

Compact Current

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The 2000 Presidents' Leadership Colloquium

Higher Education for Democracy: Strategies for Civic Engagement

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Special Issue

At the 2000 Presidents' Leadership Colloquium in Philadelphia, more than 100 attendees gathered to explore strategies to realize their commitment to civic engagement . . .



Left to right: Dean of Studies and Student Life at Sarah Lawrence College, Allen Green; University of Pennsylvania President Judith Rodin; and University of Kansas Chancellor Robert Hemenway. PLC participants shared conversation at a reception on the deck of Philadelphia's Independence Seaport Museum. At the dinner following the reception, PLC participants heard a presentation by Christopher Gates, President of the National Civic League (see page 5).

Presidential Candidates Respond

One of the central goals of this year's Presidents' Leadership Colloquium (PLC) was to discuss strategies for promoting civic participation among young people—a major voter registration drive on campuses this fall is among the strategies already planned. The presidents also hope to utilize political and legislative paths to promote civic participation, so the opportunity to meet with representatives of the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates during the PLC was a highlight of the event.

Tom Ehrlich, senior scholar at the **Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching**, presented a letter from Campus Compact's presidents to representatives of **Vice President Al Gore** and **Governor George Bush**. The letter—describing the role of college and university presidents in focusing campuses' attention on citizens' responsibilities in American democracy—asked the candidates for their support in promoting a national conversation about the meaning of citizenship. The letter also asked the candidates to participate in a small working group to plan the dialogue.

William Galston, a professor at the **University of Maryland** representing Vice President Gore, brought a letter from the Vice President congratulating Campus Compact presidents who signed last year's *Presidents' Declaration*. Gore agreed with the *Declaration's* assertions that civic education is vital to democracy, but that students today don't recognize government work as noble service and as a potential source of deep personal satisfaction. Galston stated that Gore welcomes the chance to work with Campus Compact in programs that promote civic engagement, like increasing Federal Work Study funds to students who perform community service. Further, Gore intends to promote a candid public dialogue about citizenship.

Representing Governor Bush, **Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Eugene Hickok** declared that Campus Compact's work is critically important, especially given the public perception of institutions of higher education as "ivory towers"—detached from their surrounding communi-



Bush campaign representative Eugene Hickok (above) and Gore campaign representative William Galston (below) address participants at the 2000 Presidents' Leadership Colloquium.



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Elizabeth L. Hollander

This special issue of *Compact Current* is devoted to the fourth national Presidents' Leadership Colloquium (PLC). We received overwhelmingly positive feedback about the conference. For example, one participant said, "I usually spend my time at conferences figuring out how few sessions I can go to; at this one, each session is so rich I've been constantly energized and interested."

This year's PLC began with ambitious goals, particularly for an event that started at 11:30 one day and ended at 2 the next. The goals of the PLC were:

- To create opportunities to inform political and civic leaders of higher education's commitment to educating the next generation of active citizens and, in turn, to gain their commitment to the same goal.
- To probe more deeply why this generation of college students feels disengaged from politics and policy making.
- To explore concrete approaches campuses can take to work on community building and revitalization and to engage their faculty, administrators, and community partners.

We believe the PLC addressed and met these goals successfully. The candidates for the 2000 presidential election are aware of higher education's commitment to educating college students to be active citizens; and the candidates have made their own commitments to this issue.

Michael Deli Carpini delivered an address to participants about why college students are disengaged from civic and political life. His address offered evidence and potential solutions to the problem and challenged presidents to utilize their own voices in public forums on these issues.

And through several sessions with panels of faculty, students, and administrators, participants had opportunities to explore various ways for their campuses to engage all of their constituents in community building and revitalization.

A new component of this year's event was the presence of students. Participants were pleased to

hear *from* students as well as *about* them. In fact, one participant told us, "More student involvement! The conversations/discussions were very important and beneficial."

