ community partnerships.

University/Community Partnerships And The Solution of Urban Problems

If universities, working in partnership with other institutions can address urban problems better or more cost effectively than federal agencies acting alone or with more traditional partners such as private industry and community based organizations, university/ community partnerships are justified and should be institutionalized.

Programs in which universities merely study their communities, perform studies with no specific client in mind, generate academic research based on faculty interests for publication in scholarly journals, or engage in top down programs to help their communities without involving neighborhood institutions in decision making are, as one author put it, "not well advised" (Szantan, 1981).

While a systematic answer to whether or not the COPC program has succeeded must await a scheduled national evaluation of the program, there is a growing body of academic literature (Anderson and Smith, 1993, Giamatti, 1981, Greiner, 1994, Rubin, 1995; Sauser, 1991) describing successful university/community partnerships. Preliminary evidence suggests that COPC-type partnerships can be important additions to other urban problem solving institutions (Rubin: 1995; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1995; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1996).

Federal agencies should involve other institutions in federal programs if and when the institutions can bring to bear unique attributes and special competencies which will further the agencies' agendas. In the case of urban problem solving, university/community partnerships between HUD and other federal agencies involved in urban affairs only make sense if the partnership can carry out urban programs better than the existing agencies working alone or with private sector, CBO, faith-based, union and other traditional partners.

Partnerships between HUD and private industry, CBOs, unions and faith-based institutions are now well institutionalized and have unquestionably HUD operations. Local governments often possess understanding of local conditions and legitimacy with local political constituencies which geographically remote federal agencies not directly accountable to local voters may not possess. Private industry can often produce better assisted housing at lower cost than local Public Housing Authorities. Some faith-based organizations effectively use religious networks in the delivery of housing and social services in ways the federal government never could. Local community based organizations may be able to understand and address neighborhood needs and tap local leadership more effectively than federal bureaucrats. The key to partnering with each of these institutions is understanding the institutions strengths and partnering to take advantage of them.

As new players in urban affairs, universities capacities are imperfectly understood--by HUD, other partners, and often by the universities themselves. Universities have unique strengths and also limitations. To succeed as they venture into urban affairs universities must play to their strengths and not undertake activities for which they are less well qualified than other local players.

Universities can bring resources and competencies to local housing and community development activities which other actors may not possess A prime advantage many universities can offer is *neutrality*--detachment from the local political fray. Other advantages may include *technical expertise*, *student idealism*, and a *capacity to innovate*. Universities may be able to broaden the definition of community development to include cultural supplements such as English language teaching and the arts.

Universities may be particularly well suited for specific roles--*convenor*, *planner*, and *capacity builder*. Compared to overworked city staff and CBO personnel they are uniquely qualified to organize conferences and information exchanges. With the academic emphasis on rational decision-making they may offer support for *planning* and *policy analysis*. Faculty with expertise in administrative or policy areas can help develop the capacity of local institutions through *staff development*. Stable university partnerships can also provide *longevity*--outlasting terms of local elected officials or transitions in neighborhood leadership.

While these attributes give universities some distinct advantages as partners in solving problems and delivering services, creation of university/community partnerships has the potential to transform teaching and research and refocus university activities in ways which can lead to more systemic change. For many students involvement on the

front line working for a local community at a formative time in their lives can be a transformative experience, forcing them to confront their own values and the utility of their coursework. The value of forming the kinds of values and understandings direct community service provides can reshape future professionals--lawyers, architects, social workers, planners --so that they approach their profession in ways which will benefit their local community over their entire professional lives. Similarly the sometimes painful intersection between traditional "academic" research and community needs often works a profound change in the values of researchers. And the very act of partnering transforms universities as institutions to make them more responsive.

Universities have many limitations. Much research activity is too academic to be of direct use locally. Universities are not monolithic and their own urban agendas are not always benign from a community perspective. Activities of one part of a university such as a real estate acquisition arm aggressively acquiring property for campus expansion can harm communities and complicate relations between communities and faculty and staff pursuing unrelated community-serving functions. Many COPCs are wrestling with cultural barriers as well educated, stably employed faculty and upwardly mobile students work with community members who may have limited formal education, less income, and less secure jobs. Where there are racial and ethnic differences between university personnel and the communities they serve all parties need to learn to work together (Pang, 1993). Building partnerships for the long term requires patience, commitment, and engagement with messy processes and uncertain results. It requires of university faculty a different set of competencies than those instilled through Ph.D. training in academic research and teaching.

