The Road Taken: Contributions to Advancing Community-Engaged Scholarship

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Abstract

As an early career professional, I often felt as if I was on the road less traveled as a community-engaged scholar and tenured-track faculty member in academia. Although the work of community-engaged scholarship (CES) may be valued, the mechanisms for advancing CES, such as through faculty reward systems, often are not well-established. In my experience, it has been extremely important to create both internal and external opportunities for community-engaged scholars to promote and recognize the collaborative work that integrates scholarly activities with communities in mutually beneficial ways. As a recipient of the 2014 Ernest A. Lynton Award for the Scholarship of Engagement of Early Career Faculty, I will share how the award and recognition influenced my development and trajectory as a community-engaged scholar. In my professional journey, the Lynton Award affected me in several ways, including preparing for promotion and tenure, establishing and expanding my network of community-engaged scholars, and advancing opportunities for both internal and external leadership roles in CES. Through this paper, I will share my journey as a community-engaged scholar, as well as discuss some factors that I found to be critical conditions for success. Lastly, I challenge us to consider the intersection and continuum of community-engaged and participatory approaches to ensure that we are maximizing our opportunities to advance CES across fields, disciplines and approaches.

Keywords: community-engaged scholarship; community-based participatory research; Lynton Award

The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost (1916)

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

When I reflect on my journey as a community-engaged scholar, I think of Robert Frost's poem, The Road Not Taken (Mountain Interval, 1920). As a community-engaged scholar, I was fortunate to take the road less traveled, which was not because I had any such intention. It was a confluence of factors, including exposure as an undergraduate to service learning and to participatory research as a graduate student. Then, through the Ernest A. Lynton Award for the

Scholarship of Engagement of Early Career Faculty, I got my first introduction to community-engaged scholarship as an approach and a lens from which to view my work.

Now, as a tenured faculty member, I feel comfortable acknowledging that I was not familiar with the term "community-engaged scholarship" prior to applying for the Lynton Award. Since graduate school, I supported the work of a community-engaged scholar, but in my discipline we considered the work to be service learning and participatory research. Through the process of being nominated, and later as a recipient of the award, my understanding of community-engaged scholarship blossomed. Additionally, as a recipient of the Ernest A. Lynton Award, I encountered a network of scholars and colleagues who think about this work from a different disciplinary base, often in higher education. Colleagues who identify as community-engaged scholars are very welcoming, sincere, and optimistic about the future and the advancement of community-engaged scholarship.

I often wonder, if I had not been blessed to be the recipient of the award, would our paths have ever crossed? As a scholar trained in community-based participatory approaches, I would have continued to be a productive scholar in the areas of community and youth violence prevention, neighborhood development, and youth development. I would have continued to work alongside community partners to improve outcomes of community-identified concern through participatory approaches as an Associate Director with the Center for Community Health and Development. I would have continued to serve as a tenure-track faculty member at the University of Kansas in Behavioral Psychology who integrated service learning into coursework and research projects.

However, my road, pathway, and trajectory as a scholar would have been different if I had not attained the 2014 Ernest A. Lynton Award for the Scholarship of Engagement for Early Career Faculty. After which, in 2016, I was blessed to be awarded tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. Thus, I will take this opportunity to reflect on how the Ernest A. Lynton Award has affected my work, network, and tenure process, and it has contributed to a more refined career pathway. Now, I hope to contribute to further championing the work of community-engaged scholarship so that others from an array of disciplines can more easily find the pathway. I endeavor to contribute to advancing community-engaged scholarship, as a road traveled not by happenstance, but as an intentional pathway on the journey for those who are committed to working with communities from an academic base.

Continuing the Legacy through the Ecosystem of Knowledge

Ernest A. Lynton put into words a vision for community-engaged scholarship, in which research, teaching, and service combine into a knowledge ecosystem, fortifying and beneficial to not only the academician, but also the students and the community. According to Lynton,

> Knowledge does not move only from the locus of research to the place of application, from scholar to practitioner, teacher to student, expert to client. It is, everywhere, fed back, constantly enhanced. We need to think of knowledge in an ecological fashion, recognizing the complex, multi-faceted and multiply connected system by means of which discovery, aggregation, synthesis, dissemination, and application are all interconnected and interacting in a wide variety of ways. (Lynton, 1994, p. 10)

Based on the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Post, Ward, Longo, & Saltmarsh (2016) define community-engaged scholarship "as the collaboration between academics and individuals outside the academy— knowledge professionals and the lay public (local, regional/state, national, global)— for the exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (p. 113).