Another new feature was a special book display on the civic responsibility of higher education, the challenge of the democracy, and service-learning. At our request, **Barnes and Noble** mounted this exhibit in their Penn campus bookstore—part of the **West Philadelphia/University of Pennsylvania Redevelopment Complex** that also includes the **Inn at Penn**, where the Colloquium took place.

One of the most constructive criticisms of this year's event was that so much was packed into such a short period of time, participants did not feel they had enough time for the one-to-one, informal interaction with each other that they value at these kinds of events. We will certainly consider this important feedback as we plan future programs.

We prepared this special issue to report on the PLC in response to requests from those who could not attend. We encourage you to supplement this reading by visiting our web site at www.compact.org for full descriptions of each session, transcripts of some of the speeches, letters to and from the 2000 presidential candidates, and the compilation of best practices from both the 1999 and 2000 PLCs.

Finally, don't forget to mark your calendar for November 7–9, 2002, when the national office of **Campus Compact** will host its first annual conference, "Revitalizing the Civic Mission of Higher Education." The conference will be held in Providence and will be open to all college constituents.



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Presidents' Leadership Colloquium addresses civic engagement in higher education

Campus Compact convened the fourth national Presidents' Leadership Colloquium (PLC), entitled "Higher Education for Democracy: Strategies for Civic Engagement," in Philadelphia, PA, June 26–27, 2000. Attending presidents represented a cross-section of American higher education, from community colleges to state universities to Ivy League institutions. The event attracted over 100 attendees including 40 presidents and chancellors; faculty; several students; state Campus Compact directors; and representatives from the **Carnegie Corporation**, **The Pew Charitable Trusts**, the **KPMG Foundation**, the **Corporation for National Service**, the **Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching**, the **National Civic League**, the **Eugene Lang Foundation**, **Public Allies**, the **New York Times**, the **National Voting Rights Institute**, and community organizations such as the **African American Community Agenda** in California.

The focus of this year's PLC was to discuss the evidence of young people's civic disengagement and on strategizing ways to implement programs to encourage civic participation. This year's event built on the success of last summer's PLC in Aspen, CO, where presidents drafted the *Presidents' Fourth of July Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education*. The *Declaration* addresses growing concerns that cynicism and distrust of the political process are leading citizens—particularly those of college age—to disengage from civic affairs and abandon the responsibilities of citizenship.

This year's agenda included a practical session on how particular schools have implemented the Campus Assessment of Civic Responsibility, a self-assessment designed to help colleges and universities determine the extent to which civic responsibility and engagement are institutionalized on their campus. Other sessions focused on strategies for



„ Above: At the 2000 Presidents' Leadership Colloquium (PLC), participants in a panel on "Mobilizing Students from Service to Citizenship" discuss student participation in public work and electoral politics. Left to Right: Moderator Matt Dunne, Executive Director, AmeriCorps VISTA; Sharon Bassett, Project Director, Aspen Institute; David Nabti, student, University of California, Berkeley; Gregg Behr, Founder, Duke University "Content of Our Character Program"; John Bonifaz, Executive Director, National Voting Rights Institute.

mobilizing students (see photo, above), faculty, institutional resources, and campus/community partnerships toward civic engagement. Panelists, speakers, and participants emphasized the importance of legitimizing the work toward civic engagement and making it central to the academy's core mission.

Panelists in a session entitled "Mobilizing Faculty: Civically Engaged Teaching and Research" were **Harry Boyte, Co-Director of the Center for Democracy at the University of Minnesota**; **Ira Harkavy, Associate Vice-President, University of Pennsylvania**; **Bill Plater, Executive Vice-Chancellor, Indiana University/Purdue University-Indianapolis**; **Mary Walshok, Associate Vice-Chancellor, Public Programs, University of California-San Diego**; and moderator **James Stukel, President, University of Illinois**. The panelists discussed how and why presidents should

support faculty engagement. Suggestions were made that, among other things, presidents should articulate their institution's mission or agenda in ways that allow faculty to assume leadership for engagement efforts, and that presidents themselves ought to lead by example—to get involved not just in development activities, but also in engagement activities in the community.