Communities are often ambivalent about involvement with universities for a combination of legitimate concerns and perceptions which may not be unjustified. Underfunded and overworked government agencies and CBOs need help and usually welcome additional personnel whenever they can make a contribution. Many communities recognize that professors of city planning, economics, architecture, social work, business, public administration and a host of other disciplines can contribute expertise the city or community based organizations may not possess. Communities usually welcome the energy and enthusiasm of idealistic students--particularly students from the community itself--so long as the students are sensitive to the communities and devote enough time to working with them that their contributions more than compensate for time agencies and CBOs spend supervising their work. Communities resent being merely "studied" or temporarily invaded by culturally different faculty and students with little or no knowledge about or real interest in the community beyond a course assignment or academic research project. Communities justifiably feel that they, not the university, have superior understanding of community issues and priorities. Successful partnerships must be built on mutual respect, equal status, and mutual give and take. Academics must divest themselves of their expert status and meet the community on level ground, willing to learn as well as to teach.

The Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) Program Approach

Former U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Henry Cisneros assumed a leadership role in involving universities in efforts to solve local community problems and is an eloquent spokesperson for university/community partnerships. The first in a series of occasional papers by Secretary Cisneros deals with the

university and the urban challenge and articulates a vision for much greater engagement of universities in partnerships to address urban issues (Cisneros, 1996). Under the leadership of Cisneros and HUD Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research Michael Stegman HUD organized an Office of University Partnerships (OUP) where all of the Department's university-related programs, including COPC, are now located.

COPC grants are made to universities or consortia of universities. COPC awards are in the form of two year grants. By law these grants can be as large as $ 750,000, but HUD has awarded smaller amounts (none larger than $ 580,000) in order to distribute limited funding as widely as possible. All first year COPC recipients except for institutions which received funding under HUD's joint community development program have received a third, terminal year "institutionalization" grant of $ 100,000.

COPC recipients must partner with institutions in their communities in ways left largely to the discretion of the university. Use of local advisory committee for university/community partnerships is important (Teitle, 1994) and COPCs must have a local advisory body, whose composition they define.

The embryonic community partnerships which HUD has created are far from institutionalized. The COPC program involves a tiny proportion of HUD funding. COPC is located within one thinly staffed office (The Office of University Partnerships) within one HUD office (Policy Development and Research) operating as a five year demonstration project with no assurance of continued funding.

While the fledgling OUP has made impressive strides in promoting the COPC idea within HUD, to other federal agencies, and elsewhere little staff time is available for these activities in addition to day-to-day program management. OUP has stimulated reflection on university/community partnership practice though bi-annual meetings of the COPC principal investigators, national specialized meetings, a national computer listserve, a world wide web homepage, peer review of grant proposals, this JPER symposium, and other information sharing activities.

The ideas of the federal government forming partnerships to further federal goals and funding universities to serve communities are not new. Federal support to land grant colleges has been instrumental in involving universities in rural communities and modernizing American agriculture since the 19th century. Federal partnerships to address urban problems have been important since the beginning of the New Deal (Chudakoff, 1994: 326-352). Federal/local housing and community development partnerships have existed for more than sixty years--long before the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development was created (Hays, 1993). The 1937 Housing Act institutionalized federal/local partnerships in which the federal government funded local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) operated by local government under State enabling legislation. In the 1960's federal/local partnerships were extended to involve private business, unions, churches, and nonprofit organizations, particularly in the construction and management of section 221(d)(3) and section 236 below market interest rate housing. And the emphasis on partnerships involving nonprofits has been further expanded in the 1980s and 1990s (Keyes *et al*, 1996).

As former HUD Secretary Cisneros points out, urban universities possess a wealth of intellectual and economic resources which they can bring to bear on problems in their communities (Cisneros, 1996). They are major employers and purchasers of local goods and services, repositories of intellectual talent, and the institution charged with shaping citizens of the future. As long-term, immobile institutions with fixed physical facilities their self-interest is intimately connected to the well being of their communities.

San Francisco State University University/Community Partnership Activities

San Francisco State University (SFSU) is a large, diversified urban university--the flagship institution in the California State University system. SFSU defines itself as "the city's university." Together with U.C. Berkeley and Stanford University SFSU was awarded a COPC grant in 1994. COPC funds augment a range of university/community partnership activities underway at San Francisco State. Broader activities of the entire BACOPC partnership are described elsewhere (Rubin, 1995; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1995). The following description illustrates how activities at San Francisco State play on the distinct advantages universities have.

