Youth and Education Issue Area Network

Who we were:

1. Shoghig Berberian, Associate Director of K-12 education and family programs, Bell Museum
2. Judith Conway, Extension Educator, Center for Youth Development
3. Laurel Hirt, Director, Community Service-Learning Center
4. Scott McConnell, Professor, Educational Psychology
5. Susan Ranney, Senior Lecturer, Curriculum and Instruction, Second Language & Cultures Teacher Education
6. Shereen Sabet, Assistant to Directors, Interdisciplinary Center for Global Change
7. Julie Sweitzer, Director, College Readiness Consortium
8. Hedy Walls, Vice President for Social Responsibility, YMCA of Greater Twin Cities
9. Makeda Zulu-Gillespie, Director of Community Outreach, UROC
10. Deb Jane joined us later - Outreach Coordinator | Institute for Global Studies

We were not a network – while each person already knew several people in group, and perhaps occasionally worked together, there wasn’t a shared interest focus that bound us together (other than the very broad ‘youth and education.’)

What we did:

Goal to explore interest in and create network(s).

Existing informal network of staff and faculty working with PreK-12 youth and/or educators

- Many more service/outreached, not always truly engaged

Knew additional faculty doing engaged work with community, but don’t know scope or level of community engagement.

Youth and Education topic has very broad scope. **Scope and uncertainty about who working in field/doing engaged work were the major challenges.**

**Strategy:** Held three Teach and Learn sessions. Open invitation to present, widely communicated, a number of people made direct contacts and encouraged people to present.

- U YMCA, UROC, St. Paul Student Center

Surveys – 23 –

- 1/3 primarily involved in engaged research, 2/3 engaged teaching, just under 2/3 outreach
- Worked with different audiences: children, school-based educators, youth workers, parents, community organizations
- Differences in age groups they worked with, in or out of school, family or health setting
• When asked about interest in network, they used words like ‘coalition, coordinate, work together, shared delivery, align, deepen relationships” as well as “share best practices, link young people to opportunities”
• Perceived strong interest in connecting, but not shared content of work

Serendipity:

At same time – spring OPE event, Deb Jane and other people who provide professional development for educators talked, and wanted to create network. Rejuvenated old ideas, multiple conversations among those interested and Andy, and launched that network. About 30 people interested, met last week for first time. Broke into groups to address funding, content, recruitment/marketing, and find shared questions to explore and share practices.

PreK-12 Network focusing in on programs directly serving youth

**Accomplishment** – one new, and one more focused network. Promoting work in more engaged manner, but some are more traditional service orientation (we’ll share what we know/have.)

**Feedback on process/lessons learned:**

More people/programs working on youth and education across many colleges than we knew.

Many variations within, and needed to focus work to make it valuable for participants.

Can lead a horse to water but can’t make him drink. Networks are a coalition of the willing – if they don’t want to or see immediate connection, won’t. Willing to dip toe by coming to one event/presenting – not many presenters came to listen to others.