# Saviors of Our Cities:

## 2009 Survey of College & University Civic Partnerships

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**Introduction**

"Saviors of Our Cities: Survey of Best College and University Civic Partnerships" is an extension of Dr. Evan Dobelle's original survey and ranking of civically engaged colleges and universities that appeared in 2006. "Civic Engagement," in this sense, refers to the positive economic, social, and cultural impact that institutions of higher education have upon the cities in which they reside. Results illustrate the broad range of engagement initiatives currently being implemented and are designed to analyze the evolution, maturation, and growing sophistication of these efforts which have proven so vital to metropolitan areas across the nation.

Of note:

- The final survey ranking does not include colleges and universities that reside in smaller, more traditional "college towns" like Chapel Hill, NC, Lawrence, KS or Bloomington, IN.
- At the same time, the ranking reflects institutional engagement impact to scale, meaning that the included institutions implement programs and initiatives that positively affect the greater part of their metropolitan areas.

Circumstances and initiatives vary and the findings of this work document, publicize, and advance the unique and innovative means by which concerned and committed colleges and universities forge beneficial and permanent relationships with the communities in which they reside. The findings also make clear the widening sense of partnership among the institutions themselves, as they look to each other for guidance and support to advance the cause of civic engagement.

Rankings:

- They are meant to HIGHLIGHT programs, not to EXCLUDE programs, and we encourage the bringing to our attention of any unintentional oversights in our research at mkonig@wsc.ma.edu.

**Methodology**

The format of this survey followed the original 10 assessment criteria developed by Dr. Dobelle for his 2006 work. These criteria are listed on a one-page document titled, "Saviors of Our Cities Survey Criteria".

Onsite interviews were conducted by a representative of Westfield State College with the presidents, directors of civic engagement or their designees from many of the institutions mentioned in this survey. While these interviews involved a fraction of the colleges and universities committed to civic engagement, they were strategically planned and designed to amass a significant amount of best-practice

research material from many of the institutions recognized by Dr. Dobelle's 2006 survey.

Interviews and evaluation of submitted materials required over a year to complete. The meetings took place on the campuses of these institutions and made possible a clear understanding of the unique qualities of engagement from institution to institution. The personal nature of the interviews also made apparent the growing sense of mutual support, which exists among these institutions.

With the assistance and support of the American Council on Education (ACE), the Office of the President at Westfield State College sent both documents to the president's office of almost every college and university in the nation. Once the survey appeared, the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU) graciously offered to include it on its website. This helped to ensure a broad institutional response.

After assessing the responses, Dr. Dobelle, with the help of his Fellow, Dr. Michael Konig, Professor of History and an expert in social research, created this ranking of the Top 25 engaged institutions of higher learning in the country. They based the rankings on the qualitative and quantifiable responses to the survey criteria with a special emphasis placed on how effectively the engaged institution had forged a collaborative vision of a shared future with its community. An alphabetical listing of "Honor Roll" institutions is included as well.

Special thanks are extended to those who gave of their time and resources to support this effort.

## Rankings

1. **University of Pennsylvania:** Through the Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships, Penn has transformed the neighborhood schools of West Philadelphia into "environment changing institutions." Directed by Ira Harkavy, the nation's foremost expert in higher education community engagement, the Center conducts a project through which its university-assisted school model has been replicated on a national level. These efforts, combined with an exemplary service learning curriculum and an historic, extensive and neighborhood friendly campus expansion program places Penn at the top of this list, tied with University of Southern California.

1. **University of Southern California:** Led by its visionary president, Stephen Samples, USC implements a remarkably far-reaching engagement program with a number of components: University Assisted Public Schools, Service Learning,

Community Partnering with regards to economic, social, and political empowerment. USC is a major employer in the Southern California area but it also helps to create an economic environment that attracts creative entrepreneurs outside of education and health care. The university accomplishes this through the implementation of a successful "Business Expansion Network" mentoring program, which provides start up and continual support to local businesses endemic to the community. The University of Southern California Medical Center coordinates myriad community health programs to needy Los Angeles residents.