San Francisco is a diverse city with intensely conflictual local politics (DeLeon, 1992). In this environment *neutral* analysis can help provide all actors factual information from which to debate their respective positions, raising the tone of political discourse. SFSU has a Public Research Institute (PRI) where faculty and students undertake surveys and public policy research. HUD COPC funds have augmented the SFSU Public Research Institute's ongoing program, permitting PRI to prepare analyses of census data, economic

studies, GIS maps, and other factual information for the Mayor's Office of Community

Development and the Mayor's Office of Housing. Two examples will help illustrate the

value of neutral analysis. SFSU Economics chair Michael Potepan and a student team

produced a study of the changing San Francisco economy and occupational structure--The

San Francisco Economic Roller Coaster--which has been widely used by economic

development and job training agencies and CBOs in the city (Potepan and Barbour, 1995).

This neutral analysis was an important background document for an "Economic Summit"

convened by the Mayor. The Director of the SFSU Urban Institute played a lead role in

designing the summit. SFSU convened a well attended regional meeting of city, agency,

and CBO personnel where Professor Potepan, the principal analyst of the Association of

Bay Area Governments and the Executive Director of San Francisco's leading micro-

enterprise training CBO lead discussions.

In addition to Professor Potepan's work the *technical expertise* of faculty, staff,

and students is well illustrated by another widely used study developed under the direction

of SFSU Political Science chair Richard Deleon on San Francisco's Changing

Demography and Social Needs as part of an assessment of the San Francisco Community

Development Block Grant program for the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Community

Development (DeLeon et al, 1995). DeLeon, staff and students associated with the PRI

prepared statistical analyses and maps useful for community development strategic

planning which have proved useful to MOCD, the city's Enterprise Community Program,

and much neighborhood planning in San Francisco. No office within San Francisco city

government has done comparable analysis. The combination of neutrality and sophistication has made this document a basic source document used by many organizations as the basis for public policy.

The COPC model stresses outreach; not research. Much of the work of SFSU and its COPC partners has involved communicating with local partners through a regional advisory committee, website, dissemination of written materials, conferences, and one-on-one communication with interested parties. Even more important is direct placement of students to support local planning and service delivery. University students bring vigor and *idealism* to their work. SFSU has used COPC funds to provide stipends to students in Urban Studies, Political Science, Public Administration, Economics, and Social Science to work directly with city agencies and CBOs. Students have staffed planning and policy work of the city's Mayor's Office of Community Development, Mayor's Office of Housing, Enterprise Community Program, and CBO housing, economic development, and job training activities. An example is work with the Visitation Valley Jobs, Training, and Education Center (VVJET). Visitacion Valley is a San Francisco Neighborhood undergoing renewal as a large foreclosed HUD property is demolished and new housing built and another large low rent public housing project is renovated. Despite it's share of urban problems the Visitaction Valley neighborhood has an excellent location, an attractive housing stock, a homeownership rate exceeding 50%, a diverse community including many new immigrants, neighborhood entrepreneurs, innovative school programs, and impressive youth activities. SFSU faculty and students have worked closely with neighborhood leaders to create VVJET and staff and support related institutions.

Universities capacity to innovate in urban affairs is well illustrated in the area of information technology. San Francisco city government lags far behind private industry, universities, and many other cities in its use of information technology. Under the director of SFSU computer science department chair Gerry Eisman the university has dedicated a server (called THECITY) for public use and organized students with technical expertise to work with city agencies and CBOs to set up computer systems and train staff to use them. This university program is called SFSUNET. Under a foundation grant SFSUNET trained staff of the region's homeless organizations and established the infrastructure for them to communicate with each electronically.

SFSU has defined outreach activities in support of community development broadly, with a *cultural component* that city agencies and CBOs may not be able to provide. For example in the Visitation Valley neighborhood university faculty teach English and direct a hip hop choir--activities which improve the quality of life of the neighborhood and build the skills and interpersonal confidence youth need to succeed.

Institutionalizing University/Community Partnerships

Scholars in the fields of organizational development and policy innovation have conducted a great deal of empirical research regarding innovation in private corporations (Drucker, Peter F., 1993) and government bureaucracies (Grady, 1992; National Performance Review, 1993; Osborne and Gaebler, 1992; Roberts, Nancy and Paula J. King 1996; Zegans, 1992) and there is a large body of literature regarding how to institutionalize positive changes in government programs (Yin, 1979; Van de Ven and Angle, 1989). The idea of "reengineering" organizations has been extended to the public sector (Libbey, 1994). The current administration is committed to "reinventing

government" (Kamensky, 1996) and a "blueprint" to reinvent the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development developed by ex-Secretary Cisneros (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1995a) modeled on Osborne and Gaebler's ideas and the recommendations of Vice-President Gore's National Performance Review is radically transforming the way in which HUD operates.