Illustrative Examples of Community-Engaged Scholarship

As a community-engaged scholar, I have recently been working collaboratively with community partners and students to support *ThrYve* (Together Helping Reduce Youth Violence for Equity), which is a youth violence prevention initiative in Kansas City, KS. The initiative has funding support from Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health through the Minority Youth Violence Prevention II program. ThrYve participants find and address social determinants of health, or those underlying factors that contribute to well-being or to the likelihood that youth may be involved in violence. Some of these are education, employment, social connectedness, and access to resources for youth and families. ThrYve supports cross-sector collaboration through the involvement of over 40 organizations in the community, representing government, law enforcement, justice system, education, higher education, youth-serving organizations, social service agencies, faith community, and youth themselves. The organizations guide the initiative through a Systems Advisory Board, which selects the change levers to improve conditions for youth in a priority geographical area of the community. The vision for ThrYve is: "empowered youth thriving and prospering in a safe community".

In this comprehensive community venture supporting multi-strategy interventions, secondary and post-secondary students take part through coursework, service, and research to work alongside ThrYve staff and partners. The contributions of multiple partners have shaped every approach for supporting healthy and positive youth development in our community. As a result, staff have developed community-valued products, including an assessment, strategic plan, and a series of community presentations. Within the ecosystem of knowledge, ThrYve supports a continuous process of feedback and refinement that has enhanced the approach in ways that have often slowed the process but has supported reciprocity with community partners.

As another example, for over a decade, our Center for Community Health and Development has served as the evaluator and research partner for the Aim4Peace Violence Prevention Project. The Health Department in Kansas City, Missouri, sponsors the program. Aim4Peace focuses on reducing shootings and killings in a priority area of the community. It developed from the Cure Violence (formerly Ceasefire Chicago) approach to violence prevention. Since 2008, Aim4Peace has collaborated with the Center for Community Health and Development as an evaluation partner. Aim4Peace has contributed to the ecosystem of knowledge and community partners served as co-authors on manuscripts and co-presenters at scholarly conferences along with faculty and graduate students. Academic partners have also supported activities of value to Aim4Peace, including quarterly collaborative data review sessions, presentations to program staff, community partners, and City Council. Through training opportunities and coursework, students have contributed to developing a digital story of community leadership with the initiative and other products. Furthermore, the Center for Community Health and Development

has supported the development of annual evaluation reports and presentations. These have in turn supported program enhancements with community partners. Community partner representatives also served as a dissertation committee member, as it is important to involve community partners in academic processes that validate their community and programmatic expertise. Now, students who have completed the program coursework have assumed consultation and leadership roles with the Aim4Peace initiative, post-graduation. The partnership between the KU Center for Community Health and Development within the Department of Applied Behavioral Science, and the Aim4Peace Program has supported community-based participatory evaluation, using an integrated Framework for Collaborative Public Health Action in Communities and the Model for Participatory Evaluation (Watson-Thompson, 2015).
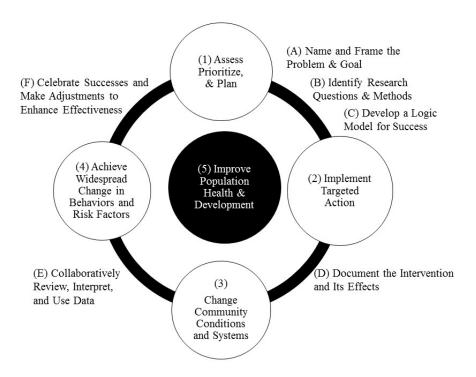

Figure 1. An integrated model presenting the Participatory Evaluation Framework for Collaborative Action based on the five-phase framework for collaborative action and a six-step participatory evaluation model (Institute of Medicine 2002, 186; Fawcett et al. 2003, 24, and Fawcett et al. 2010, 3).

The integrated framework for community-engaged scholarship guided the community-university collaboration for both the ThrYve and Aim4Peace initiatives. The model's first phase supports community and academic partners in assessing and prioritizing community-level problems and goals under study through collaborative assessment and planning. Both the university and community partners then shape the research agenda and questions to guide the effort. Based on the identified problem or goal, planning processes emerge, including the development of a logic model or framework to guide the initiative. Often, as with ThrYve, a community and systems change action plan contains the program, policy, and practice changes prioritized by the collaborative effort. In the second phase, community and academic partners support targeted action in the community through community-based implementation of the interventions identified through the collaborative planning process.