2. **University of Dayton:** UD is perhaps the most innovative of all engaged colleges and universities. Its community involvement is steeped in the university's Marianist Catholic tradition of community charity and support, as well as civic leadership. UD's Fitz Center for Leadership in Community embodies this commitment to "faith and justice" and its creative partnering around local environmental issues captures the positive spirit of engagement. UD's great lesson of engagement is that mutually beneficial partnerships between institutions of higher learning and their communities are based on the social capital created through respect and the sharing of assets.

2. **University of Pittsburgh:** Pitt's motto is, "The city is our campus," and through an engagement program, which builds upon the historic connection between institution and metropolitan area, the university has played a key role in helping to economically, culturally, and physically revitalize Pittsburgh. Working through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Pitt created the Community Outreach Partnership Center, which has leveraged the university's resources in a manner, which supports neighborhood partnerships in order to address neighborhood concerns. The selection of the city as the site of the 2009 G-20 Summit reflects an urban economy discovering "life after steel." PITT ARTS connects the university's students with the city's emerging and energetic art scene. Pitt has set the dimensions and pace of engagement in Pittsburgh. Its neighborhood collaborations have resulted in physically and economically revitalized neighborhoods. Neighborhood is the key here. Pitt's engagement benefits the entire metropolitan region, one neighborhood at a time.

5. **Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis:** This state university, in the heart of Indianapolis, claims that, "Civic engagement isn't just what our students, faculty, and staff do; it's at the heart of who we are…." The institution lives up to this commitment through entities such as the IU Emerging Technologies Center, which has helped to create myriad high-tech companies and jobs in the area and the Signature Center Service Learning Research Collaborative which "has enabled the campus to emerge as a center for research and scholarship on civic engagement and service learning." The university's own service learning course offerings are outstanding and IUPUI makes available a wealth of information to

other institutions in regards to constructing service learning curricula.  Thus, its engagement effect is not only positive for its own students, faculty, and community, but for others as well.

6. **Creighton University:**  The mission of Creighton University and the "renaissance" of downtown Omaha have been inextricably linked for many years.  Led by its scholarly president, Fr. John Schlegel, the university has invested over $225 million in campus improvements designed to erect needed academic facilities and to enhance the physical beauty and economic viability of the city.  Most notably, Creighton has contributed substantially to the development of Omaha's riverfront and to other long-term urban renewal projects.  The Creighton Center for Service and Justice seeks to create a metropolitan community grounded in the Jesuit values of faith, service, and justice.  The Creighton University Medical Center remains at its inner-city location in order to provide community health programs and "to serve the poorest areas of the city."

7. **Case Western Reserve University:**  Case Western Reserve University describes itself as "a community service model, building a beloved community, one partnership at a time."  Its Center for Community Partnerships connects the university with the Cleveland metropolitan area in many ways i.e., academic, health-related and social service outreach programs.  The Case Western Signature Health Programs are particularly remarkable and include the Healthy Smiles Sealant Program and School of Nursing Senior Capstone Project.  The Cleveland Math and Science Partnership advances biology, chemistry, physical science, and mathematics knowledge in that city's public school system.

8. **Tulane University:**  Tulane University's engagement efforts are broad with a strong focus on community health care. The university has been heavily engaged in ensuring the delivery of primary care to vulnerable populations in the Greater New Orleans area. Since Hurricane Katrina in August 2005, this work includes direct service delivery through sites operated by the university, as well as sites where the university is the major provider. Tulane School of Medicine faculty and residents are involved in more than a dozen community programs throughout the city, and since Katrina have served 67,500 patients.  Building upon the experiences in the immediate post-hurricane period, Tulane School of Medicine changed its mission to "Education, Research, Patient Care: We Heal Communities."