Drawing on this literature we define *institutionalization* to mean the continuation of successful COPC-style programs with access to secure and reliable funding well beyond the current level. True institutionalization would see the COPC model replicated in other federal agencies and the emergence of inter-agency government/university/community partnerships. Institution-alization implies inclusion of more total universities in COPC-type activities. It also implies maturation--the development of a shared national consensus on core aspects of successful partnership design and operational definitions of best practices. Given the variety of educational institutions and differences among communities the current COPC emphasis on flexible arrangements should be continued.

Institutionalizing COPCs: The National Level

The policy innovation literature stress the importance of involving *multiple stakeholders* in decision-making about innovation (Libbey, 1994). Many possible national level stakeholders have long term interests in resolution of the kinds of urban problems COPC is addressing. Among these are the Washington level of HUD and other federal agencies and national associations representing local government, universities, foundations, and communities.

Assuring continued funding for the program is an essential prerequisite to further development of COPC and related university/community partnership activities. Essential issues are how much federal funding, from what source, and in what form will be available for these activities in the future.

The current reinvention of federal domestic programs (National Policy Review, 1993; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1995a) poses both opportunities and dangers to any small, new federal government activity. The budgets of HUD and other federal domestic agencies are uncertain. Decision-making about how to spend federal funds is devolving to State and local governments. Block grants are replacing categorical grants. Why, it might be asked, should not university/community partnership activities be folded into community development block grants or other as yet to be devised large block grants as activities eligible for funding at the State or local level if--and only if--the universities successfully compete against other contenders for scarce funding in those arenas?

One answer is similar to the "infant industry" argument advanced by economists as a justification for special subsidies and tariffs to protect emerging domestic industries until they become strong enough to compete in the world economy. Competition for federal funds from city agencies and community based organizations which operate CDBG-or other block grant funded activities is intense and becoming more intense as the impact of domestic federal budget cuts and welfare reform ripples through the economy. Local competitors for block grant funding who have been in existence for many years are analogous to mature industries in the global economy. The have built up capacity and political relationships which give them an immediate advantage over university/community

partnerships in the short run. It is politically very difficult for local decision makers to reallocate funds from previously-funded groups to new university/community partnership activities. If university/community partnership activities were folded into block grants and did successfully compete at the local level there would be pressure to provide small amounts of funding, for a single year, for individual projects--undermining comprehensive and stable partnership arrangements.

There is another reason why COPC and related university/community partnership funding should remain separate from block grants. Universities which are trying to partner with community organizations would face a dilemma if they were required to simultaneously compete with the very partners for a scarce pool of funding the communities desperately need. Even the most public spirited leaders of community based organizations cannot argue to their constituents that they should forego funding so that funding can pass through another institution--a university--rather than community based organizations, no matter how valuable they perceive the university partnership to be.

In summary expanded federal funding reserved explicitly for university/community partnership activities is essential to the institutionalization of COPC and other university/community partnerships. Elimination of this funding would have a catastrophic effect. Folding funding into a block grant or otherwise placing universities in competition with communities for funding at the local level would undermine the very partnering activities the program is intended to achieve.

The overwhelming majority of federal domestic spending to address urban issues will continue to flow from a variety of agencies--not just HUD-- to governmental and non-governmental entities which implement the programs. Presently COPC activities support a

variety of these activities. But COPCs are too new and too small to shape the disposition

of the much larger amounts of funding which go into local programs. In the future federal

agencies under the leadership of, but not limited to, HUD could not only provide

expanded and stable funding for university contributions to their programmatic efforts, but

COPC activities and agency projects could become increasingly integral with the very

large amounts of funding going into public housing modernization, HOME funding for

new construction, CDBG programs, economic development and job training and other

programmatic areas. COPCs could move from valued supplements to true shapers of

urban policy at the local level. University neutrality, expertise, and longevity--discussed

further below--make universities particularly appropriate local level players to develop into

such policy-guiding institutions.

At present there are many barriers to partnerships involving universities and more

than one federal agency. Collaboration and coordination among agencies is not the norm.

Agencies are just beginning to coordinate programs and policies with each other. Most

agencies are not aware of the value universities can bring to their own programs--let alone

the potential they have to foster coordination and strategic local deployment of federal

resources.