In the third phase, targeted action leads to the implementation of identified community and systems changes, which are a key intermediary measure for how the community and environment is being modified to support improvements related to the prioritized issue. Through participatory evaluation processes, community and academic partners collect and collaboratively share data to understand progress, as well as to support necessary adjustments through an ongoing process of data sharing and feedback. Then, in the fourth phase, as interventions (i.e.., programs, policies, and practices) take effect, there should be widespread changes in the prioritized risk factors and behaviors of individuals and groups. Finally, a continuous cycle of information review, feedback, and adjustments can achieve improvements at the level of the community or population over time. Through the implementation of this participatory framework, community-university collaboration supports an ecosystem of knowledge.

Impact of the Lynton Award on my Professional Pathway

In understanding the impact of the Ernest A. Lynton Award for the Scholarship of Engagement for Early Career Faculty on my professional development as a tenured faculty member, it is helpful to share key timelines and milestones, particularly related to the tenure process. In 2012, I first applied and became one of eight finalists for the 2012 Ernest A. Lynton Award for the Scholarship of Engagement for Early Career Faculty. Although I was not the 2012 Lynton Award recipient, it was very meaningful and rewarding, as early career faculty, to receive recognition as a finalist from then the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE) within the University of Massachusetts, Boston. In 2014, I reapplied and was the successful recipient of the Ernest A. Lynton Award for the Scholarship of Engagement for Early Career Faculty.

Although I supported the work of a community-engaged scholar, prior to initially applying for the 2012 Lynton Award, I was unfamiliar with community-engaged scholarship as an approach. In preparing my nominee application materials, I learned more about the scholarship of engagement as set forth so eloquently by Ernest A. Lynton (1994) and Ernest Boyer (1996). It was evident that this was an emerging pathway from which to anchor my work. The 2012 Lynton Award application process assisted me in critically framing and succinctly communicating my approach to community-engagement. Prior to this process, I had generally thought about community engagement across my research, teaching, and service more as isolated components rather than as an integrative approach. I was supporting community engagement in teaching through service learning, in research through community-based participatory research, and in my professional and personal service endeavors. However, I was unintentionally isolating these functions and the interactions between the components of my work. In academia, we often learn to think of research, teaching, and service as three core, but often independent functions. The Lynton Award application process gave me the opportunity to reflect intentionally on the integration and impact of my research, teaching, and service as interdependent and mutually beneficial.

In 2012, I was also beginning to gather materials for my progress towards tenure review (PTTR) process, which at my institution takes place midway through the probationary period for tenure-track faculty. Although the preparation of the Lynton Award application materials was intensive,

I was able to use the application to help refine my research and teaching statements as parts of my dossier. The Lynton Award application process, prompted critical reflection on my approach to research, teaching, and service. Through the Lynton Award application process, I received valuable feedback and support regarding the communication of my approach from colleagues with the Center for Service Learning and my faculty mentors who served as award nominators. During the PTTR process, I developed an initial dossier, inclusive of a research statement, teaching statement, and supportive portfolio materials. The PTTR process forecasted the full tenure review process, except external reviews were not required. In 2013, I successfully completed progress towards tenure review, which my department conducted after my third year. Although my PTTR was successful, some internal reviewers had concerns related to the complexity of my course requirements, which integrated service learning, as well as my publication productivity due to being more longitudinal community-based studies.

My faculty chairperson at the time recommended that it would be important for me to begin to use my annual faculty performance review processes to "school" my colleagues, or promote an enhanced understanding of community-engaged scholarship within the department. The chairperson indicated that for many of my faculty colleagues, the work I did was admirable, but community-engaged scholarship was a newer concept to faculty who would be evaluating my work and supporting recommendations for promotion and tenure. Although many of my faculty colleagues were supportive of a community-engaged approach, there were concerns regarding if I would be able to balance productivity in ways traditionally measured or counted for tenure and promotion. Early in my career, I received guidance from well-intentioned colleagues to determine if I wanted to support, "community services or academic achievement". Moreover, my more-senior colleagues often reminded me to "do what you have to do now, so that you can do what you want to do later."