9. **Portland State University:**  PSU defines and measures its economic multiplier effect upon the Portland metropolitan area through its role as "employer, purchaser, student aid provider, and real estate developer."  PSU's Center for Electron Microscopy and Nanofabrication provides faculty, students, and companies in the metropolitan area access to some of the most advanced equipment for research in the fields of electrical engineering, physics, chemistry,

biology, and geology.  The university has also created one of the finest service learning curricula of any engaged institution, which is integrated both horizontally and vertically and requires a service learning capstone experience of every student.

10. **Drexel University:** Drexel's Entrepreneurship & Technology Commercialization Offices works to commercialize Drexel intellectual property and thereby bring benefit and added value to the university and the community.  It fosters an urban entrepreneurial environment in Philadelphia by licensing technology to start-up or existing companies, assisting faculty and other inventors, and developing relationships with early stage venture capital organizations and with local industry to explore mutual opportunities.  Drexel is leading the way for the rejuvenation of the four-mile long Lancaster Avenue Corridor and partnered with Penn to jointly, academically and physically, revitalize an entire destination called "University City."  In addition, they have extended their presence in Philadelphia with the acquisition and expansion of the Center City campus of Hahnemann Medical School (now the Drexel Medical School).

11. **Virginia Commonwealth University:** VCU is implementing a nationally recognized engagement program that coalesces around what it terms, "VCU Community Solutions."  In 2007 VCU celebrated its 40th anniversary by presenting "40 Acts of Caring" awards to projects, activities, or initiatives that partnered VCU employees, students or alumni with local, regional or national/international communities.  Among these projects is the Carver-VCU Partnership.  Carver is the community, which borders the University on the north.  The Partnership is designed to "create a shared urban community with a commitment to improving the neighborhood's quality of life including its health, community development, youth development, safety and neighborhood school, while extending the experience of the community into the classroom and the university."  The Council for Community Engagement coordinates and supports community-based research, teaching and service between VCU and its community.  The Council members represent all academic and major support units of the University and the VCU Medical Center.

12. **University of Louisville:**  Through its Signature Partnership Initiative, U of L is committed to "improving lives in West Louisville."  The university possesses one of the most remarkable employee-giving campaigns (U of L Cares) in the country.  Money from this campaign supports a variety of community organizations, including Fund for the Arts, Metro United Way, Crusade for Children, the Kosair Charities, and Community Health Charities of Kentucky.  U of L has committed land and $1.5 million dollars to help build an apartment, which will serve as a child development center for both residents and the university.  The university also manages 12 endowment accounts, which provide funding for community

engagement initiatives in the areas of family therapy, legal assistance, music, workforce development, dental care, and education.

13. **University of Rochester**: The U of R coordinates it civic engagement efforts through it Community Service Network.  In addition to developing service opportunities, the CSN seeks to raise awareness of community issues through regular events and projects throughout the year. The goal is to give students a context to frame their service and to help the university population to recognize the challenges faced by their own Rochester community, as well as the many positive attributes Rochester has to offer, and ultimately to foster long-term engagement and a sense of commitment. The University of Rochester Medical Center embraces a comprehensive approach to community health, which employs the multidisciplinary skills found in an academic medical center to both provide important community services and conduct community-based research. These activities help inform policymakers and the community about local health challenges; evaluate the effectiveness of interventions; and serve as a foundation for evidence-based practices to improve health and overall quality of life.

14. **University of Missouri at Kansas City:**  UMKC has established a nationally recognized engagement program, which is implemented through its Center for Economic Information, Innovation Center, Small Business and Technology Development Center, and Architecture Urban Planning and Design program. These entities provide considerable support to several non-profits, neighborhood improvement associations, and local business.  The university serves almost 3,000 businesses, launching new ones, and creating hundreds of new jobs within the Kansas City metropolitan area.  UMKC is also vitally involved in improving the city's Southtown and Brush Creek neighborhoods as well as providing pro bono technical assistance to the city of New Orleans to assist with its recovery efforts.

