

## 22. Moving to Scale - Creating Additional Replication Systems

CLP is frequently approached by community leaders, organizers, college faculty-members and others who want to build on their training or service-learning programs to develop more ambitious and comprehensive programs for developing the next generation of community leaders, organizers and agents of positive change. The CLP Network is currently the nation's sole source of expert assistance for people exploring creation of college-based Community Change Studies programs.

Over the last decade, the CLP Network has expanded one site at a time. CLP's primary replication system has been city by city, providing extensive on-site technical assistance to community leaders and faculty-members who seek expert advice as they explore creating a Community Change Studies program.

CLP's deep on-site experience with both successes and frustrations has given the Learning Partnership unmatched knowledge and skills. CLP's staff, Board members, and consultants provide great expertise as they help new sites determine whether a CCS program is feasible locally, how to adapt it to fit with local opportunities and priorities, and how to form balanced partnerships. CLP also helps local sites develop curricula which integrate practical experience, college courses, and reflection, and also creates effective systems of student recruitment and support.

However, the Partnership has found it extremely difficult to raise sufficient funding to support on-site technical assistance (TA). Current **foundation** trends leave very few funders open to any initiatives they haven't designed themselves. Even fewer are open to programs which foster organizing on issues which low-income communities themselves choose to tackle. Therefore, as it continues to search for expanding support for TA and for funding to cover its local partners' start-up costs, **CLP is pursuing four additional approaches to expansion** –

- **Providing on-line support**, materials and coaching -- Systematically supporting potential new sites and other programs with do-it-yourself (DIY) guidance materials and expanded on-line help,

- Potentially involving Network partners in collaborating in **developing learning modules, video story-telling, on-line guest speakers and discussion leaders**, and other techniques for enabling CLP students to learn from teachers, organizers and community leaders working for change in an extraordinarily rich variety of settings across the US,
- Exploring the value and potential of **creating blended learning courses** together, especially to enable CLP to reach students and campuses beyond our current Network, and to develop courses to supplement the core courses most CCS programs offer with opportunities to focus on different issue areas or other specialized topics (e.g. social media, communications, electoral and political organizing, the social history of the US, etc.), and
- **State and federal policy change** – Leading joint efforts to increase resources for Community Change Studies programs and well-paid internships through federal and state policy changes. (*See next chapter on public policies*).

## 1. CLP's Approach to Site-by-Site Replication

CLP's site-by-site replication system begins with responding to requests for advice and assistance in developing a CCS program. After a series of exploratory conference calls, CLP and people at the site decide whether there is sufficient potential to merit an on-site visit by CLP (and whether there are resources to support that work).

During an initial visit, CLP representatives and its local contacts jointly conduct a series of interviews with community and college leaders and other knowledgeable local actors to begin exploring whether the essential elements of a CCS partnership program are present. Subsequent visits widen the circle of interviews and deepen discussions on whether to form a partnership. Would a CCS program fit with local needs and priorities? How should it be shaped to best serve the context? Is a CCS program feasible? Who should be the formal partners? Who has the energy, time and background to lead the process locally? What should be the next steps in a deeper feasibility study and planning process? Would it be useful for local leaders to visit one of CLP's current sites to learn from their experience and get their advice?

This all requires a substantial effort by CLP as well as local leaders. Unfortunately, because of resource constraints, the Partnership's very small staff is overextended and cannot provide new sites with on-site assistance even when it would expedite an exploration and feasibility study.

Start-up grants directly to a local site or channeled through CLP are invaluable in enabling the Partnership and local partners to concentrate fully on planning a program, designing the curriculum, maximizing local involvement and buy-in, and getting the program off the ground. One strong selling point is that -- as the chart in Chapter 21 demonstrates -- funders will get an enormous return on their investment -- a return from their planning grant's leveraging impact year after year. It will result in two types of leverage -- (1) annual public funding for the college instruction and student financial aid; and (2) the financial value of the services CCS graduates provide to society over three or four decades in careers tackling issues of poverty, race, and community-building. [See chart in chapter 21.](#)

## **2. Increasing On-Line Support and Peer Exchange:**

Until recently, CLP's on-line program was limited to occasional webinars and our web-site's data bases on programs and curricula. However, two events have dramatically increased our use of internet.