The dichotomous system is often difficult for community-engaged scholars to navigate, as there is limited understanding of community-engaged scholarship as a valid approach leading to a different trajectory of productivity and impact for faculty. Often, community-engaged scholars produce two different portfolios of work to respond to the different needs and values of the academic and community audiences. For instance, a presentation to a key community stakeholder, such as the City Council, may not resemble a scholarly or academic product. If supporting CES, a presentation to City Council or other key community stakeholders related to CES activity should be recognized and valued as much in the scholarly review process as a presentation at an academic conference. However, in academia, it requires our measures and factors of impact, as well as distinctions between major and minor scholarly work to be more broadly defined and accepted in the academic review processes. A challenge with having two different systems of value and merit is the duplicate work and effort of the scholar. An integrated system, in which CES products have value within both the community and academia, would enhance the feasibility and attractiveness of CES. Creating opportunities to involve community stakeholders in academic processes (e.g., review committees) begins to reduce silos and promote a more equitable approach between community and university partners.

If at First You Don't Succeed, Try, Try Again

In August of 2015, I learned that I had received the Lynton Award as I was starting to assemble my dossier for tenure review. My dossier included letters from students who had benefited through coursework and/or research opportunities, letters from community colleagues, and examples of community-valued products such as evaluation reports. When I submitted my curriculum vitae for P&T review, 33% of my published articles included community-partner co-authors. Nearly 50% of my major scholarly presentations involved community partners. At the time of tenure, I had contributed to developing nearly as many technical reports (e.g., evaluation reports) as scholarly publications. This is a clear example of the dual role that community-engaged scholars often must play to provide both community-friendly and scholarly-valued products to different audiences. The Lynton Award occasioned several scholarly presentations and the publication of an article in the Metropolitan Universities journal, which further helped to communicate and endorse my approach to community-engaged scholarship.

The Lynton Award application process helped me to refine further my research and teaching statements for my dossier. However, it was more difficult to represent my work in the dossier by the general categorizations of research, teaching and service. Between 2012 and 2015, the Lynton Award application processes had made more purposeful the way I framed and practiced an integrated approach of CES. Thus, in presenting my dossier it became increasingly more difficult to demonstrate and communicate my work separately across standard and independent categories of research, teaching, and service. As we consider how to support CES in traditional academic processes, dossier templates or options that promote and lift up the integration of research, teaching, and service is an institutional practice that may be more immediately feasible for some institutions and would begin to signal support for CES.

The Greener Pathway: Conditions or Enabling Factors that Support Success for CES

I will present some conditions or factors that were key in enabling my success as an awardee, as well as a community-engaged scholar. Through the process of applying for, and later receiving, the Lynton Award I was able to refine and better communicate my approach as a community-engaged scholar. Based upon personal reflections of my pathway, I have identified several conditions that enabled my success including the following: (1) Pathways for developing a CES approach; (2) Network of support for championing and modeling CES; (3) Institutional promotion and recognition of CES; and, (4) Leadership opportunities to advance CES. Based on these factors, my CES activities post-tenure has resulted in leveraged financial resources and opportunities for administrative and leadership roles in CES.

Pathways for Developing A CES Approach.

For community-engaged scholars, it is important to have pathways and options for navigating the university system as faculty, scholars, and/or administrators. A community-engaged scholar can leverage resources, including human and financial, in the communities served. After obtaining tenure, I requested and received a one-semester course release through my department that allowed me to focus on obtaining external grant funding to support research endeavors. The course release supported me, as a participatory researcher, to further develop partnerships in the

community and to apply for federal grant funding to address youth violence, an identified problem in our community. During the period of the course release, I submitted a grant to Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health to address social determinants that may result in racial and ethnic disparities in youth violence. The resulting initiative, ThrYve ran on a $1.7 million award to support CES activities to address youth violence in Kansas City, KS.

One challenge we had with ThrYve concerned federally approved facilities and administrative (F&A) or indirect cost rates, which can be as much as 51% at our institution. To be clear, it is important to secure some F&A costs to absorb some of the expenses incurred by the university in providing infrastructure support. However, a challenge with community-engaged research is that often most of the work takes place in the community (i.e., off-campus). Furthermore, a large proportion of the funding goes directly to support community-based activities and/or partners. Moreover, it is difficult as a community-engaged scholar to communicate to community partners that a large part of the funding award remains at the institution, when often we should be supporting equitable practices as anchor institutions. One way to address this challenge may be a reduced F&A rate for funded projects that support CES. Although this may be ambitious to consider a redistribution of F&A for CES related projects demonstrating direct community investment, it would signal institutional commitment and support to and in the community.

