

Connected **Knowing**



The 12th International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement Annual Conference

September 23-25, 2012
Marriott Baltimore Waterfront Hotel
baltimoremarriottwaterfront.com
Baltimore, Maryland

*We offer great thanks to Loyola University in Maryland CCSJ student staff members who designed and crafted our Connected **Knowing** logo: Letitia Wells and Amber Ellis. The hands belong to Letitia Wells, Danielle Porfido, Matthew Diferdinando and Robin Crews.

Theme

Commentary on the theme **Connected Knowing** from KerryAnn O'Meara, Program Chair, 2012 IARSLCE Conference:

The theme for the conference is "**Connected Knowing**." The pursuit of knowledge, our innate desire to learn and understand and create meaning, is at the center of what it means to be human. Knowing is powerful, and tied to the demand for human rights and dignity. How we know is closely tied to our identity; it also is bounded and shaped by social, political, and historical forces. Knowing is part of how we grow and advance. Knowing then is personal. It also is deeply political.

Society positions as heroes individuals who have pursued knowledge to great achievement and contribution. Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Marie Curie, and many others like them are icons. Solo artists and intellectual heroes stand out and apart from others around them. While applause for individual achievement in the pursuit of knowledge may well be warranted, casting knowledge production only that way obscures a fundamental feature of learning: who else besides the spotlighted individual contributes to it, where it happens, and what ends learning serves. To summarize, most narratives of knowledge pursuit, as individual persons' accomplishments, are decontextualized and disconnected from the array of other persons, places, and purposes that are all part of it.

Yet to know is to be deeply connected to other people, to specific places with histories and cultures, and to different perspectives or ways of understanding. Learning is possible because a learner is connected, somehow, to persons, conditions, ideas, and needs, communities beyond him or herself. Learning then is about relationships – relationships between persons and so much of what surrounds them. For many communities, knowledge has meant power to improve everyday social conditions. Knowledge is made by people together. Knowledge is shared together. It is made with others in mind. We do not have to look any further than the success of Wikipedia in mass knowledge creation, in fact, for the masses, or the use of social networking in pursuits of the larger good – in Tunisia for example -- to see the powerful role that connections between individuals play in the creation of knowledge and in some cases, significant social change.

This tradition of knowing through, because of, and with others, is very much at the heart of John Dewey's dream that education involve intimate public engagement with the world. W.E.B. Dubois likewise argued for connected knowing in a 1920 book, *Darkwater: Voices Within the Veil*, in which Dubois wrote that "Children must be trained in a knowledge of what the world is and what it knows and how it does its daily work. These things cannot be separated; we cannot teach pure knowledge apart from actual facts, or separate truth from the human mind."

This theme reaches deep into what professionalism means, and what professionals strive for, touching on personal values, individual and social actions, and conceptions of the larger good. In his 1837 essay *The American Scholar*, Ralph Waldo Emerson spoke to needs to connect knowledge with values. The writings of Ernest Boyer (1996), William Sullivan (2005), and Al Dzur (2008) – continue to remind us of society's historic expectation of professionals: that they connect their scholarship to efforts to advance the public good—that they strive for more than merely private or personal gain. The concept of connected knowing – of knowing that links the best of ideas to carefully crafted action in the world – is at the center of the promise of the Land Grant University to serve as democracy's colleges. We celebrate the 150th anniversary of that promise this year in 2012. Last but not least, the term connected knowing applies not only to big visions of profession and society, practice and ideals. It applies as well to what goes on in class in the name of teaching and learning. The vision was perhaps best captured by Belenky, M.F., Clinchy, B.M., Goldberger, N.R., & Tarule, J.M. (1986) in their classic text *Women's ways of knowing: the development of self, voice, and mind*. Their work reminds us that connected knowing is an ideal not only for institutions and professions but also for individual knowing which has intimate ties to gender, and other key aspects of identity.