A panel on "Mobilizing Campus and Community Partnerships" focused on what makes partnerships successful. Panelists were **Edison Freire, Master Teacher and Director, Urban Technology Project, Philadelphia**; **Patricia Griffin, Executive Director, Public**

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Developing student leadership is important, but not just for issues around democratic participation and voting; students need to be involved with the campus administration and trustees in ways that truly value and use their input.

40 college and university presidents from campuses in the following states attended the PLC: Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Vermont, and Wisconsin.

The Disengaged Generation

Evidence and Potential Solutions

Michael Delli Carpini, Public Policy Director at The Pew Charitable Trusts, delivered a keynote address at the Presidents' Leadership Colloquium (PLC). He reported on the current high levels of civic disengagement among adults under 30, but suggested that the problem is retractable. College freshmen today are less engaged than their elders and peers of earlier years and less than 20 percent say they are proud of how democracy works. They trust government less, and see it as more likely to be run by special interests unconcerned about citizens. Only 26 percent view involvement in democracy and voting as important, and follow the news daily. Their turnout in the 1996 election was the lowest in U.S. history, and they see lack of information as key to their own disengagement.

Delli Carpini asserted that the dynamic of disengagement among young adults has changed from that of previous generations. Today's youth do not plan to vote or become involved in political processes as they mature. This bodes ill for the future of our civic life: youth are a critical resource in the health of democracy because they provide a moral voice when we seek solutions to public challenges.

But there is reason for optimism and it comes from young people themselves, says Delli Carpini. First, young adults are neither apathetic nor satisfied. They have something to say, but they are not sure how, and they believe no one is listening. Also, they have been socialized with the message from the political environment that civic engagement is not important—and that solutions to community problems will be found outside the public sectors. Thus, this generation has no sense that civic engagement is an effective path to solving public problems.

Delli Carpini suggested that to help youth become engaged, Campus Compact needs to see itself as part of a larger civic engagement movement, involving academic institutions, K-12, and the nonprofit sector where the energy to change and solve social problems is pronounced. Delli Carpini believes that the movement can demonstrate significant progress, but he suggests that the following set of principles be used to guide the progression:

- To be successful, we must provide opportunities for civic engagement that are authentic. Students should be encouraged to engage real community problems in ways that provide a



„ Above: Michael Delli Carpini, Public Policy Director at the Pew Charitable Trusts, delivered a keynote address, speaking about the civic disengagement of America's youth

meaningful introduction to participation, rather than through purely academic or mock exercises in citizenship.

- We need to define service more broadly. While one-on-one volunteerism—such as working in a soup kitchen—has its place, we must also provide opportunities for more collective, policy-oriented and explicitly political forms of engagement.

- We must integrate campus-based efforts into the larger civic infrastructure of the communities in which they reside.

- All our efforts to design and implement effective ways to increase civic engagement must include young people themselves—and include them in leadership roles—from the planning through the implementation stage. In short, they must have ownership over these efforts.

- To be effective and lasting, our efforts to make the campus a place for encouraging and nurturing civic engagement must be valued by our institutions of higher learning. Demonstrating this requires that college and university presidents articulate this to the campus community, and that these words are supported by material resources as well as by the ways in which faculty, staff, and students are rewarded (tangibly and symbolically) for their commitments to creating an engaged campus.

- Finally, college and university presidents must come to see their roles not only as leaders of their campuses, but also as public leaders more generally.

Delli Carpini ended by addressing the presidents directly, saying, “You have a valuable and underutilized voice in public debates on societal issues and needs. Now is the time to use this voice to help shape the public dialogue on the state of democratic life in the United States. z

Civic Engagement in Higher Education

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Allies: Sharon Hewitt, Planner, Coalition for an African American Community Agenda; and moderator Ken Reardon, Associate Professor, Cornell University.

Another panel on “Mobilizing Institutional Resources: A Comprehensive Strategy” was held by the following panelists: **Susan Cole, President, Montclair State University; Paul Grogan, Vice-President of Community and Public Affairs, Harvard University; Eugene Lang, Trustee, Swarthmore College; Lee Nunnery, Vice-President of Business Services, University of Pennsylvania;** and moderator **Evan Dobbelle, President, Trinity College, Hartford, CT.** The group focused on how to use various campus resources to forge community partnerships and engage in community revitalization.