One reason, of course, was the Pandemic, which had the same impact on CLP it did on other institutions. We could neither travel to our sites nor convene them face to face, so we expanded our use of Zoom enormously. This built naturally on a shift already underway at CLP -- having the staff, Board and local sites operate on a team basis by meeting regularly via videocall. Those calls now happen every two weeks, helping overcome isolation, strengthening relationships and peer exchange, sharing power, and fostering collaboration across sites on curriculum development and promoting best practices within the Network and more broadly.

CLP students are beginning monthly Zoom calls and are identifying common issues and concerns for possible cross-site collaboration and action.

### 3. Creating On-Line Systems to Support DIY Planning and Start-Up:

**Can local community leaders and faculty members create an ambitious CCS program without extensive outside help? The answer is Yes.**

Professor Hannah Ashley proved this to CLP when she contacted us to notify us that she had succeeded in creating a new Minor in Urban Community Change at West Chester University, and that she did this by relying heavily on the program and curricular materials on the CLP web-site. Hannah accomplished this without even contacting CLP and without outside funding.



This inspired us to explore ways to help others replicate Professor Ashley's successful do-it-yourself (DIY) approach to developing a Change Studies program by developing various on-line strategies.

This **e-book** is the first step in creating on-line help for replication and expanding the Network. As a guidebook, it proceeds step-by-step through the approaches we've developed and the lessons we have learned over the last decade. Each chapter can be downloaded directly from our web-site ([www.clpclp.org](http://www.clpclp.org)) when it's relevant and useful locally, and -- rather than providing rigid rules and models -- we have highlighted ideas and suggestions to help people be creative in developing CCS programs which build on their local strengths, priorities, and opportunities.

CLP is considering creating a **companion series of webinars and podcasts** to help people think through the basic elements of a program, early choices and strategy. Like this e-book, the series would focus on the process for exploring the feasibility of such a program, the basic program elements to consider, questions of content and pedagogy, student recruitment and support, challenges and opportunities, costs, etc. Sets of five or six sessions could be offered as needed, and could be combined with Zoom calls to provide opportunities for Q and As, discussions, and peer exchange.

This would provide a strong **intake system** for CLP, enabling local leaders to think through their ideas and potential, and for CLP to gage their interest, values, commitment, and capacity without making a substantial investment. This experience would also help us consider what other replication materials or tools would be most useful and practical.

It would make it much easier for CLP to actively reach out to people in cities and regions without Community Change Studies programs. The series could be repeated periodically to keep expanding the Network, and be structured as a virtual learning community with CLP's initial leaders inviting participation from people interested in CCS, including people from colleges and organizations which already offer some elements of a full Community Change Studies program. Each session could be led by a different member of our current Network or others who have useful experience and ideas to share. This would build on our local partners' sense of joint ownership, of being part of a national team setting policy and making plans for contributing to expansion and creation of an important, increasingly well-recognized new field of studies.

One possible additional advantage for participants – the CLP series of seminars could be coupled with annual Faculty/Community Leaders Institutes to qualify participants for a **professional development Certificate** from a cooperating college or university.

Finally, CLP is planning to test the potential of various approaches to blended learning for Change Studies, including exploring possible partnerships with College Unbound, e-Cornell, the distance learning arm of Cornell University, and others.

#### **4. Collaboration to gain recognition and support for this field of studies**

Underlying these strategies is our goal of jointly **creating a new field of study** which is offered by a large number of community colleges, four-year institutions and universities, both public and private. Major expansion of Community Change Studies programs would enable colleges to strengthen

their response to four fundamental issues the United States faces – poverty, race, stronger communities, and revitalized democracy. In genuine partnerships with communities they can develop new generations of leaders, organizers, change agents, and allies with the knowledge, skills and credentials to bring people together to tackle these issues and press for great social progress and a kinder, more open and more united society.

## **5. Public Policy Changes to Support Replication:**

Recently, CLP Network members have begun collaborating on public policy issues which concern them. These include early efforts to reform the federal College Work Study Program to strengthen its mandate that some CWS funds be allocated to Community-Based Work with college credit given for students engaged in serious experiential learning as part of a broader curriculum like CCS Certificate and Degree programs. Another effort is to create state and federal pilot programs providing Community-Building Internships, which are full-time, well-paid and a mix of experiential and classroom learning. (*See the next Chapter for details on CLP's policy agenda.*)