The IARSLCE is relatively speaking, a newer association. It was born 13 years ago out of the desire to connect researchers, scholar-practitioners, faculty, teachers and community partners who engage in research on and through service learning and community engagement. The theme of *Connecting Knowing* calls us to ask challenging questions about our own research, about the ideas and practices we study. Have we considered the critical role of place and local context in what students learn and with whom? How are students, community partners, and faculty coming to learn new ideas—what are the tools they are using? Are they effective and how do we know that? When they are, what makes them so? How does identity and connection to other people and place contribute to what people come to know? How does our learning, and the learning of our students and community partners help us improve the conditions of life in our communities? How can our knowing impact social change via policy and practice directly and swiftly and effectively as is possible?

We meet in Baltimore at a point in time that the American Commonwealth Partnership, AACU and the U.S. Department of Higher Education have referred to as “a crucible moment” in democratic education. It is an election year. Candidates and their supporters spar over competing visions of the good, and behind those, competing visions of thinking about and knowing what is good. Some of these questions have to do with which groups should have access to which kinds of knowledge or education. Others question the best ways for students to learn, and whether education truly enhances social mobility. Has the pursuit of knowledge in our educational systems become a private good? Or is there a public good inherent in how we view knowledge as our common project?

We meet in Baltimore, MD (Charm city) for the 2012 IARSLCE conference. “Charm city” is a place with a rich history. There we find the home of Frederick Douglass, Thurgood Marshall, Edgar Allan Poe, Babe Ruth, Upton Sinclair and Frank Zappa, John Waters. Baltimore also is the Birth Place of the Star Spangled Banner. Baltimore is a place of much service-learning and community engagement, of deep partnerships as well as historical divisions between educational institutions and non-profits and community members. It is an excellent place to consider the contradictions and challenges in how we go about our research and practice in the field of community engagement and service learning.

We offer this theme to you as a way to consider connections in your own knowledge of service-learning and community engagement—as a researcher, teacher, student, evaluator, and participant. Between now and the conference in September, we will provide multiple opportunities via the conference Website to continue this ongoing conversation. Specifically, I will ask members of the Board and colleagues throughout the community engagement movement to post reflections like this on the meaning or relevance of **Connected Knowing** in their work. Then, I join the Board and conference committee in saying—we hope to see you at the IARSLCE conference September 23-25, 2012 in Baltimore—to be connected, as we learn together.

Thanks to John Saltmarsh (University of Massachusetts Boston and Anna Neumann (Teachers College, Columbia) who provided feedback on these comments.

IARSLCE Conference

The IARSLCE annual research conference is targeted to scholars, practitioners, students, and community partners interested in research on service-learning, community-based research, campus-community partnerships, and civic learning outcomes in P-20 education. Attendees include faculty, administrators, and scholar-practitioners in higher education, community partners, educators in K-12, and professionals and leaders in educational policy and community development. To advance understanding of scholarship from international perspectives, scholars from outside of the United States are particularly encouraged to submit proposals.

Host and Co-Sponsors

The 2012 IARSLCE Annual Conference is hosted by the University of Maryland and co-sponsored by American University, George Washington University, Johns Hopkins University, Loyola University Maryland, Maryland Campus Compact, McDaniel College, Montgomery College, and University of Maryland Baltimore County.

Proposal Submission Timeline

Submissions accepted starting: **March 2, 2012**

Must be received (online) by: **March 30, 2012, 5:00 p.m. (EST)**

Notification of acceptance sent: **By May, 2012**

Tracks

In the spirit of connected knowing and learning, our tracks are intended to pull participants into the center of different streams of research conversation. In each case we are interested in proposals on topics that are evidence based and help us to improve how we practice engaged teaching and learning, research and partnership. There are multiple formats for presentation that range from research and scholarly papers to symposia and poster presentations.

As a way of inviting you into this conversation, we lay out some of the most recent findings in different areas alongside remaining questions and areas of inquiry. All conference presentations should be submitted into one of these nine tracks.

Inquiries about a particular track should be directed via e-mail to the listed section chair(s).