14. **University of Missouri at St. Louis:**  UMSL's impressive engagement efforts are oriented toward social service and community health.  Several university centers coordinate this engagement.  They include the Center for Trauma Recovery, Community Psychological Services, Children's Advocacy Services of Greater St. Louis, Shear Institute for Women in Public Life, the University Child Development Center, and the University Eye Center.  All provide community-wide support and establish UMSL as one of the most important community service providers in any metropolitan area in the country.

14. **University of Houston:**  UH's engagement strength is manifested in its industrial and business community partnerships.  The university's Small Business Development Network offers fledgling Houston entrepreneurs startup seminars, funding solutions, business loan packaging, as well as access to attorney and

accountant services.  The Center for Industrial Partnerships fosters joint initiatives between Houston companies and the university's research and educational resources in order "to help solve technological challenges involved in the commercialization process."  The CIP's mission is to "speed translation of research into commercial applications, while training the workforce of tomorrow."

17. **Emory University:** Emory's collaborative metropolitan engagement regarded by many as one of the most forward looking in the nation.  Its community health care programs alone are extraordinary. Emory Healthcare is the largest and most comprehensive health system in Georgia. Physicians within Emory Healthcare provide expertise through 4.7 million patient visits a year, at more than 20 facilities throughout the metro area. Emory Healthcare provided $29.2 million in charity care in fiscal year 2008, along with $72 million to teaching and research missions in health sciences at Emory.  Emory faculty provided $21.4 million in unreimbursed care in 2008 at the publicly owned Grady Memorial Hospital. Emory Healthcare has more than 10,000 employees, and accounts for a significant portion of the WHSC's estimated annual $5.5 billion economic impact on metro Atlanta.

18. **University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee:** Through its unique academic programs and engagement entities, UWM plays a prominent and positive role in the Milwaukee metropolitan area.  The university offers a Masters in Urban Planning (one of only two accredited in the country) that allows faculty and students to connect and support city planning and revitalization efforts.  Its Office of Neighborhood Relations (one of the most innovative of all institutions of higher learning) works to enhance the quality of life for permanent residents who live in neighborhoods surrounding the UWM campus.  The UWM Research Foundation works closely with the UWM Office of Technology Transfer to support collaborative research and technology transfer to the local public and private sector.

19. **Carnegie Mellon University:**  The Leonard Gelfand Center for Service Learning and Outreach coordinates and makes public much of CMU's community engagement efforts.  These include Strategies for Engineering Education, which provides middle-school girls with an opportunity to spend two weeks every year in "hands-on, multidisciplinary engineering activities focusing on the theme of energy."  Its Summer Academy for Mathematics and Science prepares high school students for the rigorous curriculum they will face as college engineering, science, and mathematics majors. The university emphasizes the similarities between engineering and music and thus its School of Music, through its Keyboard and Drumming Projects, seeks to enhance music instruction in the Pittsburg Public Schools.  Its powerful engineering and design schools have been instrumental in hundreds of "start-up" companies.

20. **Rhode Island School of Design:** Rhode Island School of Design supports a student driven public arts initiative, which involves students and faculty with important economic, social, and cultural issues. This initiative links RISD to entities such as the U.S. Coast Guard (boat design), the Robert Kennedy Mental Health Initiative, and the Providence Police Department (improved police car design). These engagement efforts also include international dimensions, such as participation in the Earth University in Costa Rica, and Sustainable Development in Ghana. RISD continues to serve as the catalyst and anchor tenant in the revitalization of Providence for the past decade.