Highlights of the PLC included an opportunity for conference participants to hear representatives of the Bush and Gore campaigns respond to a recent challenge to the candidates to promote a “serious and sustained national conversation on the meaning and responsibilities of American citizenship.” The lively luncheon discussion opened the PLC and initiated a thoughtful dialogue among attending presidents.

Other highlights included a keynote address by **Chris Gates, president of the National Civic League,** and a presentation by **Michael Delli Carpini, Public Policy Director at the Pew Charitable Trusts.** These presentations are outlined in this issue of the newsletter.

Those who attended the PLC were especially invigorated by the student voices present at this year's event. One president said that the most valuable part of the PLC was “the young leaders—they have inspired me to encourage students to take on more of the leadership of our programs.” z

Welcome new members

Florida Gulf Coast University, FL
President William Merwin

Central Missouri State University, MO
President Bobby Patton

Cumberland County College, NJ
President Kenneth Ender

Bluffton College, OH
President Lee Snyder

Our Lady of the Lake University, TX
President Sally Mahoney

University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI
President David Ward

University of Wisconsin-Parkside, WI
President John Keating

For a complete listing of Campus Compact member campuses, please check our web site,

www.compact.org

“Engaging America's youth is crucial to both the current and future state of democracy.”

America's Evolving Democracy

Redefining Citizenship



” Above: President of the National Civic League, Christopher Gates, speaks to PLC participants about what he calls “adhocracy,” or “citizen democracy,” at a dinner presentation at the Independence Seaport Museum.

Christopher Gates is President of the National Civic League, the nation's oldest organization advocating for the issues of community democracy. In his presentation to the Presidents' Leadership Colloquium (PLC), he discussed his belief that democracy no longer works as it should, not because citizens are apathetic, but because they are angry. Individuals are choosing not to participate because they feel the system doesn't hear their voice or respond to their concerns.

This crisis in democracy is forcing us to rethink the concept of social change and how it occurs. In the past, social change meant using government to make things better. But today, many people—especially young people and students—are choosing a different place for their energies: activism through the nonprofit sector. Youth are discarding the old assumptions that “government owns the agenda,” that “progress only comes through conflict,” and that “only a few voices really matter and have the power to get things done.”

But, says Gates, we have not yet fully replaced these discarded assumptions: “We've cast away from the old world but have not yet landed at a new one.”

We can, however “describe the edges of the new paradigm for social change,” says Gates. First, the public agenda will be jointly held by

all three sectors (government, nonprofit, and corporate). Next, programs that address societal needs will develop through consensus, not conflict. Finally, “lots of voices now matter and will sound very different from the current ones.”

Debates about theories of social change tend to focus on the opposite approaches of representative democracy—in which elected leaders make decisions on behalf of citizens—and direct democracy—in which the citizens themselves decide how to proceed. Gates notes that a third model is emerging, something midpoint between representative democracy and direct democracy.

Gates calls this model “adhocracy,” or “citizen democracy”—in which government has an important role, not just as problem solver, but as a convener and framer of the issues. In this model, the private and nonprofit sectors also play leadership roles in problem-solving and citizens are more directly at the table. Within this new approach, government works to ensure that the process is fair and open and that “everyone is at the table.”

Gates left the group with a question: Will we institutionalize that form of decision-making in a more formal way or continue to put them together one at a time on an ad-hoc basis? z

Candidates CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ties. He said that colleges and universities are returning to their roots by declaring the importance of citizenship.

The two representatives answered questions about how the candidates plan to move from statements to action. Hickok said Bush believes that we should not be afraid to discuss the lofty ideal of changing the ethos of institutions; that such is the purpose of a national campaign every four years.