I. Faculty

Section Chair: Elaine Ward

elaineward@yahoo.com

Those who study faculty community engagement have established that certain institutional environments and individual characteristics make it more likely that a faculty member will choose to link their teaching and research to public purposes. Many faculty are attracted to service-learning out of a desire to achieve certain learning goals and to engaged research because of their socialization in their fields. Yet we also know that institutional environments matter and institutions that communicate to faculty that this work is important, are more likely to have faculty involved, irrespective of any predisposition. We don't know as much as we could about how institutions communicate support in ways that matter to faculty. There is little longitudinal research on the kinds of faculty development programs that are most effective, or the long term impact of different changes to academic reward systems. Many faculty have reported that it is the relationships that they develop with students and community partners that keeps them engaged. Yet we don't know as much as we should about how to develop and strengthen these relationships in ways that promote professional growth. We are interested in research proposals that help us understand faculty motivations and experiences in community engagement, and tie those findings to concrete suggestions for faculty development and institutional support.

II. K-12 Civic and Learning Outcomes

Section Chair: Alan Melchior

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One of the emerging themes in the literature on K-12 service learning is that the quality of the program experience is a strong determinant of participant impacts: the shorthand is that "Quality Matters!" But what are we learning about what constitutes a quality service-learning experience? To what extent is there a common understanding in K-12 service-learning research and practice about common terms such as "youth voice" or "community partnership," and to what extent do we understand why those characteristics or the other commonly accepted elements of effective practice make a difference? What can we learn from research

in related fields, such as developmental psychology, about what kinds of adult/youth partnerships engage young people, help them translate learning from one realm (service-learning) into others (academic success), or motivate them to continue their involvement in their community? At the same time, what do we know (and what should we be asking) about the adult and community side of the service-learning partnership? How do we document or measure what young people contribute through their efforts? What can we say about how civically active youth benefit the community in which they work or impact the adults who work with them? We are interested in proposals that will help us expand our understanding of the service-learning experience for K-12 students, and how that learning partnership impacts the participants, partners, and communities that are involved.

III. Community Partnerships

Section Chair: Emily Janke

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The body of community engagement literature has produced many works articulating frameworks, principles, best practices, and recommendations for developing partnerships that are most often characterized as long-term, democratic, reciprocal, mutually beneficial, democratic, and transformative. With some important exceptions, most of the extant partnership literature is scholarly analysis and critique based on a limited number of case studies. The assumption in much of this literature is that such partnerships are likely to have better outcomes than those that are short-term, technocratic, one-way, or transactional. However, other works suggest that partnerships are complex, diverse and nuanced. This session track seeks to explore, critique, and contribute to what we know about partnerships as a result of scholarly investigations and to develop new questions and directions for research.

We seek, especially, to explore the following questions: How are oft-used terms defined, operationalized, and studied in partnership research, such as “long-term”, “reciprocal,” “mutually beneficial” “power,” “success,” “effective?” How, if at all, do the following traits affect specific partnership capacity and outcomes (e.g., student learning, community impact, faculty scholarship, etc.):

- *type* of partners (e.g., university, nonprofit, government, grassroots group, etc.),
- the *processes* they follow (e.g., collaboration, autonomous cooperation, etc.), and/or
- the *context* surrounding the partnership (e.g., political and fiscal environments)?

How does the unit of analysis, whether it is interpersonal, inter-organizational, or something else, affect our understanding and practice of partnering? How do partnership concepts vary across cultures and nations?

IV. Organizational Change and Sustainability

Section Chair: Cathy Burack

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Those at institutions that adopt a civic engagement agenda quickly understand that resources, policies and structures are needed to ensure the sustainability of positive outcomes for students, teachers/faculty, institutions and communities. Implementation of civic engagement programs and initiatives differs based on a variety of factors including institutional mission, scope (e.g., system/district-wide or individual school or college), type of institution, and impetus. Proposals are invited that explore institutional practices, policies and the change processes that impact – whether positively or negatively – the sustainability of civic engagement at schools, districts, and/or colleges and universities.

V. Contexts and Methods: Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks, Research Designs, and Methodological Issues

Section Co-Chairs: Andy Furco and Allen Brizee

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Over the past decade, the study of service-learning and community engagement has become more complex and more precise in their connection to best practices and empirical methods. However, nuanced contexts of practice, broad-ranged and multi-faceted outcomes, application of various disciplinary research norms, and other conceptual and methodological issues pose persistent challenges in this field of inquiry.