Network of Support For Championing And Modeling CES.

Community-engaged scholars must support a community of practice with other colleagues of kindred spirit, both on campus and in the field. I was fortunate to have colleagues who provided a community of support both within my department, at the level of the university, and through broader professional networks. Based on various networks of support, I have worked with colleagues to both champion and model CES. Through the Lynton Award, I met and maintained a network of colleague affiliated with the New England Research Center on Higher Education (NERCHE) at the University of Massachusetts- Boston, the Swearer Center at Brown University, and through the Coalition on Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU). Now, as a member of the Lynton Award National Advisory Committee, I am able to contribute to advancing CES with other committee members through our network.

For community-engaged scholars, it is helpful to obtain mentorship and support from a community of on-campus colleagues who understand and promote CES. I was fortunate to have two faculty mentors within my department, Drs. Stephen Fawcett and Glen White, who were advocates for service-learning and participatory research approaches. As mentors, they modeled community-engaged scholarship, both as directors of productive research centers, competitive successful external funding recipients, respected leaders in the field, productive participatory researchers, and as instructors of service-learning courses. They shared model materials including course syllabi, examples of scholarly products, including funded grant applications, and provided basic interpersonal support.

The Center for Service Learning (CSL) at the University of Kansas has been pivotal in my development as a community-engaged scholar, as well as in promoting CES recognition and leadership opportunities both on campus and in the field. Through the Faculty Ambassadors program of the Center for Service Learning at KU, I participated in a community of practice with

other campus colleagues supporting service learning. The Faculty Ambassadors met a couple of times throughout the semester to offer support and guidance, as well as to connect colleagues across disciplines supporting service learning and CES within the University. Through opportunities and information shared by the Center for Service Learning at KU, I could expand my regional network of partners affiliated with Campus Compact.

The Center for Service Learning provided access to a network of colleagues, along with direct supports to my development as a community-engaged scholar. The CSL encouraged me to apply for the Lynton Award in 2012, and then to reconsider applying in 2014. Honestly, without the encouragement from colleagues in CSL, I would not have considered reapplying. Although I am familiar with peer-review and resubmission processes within the context of publications, I had not considered applying this type of resubmission (and refinement of approach) to award nominations. The CSL reviewed and provided feedback on my initial application, which I incorporated into a stronger subsequent award application submission, which was successful. The resubmission of a Lynton Award application was also a successful strategy for other 2012 Lynton Award finalists, who also received the award in a subsequent year. The CSL has offered direct support, guidance, leadership opportunities, and access to colleagues and networks interested in CES.

Institutional Promotion and Recognition of Community-Engaged Scholarship.

The Center for Service Learning (CSL) at the University of Kansas (KU) was very instrumental in promoting my work and recognition as a community-engaged scholar. During periods in my career when it was a struggle to balance scholarly productivity with community-engagement, the internal and external validation I received through the CSL was helpful. The CSL promoted recognition of my work and supported nominations for awards, which served as a reinforcer, and encouraged me to continue down the CES pathway. The CSL was instrumental in supporting at least four awards that I received related to CES. In 2012, the CSL nominated, and then awarded me the Excellence in Community-Based Teaching and Scholarship Award through the Heartland Campus Compact. In 2014, I was the recipient of the Ernest A. Lynton Award for the Scholarship of Engagement for Early Career Faculty based upon nominations from the CSL and my faculty mentors. Upon receipt of the Lynton Award, I received communications from both the Provost and Chancellor regarding this accomplishment, which was an indicator of the value of both the award and CES at KU. The external validation received, as an award finalist, helped to legitimize and demonstrate the merit and intentionality of my community-engaged work within my institution.

The CSL also has developed awards to recognize service learning and CES on our campus. In 2015, I was the recipient of a service-learning mini-grant award through the Center for Service Learning. The mini-grant went to faculty fostering campus-community partnerships to supports best practices in service learning. In 2016, through the Center for Service Learning at the University of Kansas I received the Faculty Excellence in Service Learning award. Additionally, I have mentored several undergraduate students who were recipients of service-learning awards at the University of Kansas, including the CSL Student Award for Excellence in Service Learning and the Service Showcase Award. I speak of these awards not for personal recognition. I wish to demonstrate the importance and impact of having an institutional unit that recognizes

and promotes the contributions of faculty and students supporting CES. Now, I am working with other colleagues in CSL to develop departmental or organizational-level awards for academic units to champion and support CES together.

