

Welcome to our 2015 edition of the Journal of Service-Learning in Higher Education. This is our fourth year and our fourth edition serving as one of the few platforms for disseminating information about the dynamic campus-community partnerships operating in the United States and abroad. This edition and this year, is a personal milestone for me, as I sailed past two decades of teaching and research in higher education. When I began, a laptop computer was a novel oddity that was not very practical for real research and had no use in the classroom. The internet was becoming a major component of national and international connectivity - but accessing it was problematic on our campuses where funding was limited, and communities were often not "connected." This was the time when the fathers of today's combat soldiers were going to fight in the first Gulf War and we were revisiting the issues surrounding the re-integration of returning veterans to the classroom. This was the time of the Rwandan massacre and the real-world challenge of what it means to be a global citizen. This was 1994 and the year of the first volume of the *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* - and the year that Levine, Barber, Moon, Cohen and others challenged us to be involved faculty and to direct our students and our institutions toward excellence and engaged citizenship. Now, over two decades have passed and the call for dynamic leadership is ever present on our tablet screens and in our classrooms. We are struggling with the same issues, but in the context of a cohort that is more immediately connected to the world around them than at any point in history.

The development of this journal, like many others, sprung from the desire of a few committed service-focused academics (identified on our masthead) to create an additional forum for the volumes of work being produced on our campuses. Our first edition, with a range from personal accounts of disaster relief work to a "how-to" guide of building service-learning courses, was a fun and satisfying entry into the marketplace. As an editor, I felt great relief at the single focus level of completing a piece of work, no matter the content. Now, however, what I see from authors, reviewers and readers from across the country, Canada, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Latin America and Israel are the continuing calls for leadership, echoing the observations present in 1994. I believe that today's faculty are as dedicated as ever to the balance of teaching,

## **Forward**

by  
David Yarbrough  
Executive Editor



research and dynamic civic service that often transforms college communities into the best places to live. I believe that the youth and students of today understand and as are committed to making a difference as any previous generation. Just about any article in any of the service-learning forums prove that point as all of our successes depend on the actions of our students. My call, today, is to the broader institutional level of education to embrace the constant challenge of change that comes with an active citizenry. Listen to your students, reward your faculty and make the news by being the force for positive change that we all want to believe that we are.

The contributors to this edition of the Journal of Service-Learning in Higher Education articulate the challenge to institutional structures in a variety of ways. We begin with Barnett and Vardi's discussion of human service as beyond an action in itself and instead the development of a specific professional skill set. Next, Adams' article on student reflections demonstrates the continuing relevance of structure in the development of engaged service. Overton's examination of the graduate student experience, offers direct evidence of the importance of experiential components in professional preparation. Later, Malm, Bruening, Fuller, and Percy investigate the need, the relevance, and the challenges associated with active campus-community partnerships.

A new feature in this edition is the section dedicated to the introduction and review of engaged service books. We're starting with a review of the 2013 work, *Teaching civic engagement: From student to active citizen*, edited by McCartney, Bennison and Simpson. That is followed by the Nicholson review of Kerins *An adventure in service-learning: Developing knowledge, values, and responsibility*. We believe that this section will help you identify and incorporate materials relevant to your active service teaching.

Lastly, it is my responsibility to say thank you (!) to Ms. Jackie Tisdell, our lead section editor. She was instrumental in the development of this journal, the publication of every issue, and she is the continuing "glue" that holds our diverse little group together. This may be her last issue as an editor and we will miss her thoughtful and steady hand.

Enjoy, thank you for your service, and kind regards,

David Yarbrough