Investigators continue to debate whether the quality of service-learning and community engagement research should be improved through the implementation of more experimental studies rooted in a positivistic paradigm, or rather through more participatory approaches that take a more critical or post-modern stance. For example, the result of polling that was conducted at the Tenth Annual Research Conference of Service-Learning and Community Engagement reflects this debate in that 68% of the 95 conference participants who supplied responses believe that the field should “invest in or focus on more controlled, experimental studies to strengthen the evidence for service-learning and community engagement.” When the same respondents were given a list of issues and were asked to name the most important improvement that research studies on service-learning and community engagement need to incorporate, the following three issues received the most votes: “use more appropriate methods” (18%), “apply more sophisticated analyses” (18%), and “have a stronger connection to theory” (17%).

In light of these design and methodological issues, we seek proposals that examine and/or critique the different theories, research designs, and methods that are used in service-learning and community engagement research. Specifically, we are interested in submissions that articulate the strengths and limitations of particular theories, research designs, and methods and their overall application to studying various service-learning and community engagement issues in different program or community contexts. We are also interested in proposals that examine how scholars in the field determine the validity and utility of their conceptual frameworks, the strength of their research designs, and the appropriateness of their research methods.

VI. Higher Education Student Outcomes

Section Co-Chairs: Rick Battistoni and Nick Longo

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In higher education, one major focus of research in the field of service-learning and civic engagement has been the impact of programs or initiatives on students. A primary mission of higher education must be the advancement of student learning, broadly understood. Over the past two decades we have learned much about the impact of service-learning and civic engagement on students’ academic learning, personal, ethical, and career development, civic and political education, and on student voice and leadership. Still, much more needs to be done, both in defining the parameters of what we mean by such terms as “ethical or career development,” “civic learning,” or “student leadership,” but also what kinds of programmatic, structural, or institutional factors have the greatest impact on student outcomes, both short-term and long-term.

In light of what we have learned so far, we are looking for proposals that will advance our knowledge about the impact of service-learning and community engagement on students and alumni in higher education. We seek proposals that examine specific aspects of engagement that achieve specific kinds of student outcomes—curricular and co-curricular. We also are interested in receiving proposals that examine new approaches to student leadership (e.g., “students as colleagues”) in post-secondary engagement work, and what student outcomes are associated with these approaches.

VII. Community Engagement and Student Retention, Access and Success

Section Chair: Timothy Eatman

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A large body of research is beginning to show the impact of high quality and intensive service learning experiences on college student access and retention. The inclusion of service learning among a nationally recognized set of ten high impact practices for student success provides additional evidence of efficacy in this regard. In some cases retention is mediated by entering academic qualifications and other pre-college characteristics, levels of student engagement in courses and the level of academic challenge. Still, there exist other dimensions yet to manifest through scholarly inquiry that will provide for more robust and nuanced understandings and approaches.

In order to adequately respond to President Obama’s call for all college students to be able to access at least an associate degree, if not four year degree, it is critical that we understand more about the role that service learning and community engagement can play in persistence and degree completion. Here we invite proposals that deepen our understanding about the relationship between community engagement and persistence especially among varying institution types. Another ripe area of exploration where proposals are encouraged addresses the complexity of the increasingly diversifying student profile and what, if any, role community engagement plays as a motivating factor for students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in higher education toward persistence. Considering an expansive conceptualization of retention, the extent to which community engagement embedded in the collegiate experience facilitates the nurturance of engaged citizens is an open question requiring focused attention.

VIII. Global Community Engagement and Comparative Studies

Section Co-Chairs: Noah Drezner and Amy McNichols

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Higher education is becoming increasingly global. American institutions are sending more and more students abroad for semester, year-long, and short-term learning. International students are coming to the United States for part of, or their entire post-secondary education at record rates. An increasing number of public and private universities are opening branch campus around the globe. Given this increasing global context, many faculty are creating community engaged learning experiences in international settings. These experiences are taking many forms with critics questioning the sensitivity to cultural differences in some of the programs. In this section we are looking for proposals that explore global and international engagement that focuses on participant and community engagement within culturally sensitive contexts. We welcome proposals from global perspectives, especially those that look at community engagement from perspectives and/or emerged from outside of the United States.

