

Welcome to the 2017 edition of the Journal of Service-Learning in Higher Education. It is always my pleasure to read and share the interesting work that is happening across our field. Like many of you, I have spent some time traveling this past year and often heard many interesting questions. I'll share two of them with you. I was in a city in Europe where scattered throughout the public spaces, there were open fountains of clean water constantly running for anyone's use. There were no signs or directions for filling your water bottles – no cautions presented. But at every location I observed, there were queues of people (and some pets) with water bottles taking advantage of the available, cool, water on a hot summer day. When I asked a resident their thoughts on the fountains, the reply was that everyone is entitled to clean drinking water. We can do that.

A question that I have is actually an observation. In another city I visited, I was told on hotel check-in that if I wanted to take advantage of the recycling efforts of their community, the recycle "bin" (a large dumpster-type container) was located on the street, just outside of the hotel entrance. What I observed in this city were multitudes of trash and recycle containers that were obvious, obtrusive, and very available. What I did not observe in this city was trash on the streets, sidewalks, and in public places. So my thought is which would I rather see in my community: A tiny unobtrusive container that is often overlooked and seldom used – along with lots of trash on the streets; or large trash and recycle containers that are obvious and encourage use? I pick the latter – and we can do that, too.

That brings me to my final point for this edition. What is often very important to remember in reaching our desired outcomes in service-learning initiatives is that we must be clear to articulate what those desired outcomes are and how we intend to get there. The collection of articles in this edition all address that singular point. What is our purpose, how is that implemented and assessed? From the classroom, to looking at models for successful engagement and how to empower our community partners, these authors, researchers, and educators will both challenge and inform you. Thank you for reading and my best to you for the upcoming academic year.

Forward

By

David Yarbrough

Executive Editor