Leadership Opportunities to Advance CES.

In order to modify institutional systems and practices that support CES, those trained and/or practicing CES should have opportunities to contribute and shape the institutional landscape. At KU, I have found many opportunities as both a scholar and administrator in the area of CES. Since I began my tenure-track appointment, I served as a Service-Learning Faculty Ambassador for my department, Applied Behavioral Science. Through the Faculty Ambassador Program, faculty who teach service-learning courses share best practices and challenges for community engagement in their academic schools and departments. I gained the chance to serve a two-year term as a Faculty Fellow through the Center for Service Learning, which provided a leadership opportunity. As a Faculty Fellow, I helped to consider programming and new initiatives to advance service learning at KU. Most recently, the Vice Provost of Undergraduate Studies appointed me as a Senior Faculty Associate or Associate Director with the Center for Service Learning. In this role, I report directly to the Assistant Vice Provost for Experiential Learning in Undergraduate Studies. I provide guidance and oversight for strategic initiatives related to community-engaged scholarship and service learning as we explore a broader experiential and engaged learning framework at KU. As I now have a leadership and administrative role within the CSL at KU, I have a broader perspective and base for promoting CES. The Lynton Award and other recognition created robust opportunities for me at multiple levels, including at my institution.

At the Fork in the Road: Importance of Integrating CES with Other Participatory Frameworks

As we consider how to advance community-engaged scholarship at our individual institutions, as well as across fields and disciplines, it is important that we consider the broader landscape of community engagement. Academicians sometimes experience a challenge in how to integrate multiple advancements across disciplines and fields of study. To some extent, I have grappled with reconciling our vision for community-engaged scholarship through an integrated approach that recognizes and builds upon other movements in the area of participatory research. Over the past couple of decades, the continuum of participatory approaches has evolved based on disciplinary influences, which presents some variations in terms (Wallerstein, Duran, Oetzel, Minkler, 2017). Thus, I categorize participatory research to include participatory action research, community-based participatory research (CBPR), and other forms of participatory approaches. Wallerstein, Duran, Oetzel, & Minkler (2017), present CBPR and community-engaged research (CEnR) within a continuum of community engagement, which may be supported through community-university research partnerships (CURPs) (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). Community-engaged scholarship shares many commonalities in goals, outcomes, and modes with other forms of participatory approaches. Ward (2016) indicates the following in understanding the next generation of engaged scholars,

We recognized that our individual understandings of community-engaged practice and scholarship were limited to, and by, traditional higher education roles and constructs...we realized that we had to broaden our understanding of scholar beyond the traditional conceptualization of tenure-track faculty members. (p. 112).

It is important to increase recognition of community-engaged practice and scholarship across the range of community and university contributors in order to understand our collective contributions to impact and improvement. Based on my conceptualization, community-engaged scholarship extends CBPR through the integration of teaching or training, research and service, particularly for those in a more traditional faculty role. However, the broader perspective of community-engaged scholarship, which must also include community engagement professionals in non-tenured roles, lessens its distinction from other forms of participatory models. Thus, it may be helpful to consider the integration of community-engaged scholarship across the continuum of community-engagement and participatory approaches.

To actualize the vision of community-engaged scholarship requires a joint and coordinated mobilization of our collective efforts to support systemic changes within and across university systems is necessary. A coalition concept recognizes and extends our approach as a continuum of community engagement. This will help to expand our base for community and university support and proactively counter opposition. I identify as a community-engaged scholar, a community-based participatory researcher, and a practitioner of experiential and service learning. There is no problem with self-identifying across these related approaches. However, the challenge is to name, frame and build cohesive support in a way that allows for key systemic changes such as promotion and tenure policies, curricular requirements, and expanded criteria for scholarly expertise. Therefore, the more we can reduce barriers or potential deflections that may stem from disciplinary preferences, our collective approach to advancing community-engaged approaches will be stronger. Those of us who do this work recognize community-engagement when we see it. However, this challenge is not for those of us inside the camp, but for those who we want to bring into the camp. There seems to be a couple of bases by which to expand our reach, including those scholars who support community-engaged practices, but don't describe their work in this way, or those who either have not been exposed or do not understand community-engaged scholarship, but may be responsible for evaluating our work. Although there is a new generation of emerging scholars more formally trained and seasoned in community-engaged scholarship, many academicians are still unfamiliar with the approach.