Speaking about what a presidential campaign is and can be, Galston reminded the group that **President Kennedy** sparked a national conversation about citizenship by putting forward a specific proposal for the **Peace Corps**. In that spirit, Galston recommended that **Campus Compact** propose a specific policy agenda for the candidates to address and implement, including an event where the presidential candidates can conduct a direct dialogue with students to help increase their electoral participation.

A student attending the session asked what the campaigns plan to do about the fact that issues of young people are not being addressed by the campaigns. Hickok responded that the Bush campaign has organized a youth dialogue, but that given Campus Compact's urging, he will suggest a more structured and permanent plan for engaging youth. “Chat rooms and email are not sufficient to create good conver-

sations on the topic of citizenship,” he said. Galston suggested that political campaigns, as sprawling activities, are open and capable of being touched from multiple places, allowing for easy student involvement. He asked the student to submit a paper with agenda suggestions for the candidates.

To increase voter participation, Galston said, the tone of the campaign also matters. Campaigns should maintain a dialogue of competing affirmative visions and deal with the principle sources of voter cynicism, like the influence of money in politics. To restore citizens' faith in the system, he says, candidates must talk about policy, not just make claims about how their personal qualities (e.g., trustworthiness, compassion, etc.) qualify them for the positions they seek. z

Endnote. At the PLC, interested presidents met at breakfast to shape a response to the letters from Gore and Bush—presented by Galston and Hickok. The group also strategized on continuing the conversation on civic engagement with the candidates. Following the PLC, the **Campus Compact Board Policy Committee** wrote letters to all of the presidential candidates based on the breakfast conversation. Read the letters on line at www.compact.org.

www.compact.org

Read and listen to Chris Gates' speech in its entirety on line at www.compact.org.



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Important Deadline

Swearer Student Humanitarian Award
and Ehrlich Faculty Award applications
will be sent to member presidents in September.
Nominations will be due back December 15th, 2000.
More information is available online:

www.compact.org

A Transformative Collaboration: Penn and the West Philadelphia Project

In a short presentation during the Presidents' Leadership Colloquium (PLC), the story of how **The University of Pennsylvania (Penn)** and the West Philadelphia community came together to create a model inner-city collaboration around mutual visions and dependencies was told by both **President Judith Rodin** and **Vice-President Carol Scheman**. "Building civic engagement into the life and ethos of institutions requires much debate and action," said Rodin. And Penn is committed to the ideal that "community revitalization can not be a separate effort existing ... on the fringes of institutional life. ... It needs to be vigorously implemented to be fully integrated ... [into campus life]."

The largest employer in Philadelphia, Penn felt responsible for exerting a leadership role in the city's revitalization. "Striving to develop trust around important local issues, [Penn] opened up a dialogue and listened to the community in a deeper way than ever before ... to

establish that it was in it for the long haul."

Through this dialogue, the **West Philadelphia Campus/Community Collaborative** identified key areas for community revitalization: clean and safe neighborhoods, retail growth and enhanced cultural life, home ownership, and improved public education. In a surprisingly short time, the project exerted a major impact by stabilizing the neighborhood, stimulating the market, and providing a framework for long-term renewal through business development, employment, housing, and education initiatives. Here's some of what was accomplished:

- A retail district was created to increase shopping once available only in the city's centers by expanding and upgrading shops, restaurants, and cultural life at 40th Street where the community and the university come together. Key additions include a theatre center for **Sundance Films**, and a community job development program, ensuring that to date, 46

percent of all the construction and service jobs in this new district have gone to local residents.

- Penn faculty and staff who buy homes in the district receive mortgage assistance and home renovation grants; and local residents were encouraged to come together as blocks to become eligible for a 50 percent reduction in street and home lighting costs.

- Penn helped the community refurbish district housing and businesses, and build a lighting infrastructure that had not existed. Residents have become "Safety Ambassadors" as crime watchers.

- **Penn's Graduate School of Education**, working with the School District and the teachers' union, created a university-assisted neighborhood school that also serves as a community resource center and teacher training facility. Additionally, Penn faculty have designed reading curriculum and after-school programs for city schools where Penn students work as tutors and mentors. z