IX. Other

Section Chair: Kelly Cowdery

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Many faculty, students affairs professionals, schools, institutions, and community-based organizations engage in various forms of community-based participatory research and programs that do not fit into Tracks I-VIII. We welcome proposals in this section that are not covered in the previous tracks but nonetheless advance our understanding of research, policy, and practice.

Submission Guidelines

Proposals will be accepted beginning **March 2, 2012**. To be considered, all proposals must be received via online submission by **Friday, March 30, 2012, 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time)**. Incomplete proposal submissions will not be reviewed. Proposals will be peer reviewed, and notification of acceptance will be sent by **May, 2012**. Presenters are expected to confirm their participation by **May 25, 2012**. Details about how to submit proposals online will be available on the IARSLCE website, www.researchslce.org.

ABSTRACTS/SUMMARIES should be limited to 50 words and should be written to be accessible and compelling to scholars, practitioners, students, community partners, and others.

PROPOSAL NARRATIVES should be limited to 1,000 words, not including references. All references should be submitted in APA format.

NOTE: The online submission system allows you to save your proposal draft and return to edit it in the system. When you are prepared to submit, please be sure you read the directions regarding final submission carefully to successfully submit your proposal.

Research and scholarship must be at the center of all proposals submitted. Proposals that focus on program descriptions and models, program evaluations, or “how-to” strategies must describe how this topic will advance service-learning and community engagement research, policy, and practice. Pure program models of service-learning or other engagement programs are unlikely to be accepted.

Section chairs and assigned peer reviewers will favorably review proposals that present research findings from:

- Rigorous research design for research purposes
- Research and program evaluation that incorporates voices of community partners
- Comparative studies from cross-cultural perspectives
- Conceptual frameworks with clear implications and recommendations
- Meta-analysis of literature to date and implications for research agenda
- Program evaluation that is the basis for research or comparative case studies

Presentation Categories and Proposal Review Criteria

Presenters will have a variety of presentation formats from which to choose, and they must indicate presentation format preferences for each proposal. Presentation formats are

described below. The conference planners will determine which format best suits each accepted proposal. The options are as follows:

- **Research Paper**

Research papers should advance service-learning and community engagement research by presenting the results of quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods studies; or report the findings of studies that use historical, ethnographic, or other analytical methods. These studies are based on original data collection or secondary data analysis.

Research paper proposals should contain as many of the following as are applicable, preferably in this order: (1) objectives or purposes of the study; (2) theoretical or conceptual frameworks/perspectives; (3) methods, techniques, or modes of inquiry; (4) data sources or evidence; (5) results, conclusions; and (6) significance of the study findings.

Research paper proposals will be evaluated based upon:

- (1) Significance of Research Question: Originality, importance of issues being studied as clear contribution to the field;
- (2) Theoretical Framework: Well-grounded theoretical/conceptual framework, rationale, with clear indication of awareness of literature and other scholarly contributions in the field;
- (3) Research Design and Methods: Design is appropriate for the study and directly addresses clearly stated research questions, hypotheses, or premises; rigor of data collection methods, relevance to research design and methods; and appropriateness of analysis, given design and methods;
- (4) Interpretation of Findings: Reasonableness and clear articulation of the conclusions and implications;
- (5) Scholarly Contribution and Relevance: Importance and relevance of contributions to theory-building, empirical knowledge, or practical implications for community partners, public policy, teaching and learning, or program design; centrality to advancing knowledge in the field or cross-cultural comparisons; and
- (6) Audience Appeal: Potential for further research, appeal, discussion, future publication and dissemination.

- **Scholarly Paper**

Scholarly papers present well-developed arguments on philosophical, theoretical, or practical issues in the study of service-learning and community engagement. They are not required to adhere to an empirical research design (i.e., methods, data collection, and data analysis). Instead, scholarly papers pose analytical questions, synthesize divergent bodies of literature, or elaborate new theoretical or conceptual frameworks.