During a time when we face both internal and external pressures in relation to community engagement and the role of the academy, we cannot be distracted from our core mission and vision. Thus, we must together advance an ecosystem of knowledge (Lynton, 1994) that supports bidirectionality regarding our exchange of knowledge within and across not just the community, but also academia. Through community-engaged scholarship, we have the unique and unifying opportunity to dismantle silos and foster transdisciplinary learning to address some of our most perplexing societal problems. Thus, I challenge those of us within the university systems to be united in our discovery as in itself an ecosystem of knowledge that can advance our interactions with the community.

I remember a scholarly gathering I was invited to attend focused on advancing multi-sector collaboration. For those who were hosting the gathering of scholars and practitioners, they thought the models and frameworks they were presenting related to multi-sector collaboration were novel. However, many of the ideas and challenges posed regarding multi-sector collaboration were not unique, but just more novel to this sub-group of colleagues who were from fields of health that are more traditional. After the meeting, a community-based colleague voiced frustration, as she was knowledgeable of our advancements in participatory and grassroots efforts supporting multi-sector collaboration. As a boundary-spanner who integrates perspectives from behavioral psychology, applied behavior analysis, community psychology, public health, urban planning, and prevention science, I embrace the challenge of integrating our knowledge in ways that promote transdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration.

I think of a challenge that I sometimes face when supporting engaged work in the community, which is limited knowledge regarding the different community-placed and community-based efforts from the same university that may be occurring within a community. On last year, a community member affiliated with our ThrYve Systems Advisory Board, challenged us to map out the various community-based projects, efforts, and partnerships that our institution was supporting in the area of youth development in our priority geographical area. The community member wanted to ensure that we, within and across the university, were first maximizing and modeling a spirit of collaboration within our institution. Otherwise, uncoordinated efforts requesting engagement of community partners can be disjointed and overwhelming from the community perspective.

Potential considerations of feasible practices to begin to integrate CES.

I challenge us to consider how we champion community-engaged scholarship in a way that reduces barriers through our many efforts to advance community engagement. For instance, consider a conference that includes leaders across the continuum of community-engaged scholarship to identify common strategies and language. Consider also opportunities for consecutive conference scheduling or joint pre-conference workshops across similar associations in the same locale. Envision publishing embargos or co-submission requirements for journals or conferences that promote dissemination of information across different journal and conference outlets. More immediately feasible practices may support using common keywords in our dissemination efforts to strengthen our collective contributions to community-engaged scholarship across fields and approaches.

The Road Taken: Assuring an Intentional Pathway for CES

To achieve the ends that we seek in addressing societal issues through community engagement, we must extend our ecosystem of knowledge so that we are good stewards of our collective knowledge and action across disciplines and approaches of engagement. Imagine how we could advance our trajectory of community engagement by further aligning community-engaged scholars, including those who identify across the continuum of participatory and action researchers and/or service learning. Often, I have found that there are other colleagues at our institutions supporting what we would consider community-engaged scholarship, but are often calling it something different or are unaware of how to frame the approach. An integrated

approach will help garner the critical mass of scholars and administrators necessary to change conditions to make it easier and more rewarding for CES to not only be the desired, but the default pathway. Those who read this article likely are already practitioners or champions of community-engaged scholarship. Thus, I challenge my readers to share this issue with a colleague who may be at a fork in the road or who stands to help to make CES an attractive pathway along the scholarly journey.

If asked, if I would do this all over again, I would indeed choose the same path, now knowing all I do about the opportunity that awaits for impact at the community and university levels. Now that I am post-tenured faculty, I am embracing the opportunity to assume additional leadership and administrative roles to further advance CES within my institution and in the field(s). Based on the impact of the Lynton Award on my own professional development as a community-engaged scholar, I am committed to supporting the conditions I have identified through this reflection as critical to my success. We have the opportunity to promote and champion CES for our current and next generation of scholars. In the future, when faced with the fork in the road, scholars may take community-engaged scholarship as the path more commonly traveled.

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