21. **Miami-Dade College:** MDC's four-year academic engagement efforts reflect the mission of a community college; that of providing access to a wide-range of students. Access at MDC is augmented and spurred by a broad range of service learning courses and a well-conceived curriculum. What makes these efforts special is that they are founded upon the institution's cultural ties to the diverse population of the Miami metropolitan region. Cultural programs serve as the nexus between institution, potential students, and the larger community. MDC is a multi-campus institution, which constitutes multi-institutional and positive economic, social, and cultural impact upon the many unique neighborhoods throughout Miami.

22. **St. Louis University:** St. Louis University reflects the best of the Jesuit devotion to the inner city poor. Foregoing an opportunity to move to a suburban location, the university chose to remain and help revitalize downtown St. Louis. The university has created a remarkable community service institution in the form of the Micah Program. This program and its emerging Center for Service and Community Engagement effectively links administrative, faculty, and student resources with a variety of community partners. Its Doerr Center for Social Justice Education and Research is funded by a multi-million dollar endowment for research and student engagement, which largely focuses on the urban poor. The university has also purchased and renovated several downtown buildings and has collaborated with Washington University to establish a center city "Biotech Corridor" of research and development and high-tech firms.

23. **Rutgers-Newark, State University of New Jersey:** Chancellor Stephen Diner has charted a course for RN which builds upon the university's historic community engagement tradition. This engagement includes local small business support, contributions to the creative arts (including the publication of the *Newark Metro*, which reports on metropolitan life in the North Jersey/New York metropolitan area), pre-college initiatives focused on creating greater access for local residents, innovative programs coordinated by the Center for Information Management, Integration, and Connectivity, and community legal clinics. Its

efforts on the "turn-around" of historic Washington Square into a contemporary 'Greenwich Village' is visionary and currently in progress.

24. **George Washington University:**  Through its Center for Excellence in Public Leadership, GWU supports "strong city agent management as well as community-based economic and social progress in the District of Columbia."  The university has established a remarkably positive dialogue with its neighbors through its FRIENDS group.  GWU created this entity to ensure that its campus expansion plans positively impact local residents.  For several years GWU students, faculty, and staff have worked through FRIENDS to host monthly meetings and a large community celebration which bring "together local business, restaurants, groups, and institutions."  The GW Hospital provides care to thousands of DC residents as well as surveying city health trends.  This allows the local government to focus its attention on treating the health problems that GW has identified, especially those among at-risk populations. GWU's community relations staff is talented and possesses tremendous energy.  This energy is necessary to match the fast-paced tempo of urban life in the nation's Capital.

25. **University of Nebraska-Omaha:**  Community engagement is one of three over-arching strategic goals included in the UNO's strategic plan.  This commitment is reflected in the university's College of Public Affairs and Community Service.  Home to UNO's programs of Social Work, Criminal Justice, and Public Administration, the COPA is nationally recognized for preparing students and professionals for careers in public service.  The university also partners with the Metropolitan Omaha Education Consortium and the Nebraska Business Development Center.  UNO's service learning offerings are extraordinary.  Its Service Learning Academy and faculty coordinate community engagement projects in over 110 courses that enroll almost 2000 students each year.

**Honor Roll**

Like the top 25 institutions, there are many other colleges and universities that have figured prominently in lengthy cooperative efforts with community leaders to rehabilitate the cities around them, using their money and expertise to further the projects. To acknowledge the work of some of the other institutions an *Honor Roll* category is new to the rankings this year.

(Listed in alphabetical order)

- **Allegheny College, Pennsylvania**
- **Arizona State University, Phoenix**
- **Bates College, Lewiston, Maine**
- **Boise State, Idaho**
- **Boston University, Massachusetts**
- **Bowie State, Maryland**
- **Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah**
- **Brown University, Providence**
- **Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania**
- **Buffalo State, New York**
- **California College of the Arts, San Francisco**
- **California State University, Dominguez Hills**
- **California State University, Fresno**
- **California State University, Monterey Bay**
- **California State University, San Jose**
- **Chicago State, Illinois**
- **City College of New York, New York**
- **City College of San Francisco, California**
- **Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts**
- **Cleveland State University, Ohio**
- **College of Charleston, South Carolina**
- **Columbia University, New York, New York**
- **Coppin State University, Baltimore**
- **Daemen College, Amherst, New York**
- **Delaware State University, Dover**
- **DePaul University, Chicago**
- **Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa**
- **Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti**
- **Emerson College, Boston**
- **Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton**
- **Florida International University, Miami**
- **Fordham University, Bronx, New York**