HUD, through the Office of University Partnerships and COPC, is playing a lead

role in stimulating university/community partnerships to solve urban problems. But it is

not the only federal agency promoting university/community partnerships. The U.S.

Departments of Education and Justice, The Environmental Protection Agency, and the

Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment have had or currently operate

programs intended to connect universities and communities in some way. Other domestic

federal agencies which impact cities could also develop such programs. Critical to the furtherance of COPC and a broader university/community partnership agenda is joint action between agencies funding universities.

The current administration's program to reinvent government of which the HUD Reinvention is a part stresses coordinated activity across agencies. At the national level Vice President Gore chairs an inter-agency task force which is intended to achieve greater coordination among agencies. Other federal-level coordinating mechanisms exist to coordinate federal activity around specific issues or in specific geographical areas. The Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community program emphasizes interagency collaboration at all levels of government, including the federal level in designated areas. The U.S. Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) has a mandate to coordinate the activities of 23 agencies around base closure and defense conversion issues. These efforts emphasize inter-agency coordination at the regional level and local governments are encouraged to create strategic plans integrating funding from different agencies into comprehensive programs which address problems in a coordinated way.

Over the course of the last 100 years many other national organizations representing or assisting local governments, universities, foundations, and community organizations have evolved leadership structures which reflect their constituent's view of who should speak for the institution and what issues are important to it. Many of these organizations have Washington offices and staff in place whose function is, in part, to impact national policy. Working with these institutions is important to the institutionalization of COPC and other university/community partnership activities.

Local government interests are represented through the U.S. League of Cities and U.S. Conference of Mayors. Consortia of universities interested in urban affairs serve as fori for University Presidents to work out common agendas. Academic faculty and research staff concerned with urban issues or which have degree programs in city and regional planning meet through the Urban Affairs Association (UAA).) and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP). More than three hundred colleges and universities with urban affairs programs are identified by the UAA (UAA, 1995). The Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) has accredited almost one hundred graduate city and regional planning programs and has identified identified many undergraduate programs related to city and regional planning (ACSP, 1994a; 1994b). There are coordinating bodies of private foundations concerned with urban issues. Large national private foundations like Ford, Rockefeller, Mott, and Kellogg are a potential source of funding for university/community partnerships. Many are already directly engaged with communities. People involved in COPC and related university/community partnerships have not yet make a convincing case for foundations to support university/community partnerships and identified the value added that universities can bring. Key foundations are not familiar with COPC and other successful university/community partnerships. Ideally foundations will be convinced of the value of this approach and coordinate support with other federal and local sources. Universities are good candidates to stimulate dialogue between federal agencies and private foundations along these lines. National organizations representing communities or working closely with them include the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), The Center for Community Change, The Planners Network, The Poverty and Race Research Action Council (PRRAC) and others.

All of these institutions--federal agencies concerned with urban issues, the national associations which represent local government, associations of universities with an interest in urban affairs, associations of foundations, and national organizations of or representing communities are all stakeholders in the resolution of urban issues of the kind HUD is attempting to address through COPC. They are all *potential* allies in national politics to extend university participation in addressing urban problems if they are convinced about the value of university/community partnerships.

Collectively these stakeholder institutions have expertise and priorities--often priorities which have been developed through extensive internal deliberative which can contribute to long term, stable university/community partnership agendas.

Stakeholder priorities may not always be the same as HUD priorities and full involvement of these stakeholders in shared decision making will inevitably produce some level of conflict. Students of urban politics have found that most effective local level political regimes are ones in which precisely this kind of vigorous internal debate has taken place and long term political accommodations have been worked out (Stone, 1989; Mollenkopf, 1992).

There is another reason to bring multiple stakeholders into the COPC process at the national level. HUD's priorities and strategies to achieve them change constantly and many past HUD programs are now discredited. Bulldozer urban renewal projects like San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center which displaced low income and minority communities (Hartman, 1984), construction of Pruitt-Igoe, Cabrini Green and other concentrated highrise low rent public housing projects which turned into physical and social disasters (Rainwater, 1966), the poorly conceived and implemented s. 235 homeownership program

which led to fraud and foreclosures in Detroit and elsewhere (Boyer, 1973), are examples. In each of these situations HUD would have been well served by broader involvement of stakeholders who might have alerted the Department to developing problems--even if that message was unwelcome at the time. Developing a multi-stakeholder COPC process at the federal level can inform HUD policy and may provide for better policy outcomes.