Scholarly paper proposals should contain as many of the following as are applicable, preferably in this order: (1) objectives or purposes of the inquiry; (2) the philosophical, theoretical, or practical argument; (3) literature, sources, or evidence to support the argument/analysis; (4) conclusions and implications of the argument; and (5) significance of the argument for topics associated with service-learning and community engagement.

Scholarly paper proposals will be evaluated based upon:

- (1) Significance of the Topic: Originality, importance of issues being studied as clear contribution to the field;

(2) Analytical Argument: The quality of the analytical argument, including how well the argument is supported by the literature as well as a well-grounded theoretical/conceptual framework;

(3) Relevance of Conclusions: The persuasiveness of the conclusions; Importance and relevance of contributions to advancing scholarship in the field; and

(4) Audience Appeal: Potential for further research, appeal, discussion, future publication and dissemination.

• **Symposium**

A symposium is a thematic, integrated, and interactive engagement between a panel of presenters and the audience. The focus of the discussion is a clearly identified theme or topic that: (a) utilizes a particular disciplinary or theoretical perspective in considering a research problem; (b) reflects an emerging issue in a specific area of research, policy, or practice; or (c) centers on the development of service-learning and community engagement theory or research methodology.

A symposium is research-oriented but, unlike a research or scholarly paper session, the symposium organizers determine the theme and set of presenters for an entire session. The names of up to three presenters should be included in the proposal, and the backgrounds of presenters should be described. Members of the panel will make brief presentations linking their scholarly reflections with the theme, after which ample opportunity should remain for discussion. The discussion should be moderated, and a moderator should be recommended within the proposal. Conference planners encourage proposals that include community partner perspectives.

Symposium proposals should contain as many of the following as are applicable, preferably in this order: (1) objectives of the session; (2) significance of the theme or topic; (3) identification of the presenters and a discussion of their backgrounds related to the theme or topic; (4) a discussion of the research, perspective, or practice that each presenter will contribute; and (5) a discussion of how the session will be structured, including the designation of a moderator and strategies to facilitate audience discussion.

Symposium proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

(1) Significance and Relevance of the Topic: Originality and significance of the overall topic; its potential to advance research and practice; its relevance to IARSLCE members and others in the field;

(2) Coherence of Panel: Integration and coherence of panel's presentations as a group;

(3) Contributions of Panelists: Range of knowledge and/or points of view represented by varied panelists (e.g., faculty, community partner, staff member, student, teacher, etc.); and

(4) Audience Appeal and Involvement: Adequacy of strategy for involving audience in the discussion and for making the session interactive; Ways that the session intentionally tries to facilitate learning among participants.

• **Team Inquiry Presentation**

A team inquiry presentation involves multiple stakeholders (e.g., at least 3 of the following-- community partner, faculty, funder, service-learning coordinator, staff member, student, teacher) who have worked on a teaching, research or outreach community engagement project together. These presentations will highlight the value of various participants in the

design, implementation, and interpretation of findings. The focus may be on community-based participatory research with various constituencies, including community partners and students, presenting. The focus should be on what a group of colleagues learned via their research, evaluation, or engaged teaching experience.

Team inquiry proposals should contain as many of the following as are applicable, preferably in this order: (1) objectives or purposes of the proposed presentation; (2) perspectives or theoretical/conceptual frameworks that have guided the research project or program evaluation; (3) data, evidence, or resources related to the project; (4) conclusions and implications; (5) significance of this single project for future research, policy or practice.

Team Inquiry Proposals will be evaluated on:

- (1) Significance and Relevance of the Project: Originality and significance of the project and its relevance to IARSLCE members and others in the field;
- (2) Structure of the Team: Inclusion of a variety of stakeholders contributing diverse perspectives;
- (3) Contributions of the Team: Clear articulation of each team members' role in the project and contributions to the presentation; and
- (4) Audience Appeal: Presentation's potential for stimulating scholarly interest and discussion; ways that the session intentionally tries to facilitate learning among participants.

• **Poster Presentation**

Poster presentations provide a forum for scholars to engage in active discussion with other conference participants about a completed research project or about a project in developing stages. Individuals, institutions, and organizations may present posters to highlight current research or international programs and community partnerships that yield research opportunities.