- **Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, PA**
- **Georgetown University, Washington, DC**
- **Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta**
- **Graceland University, Independence, Missouri**
- **Hobart and William Smith, Geneva, New York**
- **Howard University, Washington, DC**
- **Indiana University Northwest, Gary**
- **Jackson State, Mississippi**
- **Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore**
- **Johnson and Wales University, Providence**
- **Kings College, Wilkes-Barre**
- **LaGuardia Community College, Bronx, New York**
- **LaSalle University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**
- **Loyola University, Chicago**
- **Maricopa Community College District, Phoenix**
- **Marquette University, Milwaukee**
- **Mercer University, Macon, Georgia**
- **Metropolitan State College of Denver, Colorado**
- **Middlesex Community College, Lowell, Massachusetts**
- **Murray State University, Kentucky**
- **New York University, New York, New York**
- **North Carolina State, Raleigh, North Carolina**
- **Northeastern University, Boston**
- **Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights**
- **Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma**
- **Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington**
- **Polytechnic Institute of New York University, Brooklyn, New York**
- **Raritan Valley Community College, Branchburg, New Jersey**
- **Rochester Institute of Technology, New York**
- **Slippery Rock University, Pennsylvania**
- **Springfield College, Massachusetts**
- **St. Johns University, Queens, New York**
- **Suffolk University, Boston**
- **Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York**
- **Temple University, Philadelphia**
- **The Ohio State University, Columbus**
- **Towson University, Maryland**
- **Trinity College, Hartford**
- **Trinity University, San Antonio**
- **Tufts University, Boston**
- **Union College, Schenectady, New York**
- **University of Akron, Ohio**

- **University of Alabama at Birmingham**
- **University of Albany, New York**
- **University of Arkansas, Little Rock**
- **University of Baltimore, Maryland**
- **University of Bridgeport, Connecticut**
- **University of Buffalo, New York**
- **University of California, Los Angeles**
- **University of California, Merced**
- **University of California, San Francisco**
- **University of Central Florida, Orlando**
- **University of Chicago, Illinois**
- **University of Cincinnati, Ohio**
- **University of Colorado, Denver**
- **University of Hartford, Connecticut**
- **University of Memphis, Tennessee**
- **University of Minnesota, Minneapolis**
- **University of Montana, Missoula**
- **University of Nevada, Las Vegas**
- **University of New Mexico, Albuquerque**
- **University of New Orleans, Louisiana**
- **University of North Carolina, Charlotte**
- **University of North Carolina, Greensboro**
- **University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington**
- **University of Richmond, Virginia**
- **University of San Diego, California**
- **University of San Francisco, California**
- **University of Scranton, Pennsylvania**
- **University of South Carolina-Upstate, Spartanburg**
- **University of South Florida, Tampa**
- **University of Southern Maine, Portland**
- **University of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois**
- **University of Tennessee, Chattanooga**
- **University of Texas, Austin**
- **University of Texas at El Paso**
- **University of Toledo, Ohio**
- **University of Tulsa, Oklahoma**
- **University of Washington, Seattle**
- **University of Washington, Tacoma**
- **Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee**
- **Washington University of St. Louis, Missouri**
- **Wayne State University, Detroit**
- **Weber State, Ogden, Utah**

- **Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo**
- **Wichita State University, Kansas**
- **Widener University, Chester, Pennsylvania**
- **Yale University, New Haven**
- **Youngstown State, Ohio**