

Forward



By

David Yarbrough

JSLHE Executive Editor

Here we are. Eight months from the start of talking and thinking about the consequences of a global pandemic. I'll come back to that shortly – but first will welcome you to the 11th edition of the Journal of Service-Learning in Higher Education. As always, I have learned much from the editorial process and much from the contributing authors. I have said often that my best ideas come from other people – and that is part of the magic of service-learning.

Conocimiento. In this edition we are introduced to and reminded of the knowledge that comes with experiential learning. We start with Gibson, Canfield, and Beamish who directly address the question of the value of service for our community partners. That is the “so what” question for service-learning, and their examination of what may be effective community-identified outcomes is a good start for the summer volume. The next two articles first by Damons and Dunbar-Krige; followed by Toronyi are instructive presentations of both post-graduate and undergraduate service-learning pedagogical approaches that help identify the strengths and the possible weaknesses of how service-learning modules are implemented.

Cate and Russ-Eft speak to the empowering aspects of service-learning while Miletich steps into the balance between service and learning. Lastly, the “bookend” from Carlisle, Nitta, Murray, Gourd and Shapiro bring us full-circle back to an examination of the impact of community-based learning on civic engagement. This volume, as a stand-alone collection, is a nice A-to-Z manual for service-learning. Thank you to the authors for contributing and to you readers for joining us.

Now back to a comment on Covid-19. All of the manuscripts for this edition were submitted and selected prior to the global identification of the Covid-19 Corona Virus. In the world of this work, we were all moving ahead in the trajectory set from past years and experiences. That has all been turned upside-down – and in the next few editions, I fully expect that authors and researchers will be examining the consequences of remote-based service-learning in our communities and our classrooms. We now speak to each other with Zoom, Skype and MS Teams – and have become comfortable sharing the contents of our home offices and bookshelves. We have become quite creative in

the development and implementation of experiential learning experiences, while at the same time trying to mitigate possible service injuries that now may include exposing multiple generations to a fast-spreading virus. It is also our responsibility as educators to use this time and these circumstances as learning experiences for applying standard and developing theoretical concepts to a novel event. We tell our students that the strength of higher education is to develop the tools for addressing the unknown problems of the future. Now we can prove it. Service in our communities is taking on a different flavor. We're now developing plans for educational instruction that is both safe and effective. We are managing food delivery to those who cannot leave home, and developing support systems for overburdened healthcare providers. Service is now moving beyond an event and becoming the expectation of what we do and how we provide throughout the day, the week, and the month. This is the time for clear-thinking leadership and mentorship. I am now more grateful than ever for Simon Fraser University and their early adoption of an online journal platform. And I am humbled by the remarkable work of the women and men in education (at every level) who are approaching this time as an opportunity for some of their most creative work.