Poster presenters will display their research on a large bulletin board (provided at the conference). Presenters will attend the poster session to discuss the project with conference attendees and also should bring as handouts a written detailed summary of their work. Conference planners have asked IARSLCE Board members to act as discussants and visit an assigned number of posters to meet the presenters. There will also be a Certificate of Distinction awarded to one poster considered most worthy of distinction.

Proposals should provide: (1) a clear statement of the purpose or goals of the research (i.e., the primary research questions or issues being addressed); (2) a brief summary of the theoretical or conceptual foundation for the work; (3) a description of the methodology being used and the project findings (if applicable); and (4) the theoretical and/or practical significance and implications of the research.

Poster proposals will be evaluated on:

- (1) Significance of the Topic: Originality, importance of the topic, issue, or problem being presented as clear contribution to the field;
- (2) Theoretical Framework: Quality of the theoretical or conceptual framework;
- (3) Clarity of Outcomes: The clarity of objectives and intended outcomes of the research;

(4) Relevance of Contributions: Importance and relevance of potential contributions to advancing scholarship in service-learning or community engagement research, policy, or practice; and

(5) Audience Appeal: Presentation's potential for stimulating scholarly interest and discussion.

Community Partner Fellows Program: The 2012 IARSLCE conference will include a community partner fellows program. Twelve to fifteen individuals whose professional positions are located in non-profit, community based organizations, schools or school districts, and local government agencies, who partner with IARSLCE members regularly in community engaged research, teaching, and/or program evaluation will be offered free registration to attend the conference. Unfortunately, funds will not allow us to offer transportation or accommodations.

In addition to the regularly scheduled sessions of the conference, the Community Partner Fellows and their campus partner (faculty, service-learning staff member, student, etc.) will attend workshops on grant-writing and collaborative research, providing new ideas in those areas and helping to enhance practice. There will additionally be special meetings Community Partner Fellows will be required to attend with the IARSLCE member and an evaluation of the program to fill out at the end.

To apply for the Community Partner Fellow program, please submit a letter to Kelly Cowdery at kcowdery@umd.edu by June 1st, 2012. The letter should include information about the nature of past, current and planned collaborations with IARSLCE members and their names, as well as what the applicant believes they can contribute and gain from the IARSLCE conference relevant to their own work in community engagement and career growth. This letter should be accompanied by a letter of support from the IARSLCE partner. To get further information about this opportunity, please contact Kelly Cowdery at kcowdery@umd.edu.

Publication Opportunities

Accepted proposals will be summarized in a conference *Proceedings*. Also, presenters may submit their full papers after the conference to IARSLCE's new peer-reviewed journal for consideration.

Conference Registration

Registration forms, hotel reservation information, and travel logistics will be posted on the conference website in April, 2012 www.researchslce.org. All presenters are required to register for the conference. Registration opens May 1, 2012.

Conference Hotel Information

(rooms at reduced rates have been set aside for attendees)

Marriott Baltimore Waterfront Hotel

700 Aliceanna Street

Baltimore, MD 21202

Telephone: 410-385-3000

baltimoremarriottwaterfront.com

IARSLCE Conference Important Dates

Deadline for Proposal Submission: March 30, 2012, by 5:00 p.m. (EST)

Registration Opens: May 1, 2012

Acceptance of Proposal Notification: By May, 2012

Deadline for Presenters to Accept: May 25, 2012

Early Registration: May 1 to August 6, 2012

Regular Registration August 7 to September 7, 2012

Late Registration September 8 to September 23, 2012

Tentative Conference Schedule:

Saturday, 9/22: Board Meeting

Sunday, 9/23: Preconference sessions 9-4; Keynote 4:30-6:00, Reception 6-7; Graduate student reception 7-8:30 p.m.

Monday, 9/24: Concurrent sessions 8:00-12:15; Lunch and awards 12:30-2; 2:15-3:30 concurrent sessions; Keynote 3:15-4:15; President's reception 4:45-6:00pm.

Tuesday, 9/25: Breakfast and Membership Meeting 7-9am; Concurrent sessions til 2pm

Conference ends by 3 p.m.