Institutionalizing University/Community Partnerships At The Local Level

Ultimately university/community partnerships will succeed or fail at the local level. The national level institutionalization described above can provide a supportive environment and funding within which local partnership can flourish. But it is at the local level that the new partnerships must prove their value.

The most striking aspect of the COPC partnerships is how different they are from each other. The decision to allow universities flexibility in defining the geographical and issue-area communities they are to serve, the structure of their advisory committees, and the program components has proven wise.

University/community partnerships will be unique because they are determined by the specific circumstances and character of the university and its community. Large research institutions may be in position to deliver research and analytic services that a much smaller teaching college cannot. Colleges who draw many of their own students from the communities they serve are in a position to structure student/community roles that institutions with student bodies less representative of their communities cannot.

The most successful COPC projects view university/community partnership interactions as a two way street. Properly deployed, university personnel can bring needed expertise, neutrality, energy, and stability to community projects. Communities can

educate university faculty and students as well. Architecture faculty need to understand the needs of communities which they are training architects to design. Social work faculty need to understand the needs of people for whom they are educating students to deliver social services. Urban economists need to test their models and theories against the reality of local economies and labor markets. Students can learn from internships and other contacts with communities with which they will be professionally involved in the future.

A meaningful advisory committee involved in the definition of the partnership agenda, not after the fact implementation details, is essential. Shared decision making will both help the partnership select the most relevant projects and increase community stakeholders' ownership of the partnership which is critical to long term success.

Institutionalization at the local level involves more than achieving a stable, long term university/community partnership or even successful creation of a university/community decision-making structure in which community stakeholders share power in defining the partnership agenda. It also involves integrating local partnership arrangements with other local level players. University community partnerships need to develop working relationships with the local counterparts of national stakeholder groups described above: local government, foundations, and CBOs as well as churches, labor unions and other local institutions most important to housing, community development, and economic development. This involvement can be selective and needs to be fluid.

Relations with regional HUD staff are also important. Regional level HUD staff are involved with specific programs in the communities in which universities work. There are established relationships between HUD regional staff personnel and city and local actors. The perception of local HUD programs which HUD Washington's different

operating divisions have is strongly affected by what regional staff report to Washington. For example if the HUD Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development in Washington is hearing from field staff in Detroit, New York City, and San Francisco that universities have made a real contribution to Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community programs, CDBG, McKinney Act Homeless programs and other programs under his jurisdiction he will likely be supportive of the national level institutionalization of the program. Understanding regional office functions and staff is important in building effective partnerships which will be perceived by HUD as truly effective.

Foundations have a particularly important role to play in institutionalization of university/community partnerships at the local level. The great majority of HUD funding will continue to flow to government and CBO program operations. Universities may help day-to-day work of these major programs through studies, evaluations, capacity building, and direct technical assistance--but actually implementing them is not where their particular competence lies. Foundations play a particularly important role in stimulating innovation, providing demonstrations, and helping move the activities of major players in progressive directions. Universities which develop the capacity to further these foundation objectives locally are natural allies.

Inter-University Institutionalization

Many universities' activities are advanced by national level interaction with counterparts in other universities. Many academic programs are accredited by national accreditation bodies. There are national professional associations not only of university presidents and university faculty, but also of university librarians, career counselors, academic computing personnel, and others. Inter-university organizations share

information, create and disseminate national models, organize training sessions, facilitate personnel decisions both formally and informally, develop standards, and otherwise advance the state of the art in their particular domain. These national-level activities operate largely through voluntary contributions of time from interested members of the academic community and university support for their own members to participate in conferences. Development of parallel activities for participants in university/community partnerships with modest support would help institutionalize them.

There are centers of excellence within the COPC group--some universities perform a particular activity better than others. A process to identify there centers of excellence and to set up a system of inter-university technical assistance would further institutionalization. A peer-managed process drawing upon COPC personnel could manage a process by which universities identified a type of technical assistance they desire and selected an appropriate technical assistance provider.

Conclusion

HUD's innovative Community Outreach Partnership Center Program holds great promise as a model to bring universities into active partnership with other governmental and non-governmental actors addressing local urban problems. But COPC is a tiny and fragile effort which has not yet proved its value. Preserving and expanding COPC-like activities involves concerted effort of COPC personnel at the grassroots to build excellent programs and--with their local allies and support from Washington--to make the case to continue and expand the program and related programs in other federal agencies. The next few years are an important time for reflection and for action to these ends.

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